

I Am Peter

Welcome. As I prayed and meditated on what to preach on, I had pretty much decided it would be on the parable of *The Unforgiving Servant*. Friday morning I felt I was being led down a different path. I've preached on the life of John the Apostle, John the Baptist, and even did several lessons once on the life of Paul. Everyone seemed to enjoy those types so as I felt prompted I decided to do one on the Life of Peter the Apostle.

Why Peter? I feel that Peter is the Apostle that most of us can relate to. He messes up a lot, puts his foot in his mouth a lot, and even had his best friend and God call him Satan. So I'm going to get started to night and try not to put my foot in my mouth.

Let's start reading in Luke 5:1-11

***Luke 5:1–11 (ESV)** — 1 On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, 2 and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. 3 Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. 4 And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." 5 And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." 6 And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. 7 They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. 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*

I Am Peter

*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.*

What I'm going to do tonight is try and paint a picture. I want you to use your imagination and try to go back in time with me and picture what is going on. I want us to leave here tonight with a picture of Peter that is truer than what we may have imagined. I want us to leave here with a glimpse into Peter's heart and mind so that we can better peer into our hearts and minds, but more importantly I want us to see who Jesus is.

Deadliest Catch Galilee Style

Everybody remember the felt board Peter you played with in Children's Church and Sunday School? Alright, let's wad it up and throw it out. Peter was a fisherman. How many have watched the show *The Deadliest Catch*? Okay, you know the little scrawny guys they have on the boats pulling in the nets. You know the ones that are clean shaven and always use polite language? Yeah, I haven't seen them on their either, Because pulling in thousands of pounds of fish a night kinda builds up the muscles, and having an ice cold wave come over the rails and drench you doesn't immediately bring to mind a Thank you Lord for this storm, Lord I am so grateful for the hypothermia I feel kicking in.

I Am Peter

My point is, **Peter was a fisherman!** His father's name was Jonah¹, which I must say is an interesting name for a fisherman. Jonah can be transliterated to John in English.

The bible tells us he had a younger brother named Andrew who actually introduced Peter to Jesus. Since we never hear anything about Jonah like we do Zebedee the father of James and John we can figure that Peter is now the head of the house. He takes care of Andrew.

Peter also had a wife² and later in his life he would carry her on mission trips with him³. What I want you to see is that when Jesus called Peter, he wasn't a nice deacon wearing a suit to his nice comfy office every morning. He was the man that was up all night in a raging storm slaving away to bring home a way to support his family. He was the man whose face is weathered from being slapped by cold water and burnt by hot sun.

He was a man stressed from the worries of running a fishing business; how to pay business expenses, support a family, pay his servants, and pay his partners; who were James, John and Zebedee.

He was a man that still had to work when he was sick. His back hurt, his muscles got sore. He was me! He was you! He was your coworkers. Peter is the blue collar man we all know.

His Life

So now you know who Peter was let's look at his life. Peter was a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee; He was born in Bethsaida, but had moved to Galilee. His brother Andrew introduced him to Jesus. I picture Peter being unimpressed at first. He probably preferred that wild eyed crazy preacher on the banks of the Jordan. John, Now that man

¹ Matthew 16:17

² Mark 1:30

³ 1 Corinthians 9:5

I Am Peter

knew how to make those self righteous Pharisees mad. His name was Simon which is a basic common name that means Simon. Anyways he had been to hear John preach and had even gone to hear Jesus a few times, but he still had a business to run. That is until that day that he learned who Jesus really was. It had been a horrible night. They hadn't caught a thing. They were on the beach cleaning their nets, that guy Jesus was over on the beach preaching to a group of people when suddenly He asks Simon to put our into the water. Smart guy this Jesus using the water as sort of an amplifier. Anyways Jesus finished preaching and then told him to put his boat out in the deep water and lower the nets.

Peter humored Him. We have been fishing all night and they just aren't here, but if that's what you want that's what we will do. I imagine Peter was thinking to himself who does this guy think He is. First he makes me stay out longer so he can use my boat as a stage then He wants me to drop my nets I've already cleaned. Does He not know I've been fishing all my life and there are no fish here?

But something happened. Something pulled the nets and it was so heavy it was starting to tear the nets. Wow, he was amazed never had he seen so many fish. He realized Andrew was right this was not your average preacher.

He looked into the eyes of Jesus, *“Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!”* That was the day that Jesus said follow me and Peter left everything to do just that.

Life got amazing after that. The next few years He was with Jesus day and night. He even forgave Jesus for healing his mother-in-law. But seriously Peter was at Jesus side for just about everything. It was amazing they would go from town to town and Jesus would heal people and preach. The things He said were amazing. Peter didn't

I Am Peter

always understand exactly what Jesus meant sometimes they went so far over his head that he couldn't even understand why Jesus wanted Him to tag along.

This man that he could call friend, teacher, and Lord was something special. He didn't talk like the other preachers. He never said, "God said", He would say "I say". Slowly Peter started to realize that his teacher wasn't a man called by God, but God in Flesh. Immanuel. And Peter got to walk with Him.

People would come up out of the blue, like this one time a leper walked up and started saying, "Lord, If you are willing You can make me clean."

It was amazing Jesus reached out and touched the leper. Peter was thinking, Oh I've got to explain to Jesus that you can't go around touching lepers. It makes you unclean as a preacher and is contagious. Man this preacher has a lot to learn. But before Peter could even finish his thoughts the leprosy was gone. It was gone!

Peter lay awake that night wondering did I really see what I thought I saw. But that was nothing it got even more amazing from that point.

