

# PURE PASSION

AN ATHLETE STUDY

## SOMETHING STINKS

“Can you SMELLLLL...what the Rock is Cooking?!!!” Long before Dwayne Johnson (aka “The Rock”) starred in virtually every movie being released, he would famously shout this phrase at the top of his lungs as a professional wrestler.

Dwayne Johnson may be the most famous “Rock” today, but he is not the first person to go by that moniker. At one point during Jesus’ earthly ministry, he asked the disciples, “*Who do people say that I am?*” Jesus’ disciple Simon spoke up, “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God*” (Matt 16:16–18). Jesus renamed Simon “Peter,” which in Greek means “rock.”

Peter, “The Rock,” had the reputation of boldness in word and deed—often foolishly so. As we studied back in Week 4, during Passover, Peter spoke boldly that he was ready to follow Jesus no matter the cost. In other words, we can imagine Peter boasting, “Can you SMELLLLL...!!!” As our study picks up today, we can smell what “The Rock” is cooking... *and it stinks!*

MATTHEW

26:58–75

MARK

14:54

LUKE

22:54–62

JOHN

18:15–18,  
25–27

LUKE 22:54–62

<sup>54</sup>Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest’s house, and Peter was following at a distance. <sup>55</sup>And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. <sup>56</sup>Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, “This man also was with him.” <sup>57</sup>But he denied it, saying, “Woman, I do not know him.” <sup>58</sup>And a little later someone else saw him and said, “You also are one of them.” But Peter said, “Man, I am not.” <sup>59</sup>And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, “Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean.” <sup>60</sup>But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about.” And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. <sup>61</sup>And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, “Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.” <sup>62</sup>And he went out and wept bitterly.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

*“I’ll take You at Your word, If You said it, I’ll believe it, I’ve seen how good it works, If You start it, You’ll complete it.”*

Psalm 119:9 says, “*How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word.*” God has provided believers with many tools to succeed in obedience. At the top of the list is the Bible. Use it! Scan the QR code to worship and be reminded of the power of God’s Word.



## DISCUSSION

If Jesus renamed you, like he did with Simon Peter, what would you like your new name to be? Why?

ICEBREAKER

1. Where does this scene take place? (54)

2. What did Jesus do after the rooster crowed? (61)

OBSERVATION

3. What was Peter’s response after the rooster crowed and Jesus looked? (61-62)

4. After the rooster crowed, and Peter remembered Jesus’ words (60-61), why did Peter go outside and weep bitterly (62)? What is it about Peter’s denial that was so painful?

INTERPRETATION

5. Other than verbally renouncing our relationship with Christ, give some specific ways we might deny him before others. How can you guard against doing so?

APPLICATION

Do you have any questions about Jesus or what he has accomplished for you? Don’t wait. Talk to your coach as soon as possible.

# PURE PASSION

WEEK 8

AN ATHLETE STUDY

## STUDY NOTES THE RELIGIOUS TRIAL

Last night, Jesus prepared his disciples. Now he walked alone in the custody of those who want to kill him. Before being crucified, Jesus would endure six trials; three Jewish (or “religious,” which we will examine this Week) and three Roman (or “civil,” which we will examine next Week). In the religious trials, Jesus stood before the Sanhedrin on blasphemy charges at the *house* of Caiaphas the *high priest*.

Blasphemy is slandering God—his being, his character, etc.. Thus, when Jesus applied Daniel 7:13–14 to himself in Matthew 26:64, the Sanhedrin understand exactly what he said—he is the Messiah. Daniel 7 speaks of the exaltation of the Messiah receiving *ruling authority, honor, and sovereignty* and *His authority is eternal and will not pass away*. The Sanhedrin convicted Jesus of blasphemy. because, as we said in Zero Week, they misunderstood Jesus’ coming first as the Suffering Servant before his return as the Warrior Judge.

In this trial before the religious elite, Jesus stood alone, blameless. He was so innocent that those who concocted this mock trial used false witnesses who couldn’t even get their story straight (Matt. 26:60). The religious elite did not understand the truth in Jesus’ claims, or chose to ignore it to safeguard their own power. Yet, their ignorance does not invalidate Jesus, his teaching, or his authority. Jesus stood completely pure before God, while God’s (so-called) servants prepared to execute him.

## GODLY PASSION BRINGS SPIRITUAL CONFIDENCE

During the circus inside Caiaphas’ house, another story unfolded outside. Just hours before, Peter declared, *Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death!* (Luke 22:33). Yet, when Jesus was *led away* by his foes, *Peter followed at a distance*. Likewise, while Jesus stood alone on trial, *Peter sat* outside *in the middle of the courtyard*. Sitting *among* others around *a fire*, Jesus’ prediction came true. What we discussed in Week 4 came to fruition as someone questioned Peter about his relationship with Jesus.

**Denial #1- A servant girl**, the doorkeeper (John 18:16), noticed Peter. *Looking closely at him* she identified him as a *man who was with [Christ]*. Peter *denied it saying, “Woman, I do not know him.”* John adds that at the courtyard fire *Peter sat with the guards* (Mark 14:65), *servants, and officials* of the high priest (John 18:18). Peter began to

feel the heat, not from the fire, but from his fear. He chose to step away from the heat.

**Denial #2** - Peter *went out to the gateway* (Matthew 26:71) where *someone else saw him*, stating positively, *“You also are one of them.”* Again, Peter denied it; this time with an oath (Matthew 26:72). This second ID rattled his nerves a bit more. He started to lose it.

**Denial #3** - *About an hour* passed since the second denial. By this time, Jesus may have been physically abused by his captors. A third witness pointed the finger at Peter and said confidently, *“Certainly this man also was with him.”* Moreover, noting his accent (Matthew 26:73), they branded Peter a *Galilean* like Jesus. Fear gripped Peter. He began to curse, and swear with an oath (Matthew 26:74) that he didn’t *know what* they were *talking about*.

*Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed*. Imagine the moment as *the Lord turned and looked at Peter* with a look I doubt Peter would ever forget. That split second must have felt like an eternity. Peter instantly connected the dots. He *remembered the saying of the Lord*, spoken to him in the Upper Room, *“Before a rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.”*

*Before* the rooster crowed, Peter dismissed it, disbelieving his own vulnerability. *Before* the rooster crowed, he proudly fancied himself as brave and loyal. Now, *after* the rooster crowed, *he went out and wept bitterly*. *After* the rooster crowed it would be hard to remember Jesus’ *other* words, and even harder to believe, *“When you have turned back [to me], strengthen your brothers”* (Luke 22:32).

## SPIRITUAL CONFIDENCE STANDS COURAGEOUS

With the full-force of Jesus’ look, Peter understood that he’d sacrificed his loyalty on the altar of self-preservation. His real confidence was in his flesh, and in the moment of testing, he failed.

Jesus displayed true godly passion that brings spiritual confidence to stand courageously. Yet, all too often, we forget Jesus’ words and promises to us and we deny his power and authority in our lives. That’s how sin always happens—if we remembered Christ rightly, his goodness, his love, his authority, we’d never give in. However, too often we explicitly or implicitly deny Jesus in our disobedience.

Obedience may cost some temporary pleasure, relationships, or even some opportunities. But, it’s always worth it. Like Peter, we will fall short. But, just like Peter, the story isn’t done and more opportunities will arise.