

SESSION TWENTY: What happens when I let Jesus down? *Luke 22 v 31-34, 54-62*
Full Route

1. Jesus is clear that Satan, the devil, is real (as we've already seen in 4 v 1-13). Satan wants to "sift" the disciples (the "you" in v 31 is plural) "like wheat". "Sift like wheat" was a saying meaning "to take someone apart". Satan wants to take Peter apart—to see what he (and the disciples) is really made of.
2. Jesus is praying for Peter. Peter will need God's help to get through Satan's attack on him with his faith still in Jesus—this help is important because without God's help, Peter won't come through.
3. He's to "strengthen his brothers"—in other words, support other Christians. It seems that once he's known what it's like to be attacked by Satan, to let Jesus down, and to turn back to Jesus with faith, he'll be able to encourage and help other Christians who are facing attack.
4. Peter thinks he'll be able to go to his death for Jesus' sake, whereas Jesus knows that in fact in the next few hours Peter will deny even knowing him three times. There's a huge gap between Peter's confidence in his own bravery, and Jesus' knowledge of what Peter is really made of!
5. Perhaps Peter was caught off guard. But more likely, the fact that Peter couldn't even tell a servant girl and a couple of other people that he was a follower of Jesus shows just how much of a coward he was. He had promised to go to his death for Jesus (v 33); in the end, he couldn't even tell a young girl that he was "with him" (v 56).
7. Jesus turns and looks at Peter (it must have been an awful moment for both of them: Jesus denied by his closest friend, and Peter suddenly remembering what Jesus had predicted would happen). Peter knows exactly what he's done: and he ends up crying at his own failure to follow Jesus properly.
9. Jesus said that Peter (Simon) would turn back; that he would still be able to be Jesus' friend and follower even after what he'd done. In 24 v 34 we find that Jesus, after he'd risen, appeared to Peter (here called Simon); and John 21 v 15-19 records a conversation between the risen Jesus and Peter.
10. To turn back—and receive forgiveness from Jesus and inclusion in his family (so fellow Christians are still our "brothers"). Notice that often, as with Peter, turning back begins with tears (v 62) at the way we've let Jesus down.