This Roman general comes up and starts praising Jesus and saying that he has a paralyzed servant and wants Jesus to come heal him. Jesus decides to give the man what he wants and tells him I'll go and heal him.

The man stops Him and says "*Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed.*"⁹ *For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it.*"⁴

⁴ Matthew 8:8-9.

I Am Peter

Jesus smiled and told the crowd how marvelous this man's faith was. That there would be many that thought they deserved Heaven, but they do not have the faith of this man. Jesus said Go and the man's servant was healed. Just like that. Without Jesus even seeing him.

It really got crazy at times, People would show up with all kinds of disease and Jesus would heal them. People would show up with demons. I mean some real scary stuff. Screaming, having seizures, throwing themselves in fire.

There was this one time they had just survived the worst storm ever. Peter a professional fisherman who knew the sea and didn't scare easy of storms was quivering like a baby because this was the end. Jesus simply told the wind "*Peace! Be still!*" and the storm stopped. Anyways they get to the Gaderenes and they are at a cemetery and this man comes running out of the tombs. He has blood dripping from him and scars from where he has cut himself. There are broken chains dangling from his arms. Yeah Scary. The man looked at Jesus and knelt down and started yelling "*What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.*"⁵

Jesus, calmly as ever asked the demon that was in the man, "what is your name?" The demon answered, "Legion, for we are many".

Peter's mind raced, Legion, That is about 6000. That man has 6000 demons in Him. This is it we are going to die. The next thing you know Jesus has sent the demons into a herd of pigs that then go on to commit suicide by jumping off a cliff. Somebody must have forgotten to tell them that Pigs don't fly.

⁵ Mark 5:7.

I Am Peter

We could go on for days. There were miraculous feedings, Peter even got to walk on the water, Jesus gave the disciples power to perform some miracles. It truly was an amazing few years.

His Words

Peter was a man of many words. Always first to speak even if that meant he would need help removing his feet from his mouth. Now while we like to beat up on some of the bonehead things Peter says like Lets build tabernacles to worship you Moses and Elijah on this mountain. Or Lord you can't die, you can't let them kill you. How about when they were rushing to save Jairus' daughter from death and Jesus stopped and said who touched me. In a crowd where there was probably thirty people touching me and Peter the bonehead said *"You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'"*⁶ Yeah he felt pretty dumb after that. Or Jesus washing the disciples feet and Peter said, *"You shall never wash my feet."* Or *"Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!"*⁷

Peter also was the one who said, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*⁸ and *"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life,"*⁹ and *we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God."*⁹

His Denial

Then Peter's moment of shame. The moment that he wishes he could take back. He stares straight into Jesus' eyes. His Lord, Master, teacher, and friend is staring at him as he denies him. A tear drops from Peter's eyes as he hears the rooster crow. He

⁶ Mark 5:31.

⁷ John 13:9.

⁸ Matthew 16:16-17.

⁹ John 6:68-69.

I Am Peter

remembers earlier in the night telling Jesus that he would lay down his life for Him and Jesus saying, *“Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.”*¹⁰

The words keep echoing in his mind *“You also are not one of this man’s disciples, are you?”* He said, *“I am not.”*¹¹

“You also are not one of his disciples, are you?” He denied it and said, *“I am not.”*¹²

*“Did I not see you in the garden with him?”*²⁷ Peter again denied it¹³

Peter cried. Peter wept He was a failure. The rest of the morning and following days were a blur. They crucified Jesus. He died. Peter’s Lord was dead and at the moment of truth Peter denied Him.

His Restoration

Three days later He arose and he showed himself to the disciples, but Peter was ashamed. His guilt tore him into. There was nothing left for him. He gave up and went back to his old job. **Simon was a fisherman.**

So why did I just spend this time telling you about Simon Peter and what do I expect you to take home from this?

Turn to John 21.

John 21:1–19 (ESV) — *1 After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. 2 Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. 3 Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said*

¹⁰ John 13:38.

¹¹ John 18:17.

¹² John 18:25.

¹³ John 18:26–27.

I Am Peter

to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. **4** Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. **5** Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." **6** He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. **7** That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. **8** The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off. **9** When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. **10** Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." **11** So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. **12** Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. **13** Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. **14** This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead. **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;

I Am Peter

you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. 18 Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.” 19 (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.”

Jesus restores Peter. Peter has had a fall from grace. He is ashamed and disgraced. He is having a crisis of faith. How can he serve Jesus after what he has done. He knew Jesus knew who He was, yet he denied Him.

Ever been there? How can God use me? I am a failure! I’m not even worthy to call myself a Christian. I can only bow my head in shame. But Jesus was not done with Peter. And He restored him in much the same way as He originally came to him.

Look! *He said to them, “Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish.*

Does that sound familiar? Kinda like Peter’s first calling. Jesus done this to demonstrate a second chance.

Then Jesus goes through the whole Simon Do you Love me thing with Peter replying *Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.* This happened three times, because Jesus wanted Peter to see that for his three denials. He had now stated his love three times.

Peter goes on to preach a sermon that brings 3000 people to Jesus. He became a great pastor and wrote a letter of encouragement at a time when Christians were facing

I Am Peter

their greatest persecution and another letter urging them to live a life pleasing to God as he awaited death.

As for his denial church history records that Peter watched his wife be crucified, as she was being led away he called to her, “Remember the Lord!”. Later Peter himself walked to the cross and said I am not worthy to be crucified as my Lord and asked that they crucify him upside down.

God is a God of second chances and He is never through with us as long as there is breathe in our lungs.