

## INDEFINISBLE DENIAL

February 9, 2025

**When It All Went Down // John 18:12-27**

### CONNECT – Announcements (page 2) & Building Relationships

1. What's new in your life since the last time we met? Are there any ways you've seen God at work in your life or in the lives of others around you since then?
2. Icebreaker: Have you ever been in an awkward or high-pressure moment where someone put you on the spot and you didn't know what to say? What happened?

### REFLECT - Out of the Word and Into Our Lives

3. Read John 18:12–27 aloud together. As you picture the courtyard, the fire, the questioning, and Peter's denials, what details or emotions stand out most to you?
4. Before we zoom in on Peter, look at verse 14. John reminds us of Caiaphas' earlier statement that **"it is better that one man die for the people."** Why do you think John wants us to remember this truth right in the middle of Peter's failure?
5. Who seems to be "in charge" in this scene? (v.12-16) Who is actually in charge? Why might Peter have been afraid to associate himself with Jesus in a place controlled by these leaders?
6. Where do you feel pressure today to go along with "whoever owns the place"? How does remembering Christ's authority give you courage?
7. Peter is literally at a door, and the doorkeeper asks him if he's one of Jesus' disciples. Why is it striking that Peter folds under such a small question — from such a low-status person? (v. 17 - 20)
8. What "doors" are we sometimes tempted to protect — reputation, relationships, career, comfort? How might trusting Jesus as the true Door free us to be more open about our faith?
9. Pastor Jeremy said, **"Comfort-seeking Christianity inevitably leads us to become Christ-denying cowards."** Where do you see comfort-seeking shaping your own decisions or conversations?
10. Why do we tend to fear people's reactions more than God's evaluation of us? How would our daily choices change if we truly believed Christ is the only Judge who ultimately matters?
11. The sermon raised a hard question: If Jesus calls us to be His witnesses ("Ask those who heard Me"), are we ever "denying" Him not by words, but by silence? What might that look like in everyday life?
12. In the final denial, someone who *saw Peter's failure up close* presses him: **"Didn't I see you in the garden?"** Why can past failures or shame make us want to hide from Jesus instead of run to Him? Which voice do you tend to believe more — the accusing voice of your past or the forgiving voice of Christ?
13. How does knowing Jesus died "for the people" — even people who deny Him — change the way you view your own failures?



## 🕊 PROTECT – Care for one another (divided, gender-specific groups)

14. **Where are you most tempted right now toward “comfort-seeking Christianity”**—staying quiet, blending in, or warming yourself by the world’s fire—because you fear losing something (approval, opportunity, relationship, reputation)? What would it look like to take one step of faithful witness this week, and how can we pray for courage?
15. Peter listened more to the **accusing voice** in front of him than the **merciful voice** of Jesus who was still there for him. Is there a place in your life where shame, past failure, or someone who “knows your story” has made you pull back from Jesus or from ministry? Share as you’re comfortable, and pray that you would hear Christ’s voice clearly—returning to Him for mercy and a “second chance.”

Along with any other prayer requests you may have, pray together: (1) thank Jesus for taking your place, (2) confess areas of fear or denial, and (3) ask for courage to follow Him faithfully.

## Announcements

**Stew Fundraiser: February 21<sup>st</sup>** – Help send our Youth Students to Summer Camp and enjoy some delicious stew. Sign up for \$9 quart or to help make it at the plug-in portal.

## Resources for Going Deeper

Book Recommendation: *Gentle & Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers* by Dane Ortlund

Read Luke 9:23-27

Read & Memorize Galatians 1:10