

“A.D. The Bible Continues”- Week 11
“Peter’s Ministry”
Acts 9:32-43

INTRODUCTION

As we study the book of Acts, we find that Peter figures prominently in the formation of the church. From his humble beginnings as a fisherman to an impassioned pioneer missionary he is transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit to do the work of the ministry. God is in the business of transforming each of us, and by looking into Peter’s life we can gain insight into our own transformation. Here are three lessons we can learn from Peter in Samaria.

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

Have you witnessed, or experienced, the unbridled enthusiasm of a brand new Christian? How was it expressed?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

Peter was Focused on Ministry

Q1. Read Acts 3:1-8; Acts 9:31-34

“Ministry”(in the Greek *diakonia*), is essentially all about serving. Peter was an apostle, meaning “one sent out on a mission.” Everywhere he went, he was acutely aware of people’s needs and how he could serve them by bringing God’s power into their lives. In Acts 3 Peter saw a crippled man begging for alms, but rather than giving him money, Peter ministered to him through the healing power of Jesus that he truly needed. In Acts 9 he finds Aeneas paralyzed and brings healing to him in the name of Jesus. The first step of ministry is seeing the needs of others. Do you remember seeing someone today with a need that only Jesus could meet? If so, how did you respond (prayer, encouragement, service, etc?) What can we do to help keep our eyes and our hearts opened and focused on “ministry.”

Peter Prayed with Confidence

Q2. Read Acts 9:31-42; Matthew 10:1; Matthew 28:18-20

Praying with confidence is not always easy. Peter seemed to encounter increasingly challenging needs. In Acts 9:34 he prays for Jesus to heal a man paralyzed for 8 years. In Acts 9:38 he is called to the bedside of a woman already dead! If Peter’s confidence was only in himself, those circumstances would have been insurmountable. What gave Peter the confidence to pray with authority over these situations? (see Matthew 10:1) What do we see in his actions and his words that demonstrate to us Peter knew where the power to heal came from? How does Matthew 28:20 give you the authority to pray with confidence? According to Matthew 17:20 what will it take to move the “mountains” in your life?

Peter was Led by The Holy Spirit

Q3. Read Romans 8:5; Galatians 5:16, 25

As much as we long to see healing every time we pray, God is sovereign over all His works. Our prayers do not direct His actions, but when we are led by the Holy Spirit, we can join with Him as He completes His work through us. How do we do this? Romans 8:5 tells us our minds and our lives need to be directed by the Spirit, as Peter’s was. Galatians 5:16, 25 tell us to “walk in the Spirit” and “keep in step with the Spirit. What helps you to keep in step with the Spirit? What pulls you “out of step?” Do you have any indicators that help you keep track of when the Holy Spirit is leading you?

Q4. Read Act 9:34; Colossians 3:17

God works through our prayers. But when He does, we need to recognize that it is God’s work, His power, His authority and not our own. We must keep our pride in check and thankfully acknowledge God. In Act 9:34 we see Peter acknowledge Jesus as the one who heals. Likewise, when we don’t see healing in response to our prayers, we should not carry the responsibility. Our part is to pray faithfully, and rest in the sovereign work of a loving God to move when and how He chooses. What does Colossians 3:17 tell us to apply to every aspect of our lives? Take a moment to close your group’s discussion with a time of thanksgiving.

WRAP-UP

God was able to mightily use Peter in the formation of the early Church as he remained focused on ministry to those in need wherever he went. Peter recognized the authority given to him by Jesus and prayed with great confidence. As a result of his faith and obedience, God performed many miracles through him. But Peter recognized his need to be led by the Holy Spirit, thanking and acknowledging God in all he said and did. God desires to do great things through each of us if we follow these lessons of Peter’s life; focusing on ministry, praying with confidence and being led by the Holy Spirit.

Memory Verse

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:17 ESV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life:_____

Pray for your group members’ needs: (see back for more space)_____

Challenge: After reflecting on the authority entrusted to you by Jesus, ask Him to show you how you can use it this week for His glory in ministering to those in need.

Acts 3:1-8 ESV - 1 Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. 2 And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple that is called the Beautiful Gate to ask alms of those entering the temple. 3 Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms. 4 And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." 5 And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. 6 But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!" 7 And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. 8 And leaping up he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.

Matthew 10:1 ESV - 1 And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.

Matthew 17:20 ESV - 20 He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you."

Galatians 5:16, 25 ESV - 16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ... 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

Colossians 3:17 ESV - 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.