

“Peter: Loving God’s People”

November 26 & 27, 2016 | Heroes Series #6

INTRODUCTION

The final hero in our current sermon series is Peter. The Bible depicts Peter both in his human weakness, and his passionate faith in Christ. He is a man whose experiences many of us can relate to. Peter’s passion to follow Jesus led him to demonstrate a love of God’s people. But to get to that point, Peter had to overcome his own shortcomings and allow God’s love and power to work in him. As we consider God’s call on Peter’s life, let’s ask ourselves if the same call to love others is on our own lives.

Ice Breaker (Optional): Have you known someone who demonstrates extraordinary love for others?

Study Questions (45 MIN)

Jesus overcomes Fear.

Q1. Read Luke 5:8-11; 1 John 4:18-21;

When Peter came face to face with Jesus’ power, as he filled his nets to overflowing with fish, Peter was afraid. What are some of the reasons he might have been frightened? What does 1 John 4:18 tell us about the relationship between love and fear? Jesus saw Peter’s fear and addressed it. What does the fishermen’s response in verse 11 tell us about how they reacted to Jesus’ statement in verse 10? What are the fears you would have to overcome to walk away from your current profession to become a “fisher of men?”

Jesus forgives Unfaithfulness.

Q2. Read Luke 22:55-62; John 21:15-17; 2 Timothy 2:11-13

When we consider God’s call on our lives, we might be concerned by our own lack of faith. We can probably all recall times when we doubted God’s promises and acted unfaithfully. Despite being told by Jesus that this would happen, what were the circumstances and outcome of Peter’s confrontations in Luke 22:55-61? What does Peter’s reaction in verse 62 tell us about how Peter felt about his unfaithfulness?

After his resurrection, Jesus restored Peter, assuring him that he would be used to tend God’s sheep, despite his faithlessness (John 21:15-17). What does Paul say in 2 Timothy 2:13 about God’s response to our

faithlessness? What does it take to move us from discouragement over our failures, to confidence in ministry once again?

Jesus uses Unlikely Heroes.

Q3. Read Acts 4:13; 1 Corinthians 1:27

Peter demonstrated boldness¹ before the High Priest as he shared the truth of salvation by faith in Jesus. Why did they find this astonishing? In what way was it an advantage for an ordinary man to bring the Gospel? How has God used ordinary people to encourage you in your spiritual walk?

God’s ways are often contrary to what we expect. If God uses the foolish and weak (1 Corinthians 1:27), forgives your unfaithfulness and overcomes your fears, what do you think can possibly prevent you from being used by God?

¹ parrēsia -the *absence of fear* in speaking

Wrap-Up

Peter was an ordinary man, much like us. He was afraid, unfaithful and from the world’s perspective, unlikely to bring a message of salvation to the people. But Jesus overcame Peter’s fear with love and a promise to use him to win souls. He restored Peter after repeated unfaithfulness. And despite an apparent lack of qualification, Peter was ultimately able to boldly walk in the calling of God, loving His people, and drawing them to Jesus.

Memory Verse

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear...

1 John 4:18a 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: _____

Challenge:

Bring any doubts and fears honestly before God this week, and ask him to use you to love His people and bring good news.

Q1

Luke 5:8-11 ESV - 8 But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." 9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, 10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." 11 And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

1 John 4:18-21 ESV - 18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. 19 We love because he first loved us. 20 If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. 21 And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

Q2

Luke 22:55-62 ESV - 55 And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. 56 Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with him." 57 But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." 58 And a little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." 59 And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean." 60 But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. 61 And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." 62 And he went out and wept bitterly.

2 Timothy 2:10-13 ESV - 11 The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; 12 if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; 13 if we are faithless, he remains faithful-- for he cannot deny himself.

John 21:15-17 ESV - 15 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." 16 He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John,

do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." 17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep.

Q3

Acts 4:13 ESV - 13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

1 Corinthians 1:27 ESV - 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.