

Matt. 26:31-35: Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'³² But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee."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.

Intro: After Jesus & His disciples sang a hymn & go the Mount of Olives, He has a shocking conversation with His disciples – a conversation about their soon to be realized epic failure. There's only one hero in the Bible!

Noah got drunk; Abraham lied & slept with Hagar; Jacob was a deceiver; Moses was a murderer; David was an adulterer & had the husband murdered; Jonah ran from God; Peter got called Satan; After the resurrection: Thomas was a doubter; Peter's conduct was not in step with the truth of the Gospel; Paul was a persecutor of the Church!

Israel's history/Our history: Bryan Chapell: The people of God are given the law, but they break the law. Sacrifices are provided, but the priests who begin to offer them become themselves [evil] & not helping. Then the judges say, well, just do what is right in your own eyes – that doesn't work. Alright, pick a king – your tallest, strongest, handsomest guy – well, that king becomes selfish. Well, we'll give prophets to the kings, & the kings will learn what to do from the prophets. Sounds great, except for people kill the prophets. And you begin to understand that through the course of millennia, God is saying: "We need a better law keeper. We need a better judge. Better sacrifice. Better prophet. Better priest. Better king. Not this [law breaking], not this [judge], not this [sacrifice], not this [prophet], not this [priest], not this [king]. But this [Jesus Christ & Him crucified & risen, ruling, & reigning!]"

Jesus never fell away, but on that cross He was cast away, so that you shall never fall away, so trust and obey!

1. Men Are Proud

Matt. 26:31-35: Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'³² But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee."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.

a. Peter corrects Jesus: Jesus has just told Peter what is going to happen, & Peter says no, it won't happen! When Jesus speaks, His followers say, "Yes Sir! You are right! You know!" You don't argue with Jesus!

b. Peter says he's better than others: V. 33: Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away

c. Peter & the disciples double down in their pride: V. 35: Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!" And all the disciples said the same.

d. Peter is focused on self: I will never fall away; Even if **I** must die with you, **I** will not deny you!

e. Pride is turning away from God, and they will all fall away: All of Jesus' closest disciples will fall away: Jesus chose them! They spent so much time with Jesus! They saw Him turn water into wine; they saw Him heal the sick; they saw Him make the blind see; they saw Him cause the deaf to hear; they saw Him raise the dead; they saw Him forgive sin; they saw Him calm the storm; they saw Him walk on water; they saw numerous other signs & miracles that prove He is God; they heard Him preach; they saw Him love like no one else; Peter, James, & John saw Him transfigured & saw His glory! Yet they all fell away!

f. All men are sinners: Romans 3:23: all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

- **Isaiah 53:6:** All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

- When Jesus speaks, His followers say, "Yes Sir! You are right! You know!" You don't argue with Jesus!
- They could have said: "Lord, we don't want to do this! Is there anything we can do to stop this?!"
- Pride thinks it knows better than God. Peter & the disciples were proud. Men are proud. You are proud.

- **James 4:13-16:** Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such & such a town & spend a year there & trade & make a profit"- yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time & then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live & do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

- **1 Corinthians 10:12:** Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.

- Except for the grace of God, there go I. (Handouts on pride) **GOSPEL!** (We have all fallen away!)

2. Jesus Is God

One of the characteristics of God is that He knows everything! He's omniscient! Jesus knows everything in these verses, doesn't He?! He knows His disciples will fall away; He quotes God's Word (He inspired it!) in Zech. 13:7, & tells them this will happen!; He knows He will be raised up; He knows He will meet His disciples in Galilee; He knows Peter will deny Him; He even knows the details of how & when Peter will deny Him! **Jesus is God!**

1 Jn. 3:20: whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, & He knows everything.

3. Jesus Is Love

Matt. 26:32: But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.

a. See the sweet, deep, deep love & mercy of Jesus: What kind of person says what Jesus says?:

Matt. 26:32: But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.

After you all forsake me! After you deny Me! After you disown Me with swearing & curses! After all the ways I've served you, after all I've done for you, & after all I've told you I will do for you: "I will go before you to Galilee."

High School Story: 3 friends in a fenced in basketball court, fight, locked in, 2 got away, Bradley was left/beaten

If you are a disciple of Jesus, He says this to you today! After you've fallen again into sin, I'll be there for you! After you've looked at porn, I'll be there with you to clean up the mess; After you've blown up at your wife for the 10th time this week, I'll be there; Children, after you've gotten your 3rd spanking in one day, I'll be there for you; After you've lost your temper in the car again & again, I'll be there for you. After you deny me & fall away in all the ways we deny Jesus & fall away – He'll be there for us & meet us again with love, mercy, forgiveness, & compassion!

