

## **Did all the disciples forsake Jesus, or was Peter the only one?**

What happened to the disciples after the mob arrested Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane? We know John was there at the cross when Jesus died, and Jesus asked John to care for Mary (John 19:26-27), but what about the other ten men?

The best method for resolving a question such as this is to visit each Gospel record, capture notes, and correlate the facts. Here's my summary of such a study.

### 1. Matthew and Mark record Jesus' prediction to the eleven disciples that "you will all fall away".

John gives the clue that Judas had left the group by this time (John 13:21-30). Matthew and Mark record that each disciple was adamant of his own faithfulness. Both writers also include that this "falling away" would be in fulfillment of Scripture (see Zechariah 13:7).

The same word, *skandalizō*, translated "fall away" is used in these verses. Meanings include to put a stumbling block in the way, upon which another may trip; to offend; or to cause a person to begin to distrust and desert one whom he ought to trust and obey.

See:

Matthew 26:31-35

Mark 14:27-31

### 2. Luke and John record only Peter's boast of remaining loyal to Jesus.

See:

Luke 22:33

John 13:36-38

### 3. In the garden, at the time of the arrest, all the disciples left Jesus and fled, fulfilling Zechariah's prophecy.

The arrest of Jesus brought an end to the disciples' debate on who would be greatest in the new kingdom (Luke 22:24-30). A sense of "run for your life" replaced their petty arguments over position.

See:

Matthew 26:56

Mark 14:50

### 4. Matthew, Mark, and Luke record that Peter followed Jesus at a distance.

Peter was recognized by several bystanders and began making his denials.

See:

Matthew 26:69

Mark 14:54

Luke 22:54

5. John adds the insight that one other disciple (John) besides Peter was following Jesus.

See:

John 18:15-16

While all the men forsook Jesus, perhaps John was the first to come to his senses, repent, and stop running? He followed to see what would become of Jesus and entered the court of the high priest (John 18:15). Certainly John was at the cross where Jesus passed responsibility for Mary to a friend He could trust.