

"The Long and the Short of It" (It's Time to Agree with God) Week 1

Sermon date 4/30/2017

QUICK REVIEW

1. Upon reviewing your notes from Sunday's teaching, was there anything that caught your attention?

The Goal

The premise of this series is that it's time to get on the same page with God concerning some areas in my life: who He says I am, who He says He is, what He says I can do, and what He says I can be. When I learn and believe these truths, I can live the life I always wanted to live at the side of Christ.

Over the next five weeks of this study, we will be looking at the lives of four men in the Bible. We will unpack these questions in their lives and see how they are applicable to us today. This week we begin with the Apostle Peter. In search of understanding who Peter became we will look at some pivotal moments in his life as a disciple. Then we'll turn our attention to the night he betrayed Jesus, followed by a moment with Jesus that changed it all.

DIGGING DEEPER

This week we will be unpacking the life of Peter.
Read the following verses and answer the following question.

Matthew 4:18-22

¹⁸ While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.¹

2. What do you learn about Peter from this passage?

He was a fisherman; His brother was Andrew, another disciple. He was close to James and John—they would have known each other prior to following Jesus.

Matthew 14:28-33

²⁸ And Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.” ²⁹ He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw the wind,⁴ he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, “Lord, save me.” ³¹ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” ³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³ And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”ⁱ

3. What do you learn about Peter from this passage?

He was bold and the only one to get out of the boat. He was also still afraid.

Mark 14:26-32

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. ²⁷ And Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’” ²⁸ But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.” ²⁹ Peter said to him, “Even though they all fall away, I will not.” ³⁰ And Jesus said to him, “Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.” ³¹ But he said emphatically, “If I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And they all said the same.ⁱ

4. What do you learn about Peter from this passage?

He was convinced he would never deny Jesus.

5. Have you ever thought you would never do something and yet you found yourself in that very situation? Would you share with the group?

Luke 22:31-34

³¹ “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, ³² but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” ³³ Peter said to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.” ³⁴ Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.”ⁱ

6. What do you learn about Peter from this passage?

Jesus told Peter he would fall and encouraged him to get up even before Peter actually fell. He was told to strengthen his brothers when he turned back again. He was instructed to get back up and go forward.

7. What would it have been like to be in Peter's place and hear those words from Jesus?

Luke 22:54-62

⁵⁴ Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance. 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.ⁱ

8. What do you learn about Peter from this passage?

I can't imagine the frustration and failure he felt. This is the starting place for many of us and our view of ourselves. Many of us have experienced failure and brokenness and view ourselves only through this lens, but God had a different plan for Peter and for you and me. With the next few questions we will examine how Jesus restored Peter and how the same process applies to us.

TAKING IT HOME

The premise of this series is that it's time to agree with God about:

- Who He (God) says I am.
- Who He is (God).
- What He (God) says I can do.
- What He (God) says I can be.

From the last several passages we can see and assume Peter had a different answer to the above questions. From John 21 (the passage Pastor Craig preached from on Sunday), how did Jesus reshape Peter's understanding of the answers to these questions?

9. Who did Jesus say Peter was, and how did it differ from Peter's view of himself?

Look back at some of the answers you got from the group about what we know about Peter and his denial of Christ. Jesus restored him to his position of leadership three times—one for each denial. Jesus still loved and believed in Peter.

10. What did Jesus reveal about Himself to Peter?

Jesus is forgiving of even the most blatant of denials. He restored Peter to a place of leadership and later empowered him to be a pillar in the church.

11. What did Jesus say Peter could do?

He could trust Jesus and lead His people (sheep).

12. What did Jesus say Peter could be?

He said Peter could be used for God's purposes. No longer a fisherman, but a fisher of men.

13. How does Peter's experience apply to us?

CHAIR TIME TOOL

This week read Acts Chapters 1-4 and answer the following questions:

1. What did Peter go on to do at the side of Jesus?

2. What is God asking of you in the areas of your walk with Him?

3. Where do you disagree with God's view of you, of Him, what He wants you to do, or what He says you can be?

Next week we will be looking at what the Bible says about how God sees you.

ⁱ *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version* (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016),