

MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Lessons for the Life of Peter

Overview: Our discussion will involve reflecting on three occurrences in the life of Peter, as he followed Jesus. As we try to imagine Peter's emotions and thoughts as he had these experiences with Jesus, we will be seeking to understand what the Lord wants us to learn about our personal relationship with Him today.

Hearing Our Stories: Denny Smith

First fishing encounter:

- When Jesus first said to Simon "put out to deep water & put down your nets." what do you think Simon (Peter) was thinking and feeling, and why?
- How would you describe what you believe Simon experienced when the nets became filled with fish.

Action Item: This seems to be the moment at which Simon makes the decision to dedicate his life to following Jesus. Have you ever had an experience in your own life that dramatically increased your commitment to life your life for Christ?

Peter's three denials of Jesus:

- Did you remember that, after the last supper, Jesus said "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."? What are some of the implications of this statement as they relate to Simon then denying Christ three times?
- When Simon denied knowing Jesus the third time it says "The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him.." What do you think that Peter "saw in Jesus face" when Jesus looked at him?

Action Item: What message does this experience of Peter convey to you personally? What else might Jesus want us to learn from this experience of Peter?

The post-resurrection fishing encounter with Jesus:

- Jesus chose to again reveal himself to Peter and other disciples, and again cause an abundance of fish to fill their nets. Why do you think he chose to do that a second time?
- When Jesus ask Peter "do you love me more than these," Peter replied "Yes Lord, you know I love you." Why do you think Jesus repeated this question to Peter two more times?

Action Item: What about this last encounter is most relevant and impactful to you personally?

Closing Prayer:

The first situation occurs early in Jesus ministry, we know that Simon has met Jesus at some point, because after a teaching in the synagogue Jesus had gone to Simon's home, and healed Simon's mother in law.

After that, in chapter 5 verse 1 of the book of Luke we read, "One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God, he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they called their partners in another boat to help them, and they filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men." So they pulled their boats up on shore, and left everything and followed him.

The second situation occurs following the disciple's time with Jesus at the last supper. Again, the book of Luke records that as Jesus was talking with his disciples during the supper, he said "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."

But Simon replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death." Jesus answered, "I tell you Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times."

As we know, later that evening Jesus was arrested. As Peter followed the soldiers who took Jesus away, Peter was confronted on three separate occasions, and each time he denied knowing Jesus. Luke reports the final occasion as: "About an hour later another asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean." Peter replied, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" Just as he was speaking the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.: And Peter went outside and wept bitterly.

The third situation occurs during the forty days following Jesus resurrection. Again, Peter has been fishing all night with five of the other disciples and has caught nothing. The book of John states, "Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was him. He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No", they answered.

He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish. Peter and the disciples immediately knew that it was Jesus.

The disciples returned to shore and ate and talked with Jesus. The book of John then records, "When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know I love you." Jesus said "feed my lambs."

Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."

Jesus said "Feed my sheep. I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go."