

The “F” Word “Forgiving Myself”

John 13:36b-38: “Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.’³⁷ Peter asked, ‘Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.’³⁸ Then Jesus answered, ‘Will you really lay down your life for me? I tell you the truth, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!’”

John 18:17-18, 25-27: “‘You are not one of his disciples, are you?’ the girl at the door asked Peter. He replied, ‘I am not.’¹⁸ It was cold, and the servants and officials stood around a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.²⁵ As Simon Peter stood warming himself, he was asked, ‘You are not one of his disciples, are you?’ He denied it, saying, ‘I am not.’²⁶ One of the high priest’s servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, ‘Didn’t I see you with him in the olive grove?’²⁷ Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.”

How Can I Learn to Deal with My Guilt?

1. Listen carefully to what Jesus has to say to me & accept God’s gift of forgiveness.

- **John 21:15:** “When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?’ ‘Yes, Lord,’ he said, ‘you know that I love you.’ Jesus said, ‘Feed my lambs.’”

2. Be convinced of God’s love for me as I take inventory of my love for Him.

- **John 21:16-17a:** “Again Jesus said, ‘Simon son of John, do you truly love me?’ He answered, ‘Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.’ Jesus said, ‘Take care of my sheep.’¹⁷ The third time he said to him, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me?’ Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ He said, ‘Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.’”

3. Be about the business of pursuing God’s calling in my life, as a disciple-maker of others, regardless of the personal cost.

- **John 21:17b-19:** “Jesus said, ‘Feed my sheep.’¹⁸ I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.’¹⁹ Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, ‘Follow me!’”

4. Keep my focus on Christ and avoid any competing distractions that might become another source of pain or guilt.

- **John 21:20-22:** “Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, ‘Lord, who is going to betray you?’)²¹ When Peter saw him, he asked, ‘Lord, what about him?’²² Jesus answered, ‘If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.’”