Author: The strongest [comfort] for [you], struggling to grasp & [live out] the high level of commitment Jesus required, will arise from Jesus' response to the failure of the disciples. They failed to understand. They received Jesus' strong rebuke in [Mark] 8:14-21, where He openly suspects them of hard hearts, unperceiving eyes, & stopped ears. They lacked faith. They responded to Jesus' second & third death predictions with remarkable insensitivity: by competing with each other for glory & spiritual honors. Jesus' steady loyalty to His disciples in return will encourage [you]. In Mark 14, the disciples failed completely in the very self-denying obedience that Jesus made essential for eternal life . . . for in Mark 14 Peter denied Jesus, & the rest abandoned Jesus, all in order to save their own lives. Yet throughout this increasing failure by the disciples, Jesus remained faithful to them.

b. Jesus is the Mercy-Heart God: Neh. 9:16-20 (Levites): But they & our fathers acted proudly, Hardened their necks, And did not heed Your commandments. They refused to obey, & they were not mindful of Your wonders That You did among them. But they hardened their necks, & in their rebellion They appointed a leader To return to their bondage. But You *are* God, Ready to pardon, Gracious & merciful, Slow to anger, Abundant in kindness, & did not forsake them. Even when they made a molded calf for themselves, & said, 'This *is* your god That brought you up out of Egypt,' & worked great provocations, Yet in Your manifold mercies You did not forsake them in the

wilderness. The pillar of the cloud did not depart from them by day, To lead them on the road; Nor the pillar of fire by night, To show them light, & the way they should go. You also gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, & did not withhold Your manna from their mouth, & gave them water for their thirst . . . **Neh. 9:26-31:** Nevertheless they were disobedient & rebelled against You, Cast Your law behind their backs & killed Your prophets, who testified against them To turn them to Yourself; & they worked great provocations. Therefore You delivered them into the hand of their enemies, Who oppressed them; & in the time of their trouble, When they cried to You, You heard from heaven; & according to Your abundant mercies You gave them deliverers who saved them From the hand of their enemies. But after they had rest, They again did evil before You. Therefore You left them in the hand of their enemies, So that they had dominion over them; Yet when they returned & cried out to You, You heard from heaven; And many times You delivered them according to Your mercies, & testified against them, That You might bring them back to Your law. Yet they acted proudly, & did not heed Your commandments, But sinned against Your judgments, 'Which if a man does, he shall live by them.' & they shrugged their shoulders, Stiffened their necks, & would not hear. Yet for many years You had patience with them, & testified against them by Your Spirit in Your prophets. Yet they would not listen; Therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands. Nevertheless in Your great mercy You did not utterly consume them nor forsake them; For You *are* God, gracious and merciful. **Neh. 9:32:** Now therefore, our God, The great, the mighty, & awesome God, Who keeps covenant & mercy

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4. Jesus Died

a. Jesus points us & His disciples back to God's Word (His Word!) in the Scriptures: Zech. 13:7: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who stands next to me," declares the LORD of hosts. "Strike the shepherd, & the sheep will be scattered" [Jesus says this Scripture is about Him!]

Jesus' whole life is a fulfillment of all of God's promises! **Josh McDowell:** 60 major prophecies Jesus fulfilled. The chances that one man fulfilled just 48 of those prophecies is 10 to the 157th power! **[Jesus is the Messiah!]**

b. Jesus was struck by God until He was dead: This should make our ears tingle! Jesus was struck by the sword of God! No! I should be struck down by the sword of God for my sin! But Jesus took my place! He took our place!

- **Isaiah 53:4, 10:** Surely He has borne our griefs & carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, & afflicted . . . ¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush Him.

- **Romans 8:3:** By sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh & for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh

- **Galatians 3:13:** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us – for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"

5. Jesus Rose Again

Matt. 26:32: But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.

Jesus did not stay dead: He could not, would not, should not, must not, shall not & every other "not" stay dead

He knew He would die; He knew He would rise; He knew where He would go after He arose!

John 11:25-26: Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection & the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, & everyone who lives & believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

6. Men Are Transformed

a. Jesus disciples were transformed: Some might criticize Jesus: what kind of leader was Jesus if at His greatest time of need, all the men He was discipling fell away? In the heat of the battle, they all ran away!

1) His disciples faced a battle no man has or will ever face: the onslaught of the principalities & powers of

darkness & the devil & demons was like none has ever seen or ever will see!

