
DANGER ON A COLD NIGHT

Marc Gibson

We've been having some chilly nights here in central Florida. If you live in one of the northern states this time of year, you expect it to be cold. But when the Sunshine State turns frigid, it gets downright uncomfortable! Be that as it may, we cannot control the weather, and we just keep going day by day (albeit, more indoors when it's cold).

The Bible tells us that the night Jesus was betrayed was a cold evening. We learn this from the account of Peter in the courtyard of the high priest after the arrest of Jesus (John 18:15ff). After Peter was allowed entry into the courtyard, we are told that "the servants and officers who had made a fire of coals stood there, *for it was cold*, and they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself" (v. 18).

No doubt that fire felt good to Peter as he shivered from cold, fear, and uncertainty. He had just witnessed his Master betrayed by a fellow disciple (Judas Iscariot), after which he had swung his own sword to protect Jesus, cutting off the ear of the servant of the high priest. Jesus told him to stop, healed the man's ear, and allowed Himself to be arrested and taken into custody by those who sought His life. The disciples scattered, but Peter followed at a distance, and now found himself around a warm fire in a most unlikely place. We might say he was courageous to be where he was; others would say foolish. In any case, his faith was about to be tested severely, or as Jesus warned him earlier, sifted as wheat by Satan (Luke 22:31).



Three times Peter was questioned as being one of Jesus' disciples. Three times he denied even knowing Jesus. He had earlier boasted to Jesus that he was ready to go with Him "both to prison and to death" (Luke 22:33). Now, as Peter found himself on the "hot seat" he resorted to oaths, curses, and swearing to strengthen his denials. How miserably cold that night must have become when the rooster crowed and His Lord, who had warned him of these things beforehand, turned to look at Peter. He had just three times denied his Lord whom he had once confessed as the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matthew 16:16). He ran out into the cold night and wept bitterly.

We may find ourselves in troubling circumstances when we are tempted to deny our Lord and His truth. These are real dangers brought by Satan, and we must be sober and vigilant to his attacks. When the cold winds of evil swirl about, be careful where you seek your warmth. The fire of the enemy is a dangerous place to be!