

Sermon for March 29/30, 2025
"The Two Trials" Pastor Jeff Manion



SMALL GROUPS

Share Life | Pursue God | Invest In Others

THREE THINGS TO KNOW

DON'T MISS THIS. Good Friday and Easter weekend provide a special opportunity to **SERVE** visitors and our community at Ada Bible Church. This is a perfect time for you, your family or your group to step into serving and make a difference. Your willingness to serve creates a welcoming environment for our community and for those who may be visiting for the first time. Join us in sharing God's love through simple acts of service. [Sign up](#) to serve in hospitality today. [Email our children's ministry team](#) about serving with them.

GROUP VALUES. This month, our focus is on the **SPIRITUAL PRACTICES**. Spiritual practices are essential habits that grow us closer to God and one another. Consider taking the next step in your relationship with these practices by participating in [Ada Bible Academy](#) this spring. Through the four-week class, Deeper Walk: Spiritual Practices for Life with God, you will discover practical ways to create space for God in your daily rhythms through time-tested spiritual practices. [Register now!](#)

GROW AS A LEADER. LEADING THROUGH THE SEASONS. Some groups find it helpful to end the spring season with a celebration of the year. It could mean gathering for a cookout, bonfire or something else. At that celebration, spend time sharing all God has done and focus on how you have grown throughout the year. It can be helpful to review prayer requests from the year to identify how God was at work in the group. [Learn more](#) about leading well through the seasons.

SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

Welcome to the third week of our sermon series, **THE FINAL HOURS**. This week, we examine a pivotal moment when two trials unfold simultaneously: Jesus facing the Jewish authorities and Peter facing a test of his loyalty.

ICEBREAKER

What's something you claimed you would never do but ended up doing anyway?

THIS WEEK'S TEXT

Have a couple of people read [Mark 14:53-72](#) aloud.

What contrast do you notice between Jesus's and Peter's actions in this passage?

What emotions do you see in each of the characters in this story?

How does Jesus's response to the high priest's question about being the Messiah demonstrate both courage and clarity about his identity?

THIS WEEK'S SERMON

Pastor Jeff Manion examined the parallel trials of Jesus and Peter. As a group, recall some of the sermon's big ideas and main points.

How do people try to "follow from a distance" when it comes to their commitment to Jesus?

Think about the mileage Peter had with Jesus—the years of traveling with and learning from him. How does that context make his denial even more shocking?

Who has been a good example to you of following Jesus closely rather than from a distance, even when it cost them personally? What about them inspires your faith?

Jesus repeatedly taught his disciples that following him included benefits like a full, abundant life but also demands such as denying ourselves and picking up our cross. Why do you think we're often drawn to the benefits of following Jesus while minimizing the demands?

Jesus taught that following him means to serve, sacrifice and even suffer sometimes. We want to follow Jesus, but not *here*. How do you struggle to follow Jesus *here* as he taught?

Peter broke down and wept after his third denial. When have you felt regret after failing to stand firm in your faith? How did God meet you at that moment?

Though this passage ends with Peter's failure, Jesus later restores Peter, and he becomes a bold leader in the early church. How does this glimpse of restoration encourage you in your own journey of following Jesus?

WRAP UP

Pastor Jeff urged us to choose one relationship where we can begin serving in the way of Jesus. Which relationship did you choose and how can we pray about it this week?