

COMMUNITY GROUP GUIDE

② The Silence of God?

INTRODUCTION | the gaze of Jesus

In today's scripture passage we read about the most dark and shameful episode in the apostle Peter's life. In the movie Silence, there are multiple scenes dealing with images of Jesus. It's from these that we can draw our points. First, let's reflect on the weakness in our lives. Like Peter, there are parts of our lives that we do not wish to remember. Secondly, notice the look Jesus gives Peter. Jesus looks at Peter with love. Thirdly, let's work at the work of Christ's gospel in the midst of weakness. In light of that I want us to think about how Jesus taking up our sin and weakness through his suffering and death on the cross.

SCRIPTURE | Scripture: Luke 22:54-62

54 Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance. 55 And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. 56 Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with him." 57 But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." 58 And a little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." 59 And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean." 60 But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. 61 And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." 62 And he went out and wept bitterly.

QUESTIONS |

- 1: (21: 15) What does Peter testify about Christ in this verse? Why do you think?
- 2: Eventually, we all show a lack of faith or fall into sin. Overconfidence or pride overcome us. We all get overtaken by fear or anxiety. These are born out of an inability to recognize our own weakness.(ref Matt 26:33,35)
- 3: (verse 61) As Christ had warned beforehand, Peter denied Christ 3 times. What did Christ do when this betrayal happened? When this happened what kind of attitude did Peter have in regards to Jesus? (Ref Matt 18:21-22)
- 4: Does reading of Peter's betrayal of Christ help you better to understand the scene in Silence where the priest Rodrigo tramples on the image of Christ? What points are similar, which are different? What message do you hear scripture teaching? (Ref Shusaku Endo)
- 5: After Christ's resurrection, he met Peter and resurrected Peter's faith. From this what important reality should we notice? In the midst of persecution or difficult discipline how should we rely on and have faith in Jesus? (ref John 21:15-18)

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REFERENCES |

Matthew 26:33,35

33 Peter answered him, "Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away." 34 Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." 35 Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!" And all the disciples said the same.

Shusaku Endo 「SILENCE」

I have my own things to say. Whoever steps on the picture of Jesus (to show that they are apostates) has his own things to say. Do you think I step on them willingly? My feet hurt. The feet that stepped on pictures of Jesus hurt. God demands me to be strong although he made me a weak person. That is nonsense.

Matthew 18:21-22

21 Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" 22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

Shusaku Endo 「SILENCE」

The priest lifted his foot. In his foot he felt a sharp pain. It wasn't just his imagination. At this moment he prepared to trample on the most beautiful, most holy thing; that which was the ideal and that which filled the dreams of men. There was real pain. At that very moment the icon said to the priest "go a head and step on me. It's ok if you step on me. I'm the one who knows the pain in your foot better than anyone. It's ok for you to step on me. I was born into this world for the very purpose of you stepping on me, I suffered on the cross for you to step on me."

John 21:15-18

15 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." 16 He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." 17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. 18 Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go."

PRAYER |

- Jesus in his suffering and sacrificial death on the cross, in perfect obedience to the father covers over and heals and forgives our weakness and sin.
- Pray that you recognize your weakness and in Christ confess it. Pray that in times of persecution or difficulty by Christ's love you will be filled and lead to walk in the Spirit. Specifically share your current struggles with one another.

UPCOMING EVENTS | This Week & Next Week

Grace City Choir (2/13)
Lunchtime meetings (Kudanshita 2/14, kasumigaseki 2/15, Otemachi 2/16)
Obento Project (2/18)
Sunday worship (2/19 KDDI Hall)
Lunchtime meetings (Akasaka 2/21, Marunouchi 2/22, Otemachi 2/23)
Sunday Worship (2/26 Hamacho F-tower)
Welcome dinner (2/26)