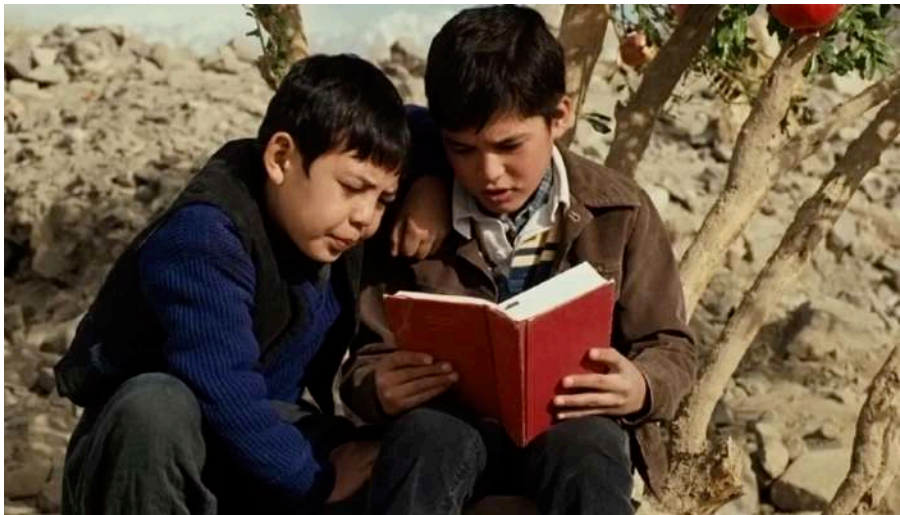
A stylized profile of a man's head, facing left, rendered in shades of blue. The head is filled with a lighter blue color, and a white cross is positioned on the forehead. A white path winds through the head and neck, starting from the bottom and curving upwards. The background is a dark blue gradient.

John 18:15-18, 25-27

His Best Friend's Gospel

Denied



¹⁵ Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, ¹⁶ but Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl who kept watch at the door, and brought Peter in.

John 18:15–18

ESV



¹⁷ The servant girl at the door said to Peter, “You also are not one of this man’s disciples, are you?” He said, “I am not.”

¹⁸ Now the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves. Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.



²⁵ Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, “You also are not one of his disciples, are you?” He denied it and said, “I am not.” ²⁶ One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, “Did I not see you in the garden with him?” ²⁷ Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed.

John 18:25–27

ESV



Intentions vs Actions

- John 13:37-38 “I will lay down my life for you.”
- Paul’s intention is not to betray Jesus, he believes he will stay faithful until the end — even to the point of death. He denies that he will ever deny Jesus (cf. Matthew 26:33-35)
- However, when the rubber meets the road, his actions don’t match.
- Peter sets himself up for failure when he trusts his own ability and has confidence in himself, even more than he has confidence in Jesus.
- Rather than surrendering to Jesus, and trusting His way, Peter assumes he knows better. In spite of his big talk, and his good intentions, he can’t follow through.



A choice to turn back.

- John mentions a gap between Peter's first denial, and subsequent denials.
- Mark indicates this was about 6 hours, between midnight — when the rooster would have first crowed — and dawn, at around 6:00am.
- Had multiple hours to reflect, realize, repent, and return to Jesus — especially in light of Jesus warning.
- Instead, he doubles down on sin.
- Too often, we flirt with sin — see how close we can get to the line, or else minimize, hide, or deny when we do fall.
- We need to flee the place of temptation, run to Jesus, and throw ourselves on his grace.



Jesus Doesn't Give Up On You.

- Peter's denial rocks him. He gives up on his mission, the call Jesus has given him, to be a "fisher of men" and returns to fish for fish.
- He's given up on himself, but Jesus has not given up on Peter.
- John 21:15-19 — "Do you love me?"
- Peter's three denials are replaced by three strong affirmations of his commitment to Christ.
- "Feed my Lambs", "Take care of my Sheep" and "Feed my Sheep". Not only a personal redemption, but a reinstatement to mission. In spite of his failure, Jesus still trusts Peter.
- We are not defined by our failures. We're defined by His victory. He overcomes. He redeems. He restores.

