

## “FOLLOWING AT A GREAT DISTANCE.”

By Keith Greer

"Then, having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed at a distance." {Luke 22:54}

When one becomes a child of God, we should begin to "**follow Jesus**." "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you." {John 13:15} Jesus left us a "pattern," that we might be able to "follow" after. How close do we need to follow Him? To answer our question, let us examine this passage concerning Peter.

In Matthew 16:13, Jesus asked His disciples, " ... Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" Simon Peter answered, " ... You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." {Matthew 16:16} Peter well understood who His Lord was! He had heard the parables, he saw the miracles, and even had personal instructions from the Master on numerous occasions.

" ... All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night ... Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never stumble ... Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You! And so said all the disciples." {Matthew 26:31-35} Peter had intentions of being faithful to the Lord, no matter what! Never forget when Peter made this statement he was with the disciples and Jesus. In his heart Peter never could conceive turning away from the Lord.

" ... Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat ... I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me." {Luke 22:31-34} Mark's account said Peter spoke "**vehemently**" that he would die for the Lord! {Mark 14:31} Peter had no doubt in his mind what he would choose concerning his relationship with the Lord – no matter the circumstances presented to him. What did he do?

" But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying!" Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times. So Peter went out and wept bitterly." {Luke 22:60-62} Where was his zeal? Commitment? His promise of loyalty? **WHAT HAPPENED???**

Peter's problem was that "**he was following Christ from a great distance!**" "And when she saw Peter warming himself, ..." {Mark 14:67} Peter was with the enemy! How can one follow Christ, if he is with the enemy? " ... Do you know friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." {James 4:4}

Why do many Christians struggle in living for Christ? Sadly, they have the same problem that Peter had in following His Lord. The world is against the Lord; His word, His standards, His morals and everything He stands for. Please understand this point – the world will never encourage you to live for Christ or to develop His character in your life. The devil and the world have no regard for your problems, your life or helping you in overcoming difficulties in your life. Destruction and misery is all the

devil wants for you and spending all eternity with him and his angels. The world is not your friend and will chew you up and spit you out when it's done with you.

Remember this one point. We cannot hold to God and the world! Walking a "tightrope" will eventually result in you falling off – always on the wrong side! How close is not measured in feet, but with the heart! Peter was with His Lord, but at a "great distance." Why? Peter was with the wrong crowd, and he feared for his own life! What about you? Are you "following" Christ? If so, is it at a distance? \*\*\*