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**PETER AND JESUS**

**Passing on:** trust

**What a mentor does:** models

**Scriptures to study:** Matthew 4:18, Matthew 14:28, Matthew 26:40, Matthew 16:16-23, Matthew 14:21, Mark 6:6-13, Luke 22:45-62, Acts 2:1-41

**Key thoughts:**

* Jesus was a mentor to all His disciples. With Peter in particular, we see some vivid examples of mentoring.
* Jesus spends time mentoring Peter in how to trust.
* Jesus perfectly models trust in God the Father.
* Peter fails at key moments.
* Peter becomes among the most passionate followers of Jesus in the early church.

Jesus devoted 3 ½ years to modeling Himself to His disciples. Peter, one of Jesus’ disciples, was impetuous. He often acted quickly and impulsively. In the Gospels we see a number of examples of Jesus interacting with Peter as a mentor.

**Peter acknowledges Jesus as God.** In Matthew 16:13-18, Jesus asks Peter “Who do you say that I am?” Peter responds “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Then moments later (Matthew 16:21-23) Peter denies Jesus’ foretelling of His own death. In just the span of these few verses we see Jesus praise Peter, then chastise him. Jesus used both positive reinforcement and stern rebuke in His mentoring.

**Peter walks on water.** In Matthew 14:22-33 Jesus miraculously walks on water. The account is an opportunity for Jesus’ disciples to trust Him. Jesus says from the water, “It is I. Do not be afraid.” Peter dares to step onto the water as well, but gets scared and begins to sink. Jesus uses this too as a lesson in trust, asking Peter, “Why did you doubt?”

**Peter falls asleep in the Garden.** Jesus is praying at Gethsemane on the eve of his crucifixion. He returns to find his disciples asleep. “Couldn’t you men keep watch with me for one hour?” he asked Peter (Matthew 26:40). Jesus does this three times—each time the disciples, including Peter, are sleeping. Jesus knows what will happen, his arrest is imminent. Again he is teaching here a lesson in trust.

**Peter denies Jesus.** In Luke 22:54-62, we read the account of Peter denying he knows Jesus three times. Peter’s denials are based in weakness and fear. Peter still followed Jesus after His arrest, but he kept his distance so as not to be identified with Him (Mark 14:54). Jesus revealed to Peter that Satan had asked for permission to sift Peter like wheat (Luke 22:31). Even in His own death, Jesus was equipping Peter with a higher goal in mind. He was preparing Peter to strengthen his brothers (Luke 22:32).

**Peter preaches at Pentecost.** Peter became the pillar of the early church in Jerusalem, exhorting and training others to follow the Jesus (Acts 2). When the Holy Spirit arrives at Pentecost, it is Peter who delivers a passionate sermon, saying, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.” The result was more than 3,000 added to their number that day. Though several examples in his life show Peter failing Jesus, the reality was his character and passion for Jesus were being strengthened for the time when he would need it.



* What is an example from your life of when you had to trust someone? Did that trust come easy?
* Have you ever received good advice but failed to put it into practice? What was the result? What did you learn from that situation?
* What is a character trait you possess that someone modeled for you? How did they live it out and what effect did it have on your life and leadership?
* How has failure in your life resulted in strengthening you in some way? Is failure always a negative or might it have a higher purpose?



* Read Matthew 14:22-33. Why is the story of Peter attempting to walk on water in the Bible? What was Jesus trying to teach Peter through this experience?
* Read Luke 22:54-62. How is Peter denying he knew Jesus significant? In what ways might we deny Jesus ourselves today?
* Read Matthew 26:40. For what reason did Jesus want the disciples to stay awake while he prayed in the garden? Why do you think Jesus called out Peter specifically in this instance?
* Matthew 16:13-23. Here we read an example of Peter being praised and then chastised by Jesus. What is Jesus trying to teach Peter in this encounter?



* What is one way in which you can put trust in Jesus today? Is there an area of your life or leadership where you are not trusting that you can give over to Jesus?
* What have you learned from your most recent failure that you can put into practice now? Do you consider it a failure if you learn from it and can move on?
* What about Jesus’ life and leadership can you emulate? In what ways can Jesus serve as an example for your own leading words and actions?