

Peter - the Unlikely Leader - April 14, 2021

Underdog. Unlikely. Rises higher than seemed possible. Does more imagined. Jesus is Gone. For any group to stay together, there must be a leader.

1. Peter wasn't Perfect. He had some Faults. But so do we.

- **Peter was rash, impatient** (move children out of the way), and **thick-headed** (didn't understand what Jesus was teaching or telling them)
- Peter **denied** knowing Jesus 3 times. But then went out and wept bitterly.
- Peter dealt w/ **despair**; guilt-ridden, went back to fishing.
- **At time, Peter made no sense.** At the transfiguration, when Jesus is talking with Moses & Elijah, Peter speaks up and suggests he could build 3 shelters for them. He was frightened; ridiculous. (Mark 9:5).
- **Peter rebuked Jesus. Mark 8:31-33** – Jesus begins telling the disciples that He must suffer many things, be rejected, killed, and in 3 days, rise again. But “Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.” Then Jesus “turned and looked at his disciples, He rebuked Peter: *“Get behind me, Satan!”* “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”
- Peter told Jesus **“No, you shall never wash my feet.”**
 - We are guilty of the same things; telling God how to be God.
 - We see things with limited earthly vision. None of us are perfect!
- **Peter was human.** Fell asleep w/ James & John when asked to keep watch. Mark 14:33-40 - *“The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”*

2. Not Perfect, but He Had Perfect Qualities for God to Use

- **Passion.** He was willing to pull out a sword and fight for Jesus.
Matt. 26:51-54 – When Jesus is arrested; Peter drew his sword, cutting off the ear of the servant of the high priest. Jesus stops him, “All who draw the sword will die by the sword. ⁵³ Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than 12 legions of angels? ⁵⁴ But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen this way?”
 - Luke 22 - disciples had 2 swords; only Peter fights for Jesus.
 - Peter is rash, but he has passion. It needs direction & control.
 - What others see as our faults can become the very thing God uses to touch/impact others.

- **Courage.** Peter was only one willing to get out of boat & walk on the water. **Matt. 14:25-31** - Shortly before dawn Jesus is walking on the lake. Disciples are terrified; "It's a ghost," they said. ²⁷ But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." ²⁸ "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." ²⁹ "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" ³¹ Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"
 - Peter had courage. Thru faith, he gained more.
- **Love.** He declared his loyalty for Jesus. Willing to speak it out loud. **Matt. 26:31-35** – "Then Jesus told them, 'This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'" ³³ Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will." ³⁴ "Truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." ³⁵ But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." & all the other disciples said the same.
 - He dealt w/fear; but it doesn't mean he didn't love Jesus in his heart.
- **Spiritual Insight.** He knew Jesus was the Son of God. God given inspiration. **Matt. 16:15-18** – Jesus asked, "Who do you say I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church..."
 - Spiritual insight is meant to be shared. Share knowledge.
- **Driven by Curiosity.** Willing to search out truth. Some do nothing.
 - 1) **Luke 24:12** – "Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb."
 - 2) **John 20:3-6** – Peter and John run for the tomb. John got there first, but only looked inside. It's Peter who goes "straight into the tomb."
 - 3) **Peter left home to follow Jesus and be His disciple**
 - 4) Peter saw the resurrected Jesus on the beach & **jumped out of the boat.**
 - You can sit w/your questions or you can go search out truth.

3. Putting It All Together w/7 questions. What Peter's story means for us.

- 1) Peter wasn't perfect; nobody is. God uses imperfect people. Trying perfect?**
- 2) "God looks at the heart;" in his heart, Peter loved Jesus. Where's yours?**
- 3) Peter was part of the "inner 3." Are you close enough to Jesus?**
- 4) Peter felt guilt - past. God doesn't care about what you've done; He cares about what you will do ... who you will become. U stuck in past?**
- 5) God's Spirit gives us boldness to overcome fear. Courage was developed in Peter. 2 Tim.1:7 says: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control." U living in fear or power?**
- 6) Peter was a fisherman before Jesus called him to fish for men ... You don't have to be great to do great things for God. Love Him? Feed His sheep.**
- 7) Peter denied knowing Jesus; but He ultimately came to really know Jesus... and that changed his life. New life. New practices. Leadership.**
 - a. Knowing Jesus gives us Purpose.**
 - b. Knowing Jesus reminds us - God can do the Impossible.**
 - c. Knowing Jesus is assurance of New Life – now and for eternity.**

Do you know Jesus?

Song of the week – "Peter's Song" by Michael O'Brien