

THE BIG IDEA: When we know what the crow means, we can go where the crow leads.

The Take-Off

Before we dive into this morning's message, will you allow me a little time to explain my method of sermon prep? It's important that you understand the method behind the message and then we'll walk through our passage. If you'd like, go ahead and find Luke 22:54-65 - it's the passage about Peter denying Jesus.

While you're doing that, a little peek behind the scenes of message prep:

- I read the text - a lot
- I read about the text - a lot
- I pray about the text - a lot
- I ask the Holy Spirit to highlight the parts of the text that He wants me to highlight, and then...
- I ask Him for a picture, a metaphor, a hook on which to hang that truth.
- That's where the Big Idea comes from.
- It's not me saying that there's nothing else in the text - goodness, we could preach the same text every week and the Holy Spirit would reveal different angles to the truth that would make every time seem like the first time we'd ever read it!
- It's me saying "look at this - don't miss this - this is what The Helper is saying to us RIGHT NOW!!"

Is it the only way to work through a passage? Nope.

Why is this so important today?

Because there are so many directions that we could take this section of Scripture - and many teachers have - but as I studied and prayed over it, I know that the Lord highlighted the rooster, and not just the rooster, but the sound the rooster made.

The rooster crowing is where we'll end up, but let's start at verse 54 and work our way there.

1. The danger of distance

- a. I've heard this passage preached so many times, and the most common theme is how bad Peter is
- b. v. 54 / Can I just point out the obvious? Peter was still following Jesus.
- c. v. 54 / The problem was that he was following him "at a distance."
- d. Some of us here this morning are following Jesus at a distance
 - We're not sure what's happened to the closeness we once felt
 - We aren't as confident as we once were about what Jesus promised
 - We're not sure how this will all play out
- e. God understands the distance, but He doesn't want it because of **the danger** that comes with it
 - v. 55 / distance can make us cold / Peter moved toward the fire
 - v. 55 / distance can bring wrong companions / Peter "joined" them there / guards, enemies
 - vv. 58-60 / distance can lead to denial / distance from God dims our commitment to God
- f. All this leads to the pivotal moment in the scene - v. 60 - "while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed."

2. Know the crow

- a. How we read verse 60 has a lot to do with how we read the whole story
- b. If Peter is bad, the crow is a sign of failure; if God is good, the crow is a sign of faithfulness
- c. We need to **know what the crow** means
- d. Until we do, we won't know what to do!
- e. **When we know what the crow means, we can go where the crow leads**
- f. The rooster crowing wasn't about Peter's failure as much as it was about Jesus' faithfulness
- g. They looked eyes, and Peter didn't see disappointment - He saw mercy
- h. His failure was overtaken by God's kindness
- i. [Dad and making the bed] / Romans 2:4

3. The sound of mercy

- a. Let's finish this morning talking about **sounds**.
- b. Sounds are powerful!

- c. They can transport us from this room back to moments - key moments - in our lives
- d. Let me give you some examples:
 - [Jaws] - takes me back to the pool at the Caravelle in Myrtle Beach
 - [Open Arms] - takes me back to awkward high school dances
 - [The Polar Express] - I'm instantly back to the hardest season of my life
- e. One more ... [Rooster]
- f. In the moment, the rooster crowing wasn't the sound Peter wanted to hear
- g. He left weeping bitterly (Gr. means "poignant grief")
- h. We know that Jesus restored Peter - my guess is that Peter never heard a rooster crow the same again

The Landing

When we know what the crow means, we can go where the crow leads.

There was a lot that Peter didn't know by the fire that night, but the crow reminded him of what Jesus knew
It reminded him that the words of Jesus don't return void

- Not just about what Peter did or didn't do
- But also what Jesus had spoken about who Peter was - a rock!

Every morning when Peter heard the rooster crow, he remember the words of the prophet Jeremiah:

Lamentations 3:22-23 New International Version (NIV)

22 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.

23 They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.

The crow means mercy, and so it leads us to the God Who gives it.
Let's pray.