2) Jesus wasn't done with His disciples yet! The greatest work Jesus had to do for them & in them wasn't done yet! And after Jesus died & rose again & ascended into heaven & poured out His Holy Spirit on them, all His disciples were totally transformed, & every one of them except one died for the sake of His name! They didn't fall away but died!

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b. How can we be transformed & not fall away? 1) Conversion; Church; Bible; Prayer; Singing; Watchfulness

2) Last Sunday, on (Jan 19th) in 1563, the Heidelberg Catechism was first published in Germany. Be encouraged by the first question & answer: **Q:** What is your only comfort in life and in death?

A: That I, with body and soul, both in life and in death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ, who with His precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins, and redeemed me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me, that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, that all things must work together for my salvation. Wherefore, by His Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live for Him.

Jesus prayed for His disciples: **Lk. 22:31-32:** Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers. **[Jesus is praying for you now!]**

3) Fight for humility & keep your eyes on Jesus & His Mercy-Heart: a) Jesus' Mercy-Heart: Jesus warned His disciples if you deny Me before men, I will deny you before My Father in heaven (Matt. 10:33). But Jesus was merciful to Peter! (Peter/Judas contrast); b) Fight for humility: What will humble us the most? When we see how we've fallen away & denied our Master – King Jesus, but remember that He never fell away – remember that He will never deny us, His children. And to purchase us, He had to be cast away, denied, & forsaken by His Father on that cross so that we could be the very sons & daughters of the Living God & never be cast away & never fall away!

Jesus Never Ever Fell Away; But Always Did Just What He'd Say; Then God Did Strike The Shepherd Slay; His Own He Won't Deny But Pay; He Died And Rose To Love Display!

We've all fallen away
By what we think and do and say
The disciples here have led the way
They all forsook Him – went astray
But Jesus never fell away!

Oh, we've all fallen away
His disciples failed to understand
Jesus rebuked them
They had hard hearts
They didn't understand Him
They all fell away
But Jesus never fell away!

We've all fallen away
Jesus' disciples lacked faith
They argued in pride and arrogance over who would be the greatest
They failed to deny themselves, pick up their crosses, and follow Him
They all fell away
But Jesus never fell away!

We've all fallen away
Peter had to be called Satan
Peter took his eyes off Jesus and began to sink in the raging sea
Peter denied His Lord Jesus three times with curses and swearing
Peter fell away
They all fell away
But Jesus never fell away!

We've all fallen away
We've made gods of all kinds of things and people and hopes and dreams instead of the only true God
We've taken God's name in vain
We've disregarded the right worship of God
We've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God
We've all fallen away
But Jesus never fell away!

We've all fallen away
We've dishonored and disobeyed our parents and other authorities in our lives
We've murdered in our hearts
We've committed adultery in our hearts
We've stolen time and money from our employers
We've lied
We've been discontent, grumbled and complained, and desired what we don't have
We've all fallen away
But Jesus never fell away!

We've all fallen away
But God . . . but God changed us
And now we'll never fall away!
Now we'll never be the same!
By grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone
Now we turn away from sin
Now we turn away from hell
Now we turn away from death
Because Jesus never fell away!

In Christ, we'll never fall away again!
In Jesus we turn away from our love for sin
We turn away from our desires for what God forbids
We turn away from hatred
We turn away from lust
We turn away from idolatry
Because Jesus never fell away!

In Christ, we'll never fall away!
Because of the cross and resurrection, the curse has been turned away from us because Jesus took the curse away for us
God's wrath has been turned away from us because Jesus took God's wrath away for us
Everlasting judgment has been turned away from us because Jesus took God's everlasting judgment away for us
Pain, tears, and death has been taken away from us because Jesus took away our pain, tears, and death
We've been given fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore because Jesus was cast out of fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore on that cross! Praise God that Jesus never fell away!

Christ Jesus Never Fell Away
Stood Firm In Every Law Obey
To All God's Promises He's "Yea!"
He Is The Truth, The Life, The Way
Peter "Big-Talk" Would Only Say
But Jesus Did All He Would Say
Yet Christ, The Father's Wrath Would Slay
For Us Our King Was Cast Away
He Died For His Who've Gone Astray
Then Rose So We Would Ever Stay
And Never, Never Fall Away
His Love So Great On Full Display
For Even Now For Us He'll Pray
And Keep Us For That Final Day
So Look To Him, Trust And Obey
For He Is All Our Hope And Stay!

Jesus never fell away, but on that cross He was cast away, so that you shall never fall away, so trust and obey!