



Discussion Guide

Date: 5/17/2026

Sermon Title: Will Jesus love me even if I've done things I regret?

Scripture: John 18:1-11, 15-18, 25-27; John 21:15-19; Acts 2:14-21

This discussion guide is a layout to be used with a group or class. We have included opening and closing prayers to start and end your group. The guide may be used for personal or family reflection as well.

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and loving God, we gather today as people who are still growing, still learning, and still in need of Your grace. Like Peter, we know moments of courage and moments of failure. Yet You continue to call us beloved. Open our hearts to hear Your voice today. Help us to receive the forgiveness of Christ, trust in the power of resurrection, and walk faithfully in the calling You place before us. Amen.

OPENING QUESTIONS: (Choose one to start with)

1.

INTRODUCTION:

Simon Peter's journey moves from fear and failure to restoration and resurrection hope. The disciple called "the rock" crumbled under pressure on Good Friday, yet through the grace of the risen Christ, Peter was restored and empowered to lead. Our failures do not define us. Jesus meets us in grace, restores us in love, and calls us forward in purpose.

DIGGING INTO THE SCRIPTURE: Read the following passages and use the questions for conversation or reflection.

Read John 18:15–18, 25–27

1. What emotions do you imagine Peter was experiencing during Jesus' arrest and trial?
2. Why do you think Peter denied Jesus even after boldly claiming he never would?
3. What stands out to you about the moment the rooster crowed?
4. Peter had earlier tried to defend Jesus with a sword (John 18:10). What does this reveal about Peter's understanding of Jesus and the kingdom of God?
5. Have you ever experienced a moment where fear or pressure caused you to act differently than your values or faith?
6. What does Peter's denial teach us about human weakness?

Supporting Scriptures: Romans 3:23; Psalm 51:10; 2 Corinthians 12:9

Read John 21:15–19

1. Why do you think Jesus asks Peter three times, “Do you love me?”
2. What do you notice about the tone of Jesus in this conversation?
3. Jesus does not shame Peter or rehearse his failure. What does that teach us about the heart of Christ?
4. What is significant about Jesus giving Peter responsibility again: “Feed my sheep”?
5. How does restoration differ from simply being forgiven?
6. Have you ever struggled to forgive yourself even after asking God for forgiveness?
7. What might Jesus be calling you toward even after moments of regret or failure?

Wesleyan Insight:

In Methodist theology, grace is not merely pardon; it is also transformation. God forgives us and continues working within us through sanctifying grace, shaping us into people who love God and neighbor more fully. This reflects the Methodist understanding that no person is beyond redemption because God’s grace is always active and available.

Supporting Scriptures: Romans 8:1; 1 John 1:9; Isaiah 43:18–19

Read Acts 2:14–21

1. What changes do you notice in Peter between John 18 and Acts 2?
2. How does the resurrection transform Peter’s fear into courage?
3. Why is it important that the same Peter who denied Jesus became the one boldly proclaiming the gospel?
4. What does Peter’s transformation reveal about the power of the Holy Spirit?
5. How can our failures become places where God’s grace and testimony shine most clearly?
6. What encouragement does Peter’s story offer people carrying regret or shame today?

Supporting Scriptures:

Joel 2:28–29 (quoted in Acts 2); Philippians 1:6; 2 Timothy 1:7

GOING DEEPER: *Some personal Reflection Questions*

1. Is there a regret, failure, or painful memory that still shapes how you see yourself?
2. Do you believe Jesus responds to you more with condemnation or restoration? Why?
3. What would it mean to truly accept Christ’s forgiveness?
4. In what ways is God still calling you to serve, lead, love, or witness despite your imperfections?
5. Where have you experienced resurrection after disappointment or failure?
6. How can the church become a community of restoration instead of shame?

SERMON QUESTIONS:

1. Pastor Clayton reminds us in the sermon that Peter was called by Jesus into a life of discipleship. When Jesus called Peter, he immediately left his nets to follow. What does it look like to “leave your nets” and follow Jesus in today’s world? What might Jesus be calling you to leave behind?
2. Peter was the first to confess Jesus as the Messiah. Why do you think Peter was often the one to speak up first? What are the benefits and risks of being bold in faith?



3. Peter is seen as a faithful disciple. Jesus said He would build His church on Peter, the "rock." How does it change your perspective knowing that the church's foundation was someone who would later deny Jesus three times?
4. The sermon we see Peter has an amazing comeback story and is restored by Jesus. In John 21, Jesus asks Peter three times, "Do you love me?" Why do you think Jesus asked three times? How does this scene represent restoration?
5. Pastro Clayton says, "If you've ever failed in life, if you've ever disappointed yourself, disappointed people you love, if you've ever felt like you've been a disappointment to God, you're in good company with Simon Peter." How does Peter's story give you hope about your own failures?
6. How does the concept of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of love change the way we approach ministry, mission, and daily interactions with others?
7. The sermon describes the church as "a human institution striving to do divine work." How have you experienced both the humanity and divinity of the church?
8. What role does community play in spiritual restoration, as seen in Peter's journey from denial to leadership among the other disciples?

REFLECTION:

1. In what area of your life do you feel like you've "collapsed under pressure"?
2. Where do you need to hear Jesus ask you, "Do you love me?" and commission you to "feed my sheep"?
3. In what areas of your life do you feel God is calling you to get back up after failure and continue the work of loving and serving others?
4. What would it look like for you to rely more on the Holy Spirit's courage rather than your own strength?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Merciful God, thank You for meeting us with grace when we fail. Thank You for loving us even in the moments we regret most. Like Peter, we confess that we do not always live courageously or faithfully. Yet You continue to call us, restore us, and strengthen us through the risen Christ. Help us to trust that our failures are not the end of our story. Fill us with the power of the Holy Spirit so that we may live boldly, love deeply, and follow faithfully. Remind us that resurrection is always stronger than shame, and grace is always greater than regret. In the name of Jesus Christ, who restores and redeems us, Amen.

WAYS TO RESPOND:

Choose ONE of the following practices to focus on this week:

1. Confession and Restoration: Identify one area where you feel you've failed God or others. Spend time in prayer asking for God's forgiveness and restoration. Journal about how God might be calling you to a "comeback story"
2. Holy Spirit Boldness: Identify one situation where you need courage you don't naturally possess. Pray daily for the Holy Spirit to fill you with boldness. Take one step of faith in that situation this week
3. Feeding the Sheep: Ask God to show you someone who needs care, encouragement, or spiritual support. Reach out to that person with a call, visit, meal, or note. Share Christ's love in a practical way.
4. Pentecost Witness: Like Peter at Pentecost, share your faith story with someone this week. It doesn't have to be a sermon; just share what Jesus means to you. Trust the Holy Spirit to give you the words