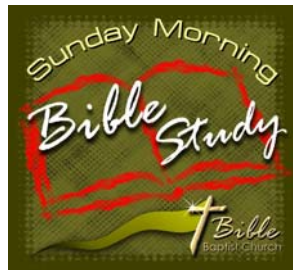




# THE LIFE OF PETER

## STUDY I

### "CALLED TO MORE"



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# ☩ THE LIFE OF PETER

## STUDY I – CALLED TO MORE

### INTRODUCTION

Peter was an average guy. He had an average life. He had a wife, a job, and a home. Peter had religion in his background; he was raised in the Jewish faith. During the time Peter lived, the Roman Empire controlled Israel but permitted Israel's kings to govern the Jews as long as Israel paid their taxes and kept the peace. As a Jew, under corrupt Jewish governmental authority and brutal Roman domination, the promise of a coming Messiah was hoped for now more than ever. But life had been this way for a long time, and the Messiah's arrival seemed just as far away as it had seemed all of Peter's life. And just like Peter, we too have a sense that there is something more to life and we are waiting. But life has been this way for a long time, and the Messiah's return seems just as far away now as it has seemed since we first believed. Unbelievers and believers alike know that there has to be something more.

### ☩ TRUTH

In the following passages, Peter meets Jesus, is renamed by Him, and obeys Jesus' call which radically changes the direction of his life forever.

#### **Turn to John 1:40-42**

One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

**A New Name – Cephas** When Jesus looked at Simon He knew Simon's character and destiny. Jesus gave him the Aramaic name Cephas. Peter is the Greek translation of Cephas ("rock"). No reason is given here for the change of his name from Simon to Cephas. The common understanding is that his name indicates what God by His grace would do through him. He would be a rock-like man in the church during its early years.

## **Turn to Matthew 4:18-20**

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. 20 And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.

**A New Calling – Fishers of Men** Since Jesus is the promised Messiah, He had the right to call men from their normal pursuits of life to follow Him. Jesus now called these fishermen to leave their profession behind and to begin following Him permanently. He would take them from fishing for fish and make them fishers of men. The message of the coming kingdom needed to be proclaimed widely so that many could hear and could become, by repentance, members of God's family.

## **Now turn to Mark 1:16-18**

Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. 18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

**A New Obedience – They Immediately Followed Jesus** The Lord's public ministry had just begun. These first disciples did not give up their lives because of the incredible miracles they had seen; Jesus had not yet begun His astonishing work. They didn't drop what they were doing and completely change the course of their lives because they knew all of the blessing and eternal bliss that is detailed in the New Testament; it hadn't been written yet. These men made their decision to obey Jesus' call on their lives based on the hope recorded in the Old Testament and on the testimony of one modern day prophet, John the Baptist (John 1:35-37).

**How about New Conflicts? Marriage, In-Law, Socio-Economic, and Religious Animosity.** Obeying Jesus' call carried with it a cost because it involved leaving not only one's profession but also one's family responsibilities and strict Jewish Law keeping. Peter was married and his mother-in-law was healed by Jesus (Luke 4:38-39). Matthew 4:22 notes that James and John left not only their fishing, but also their father to follow Jesus.

# FISHING

**Let's Talk About Us – Are We Called to More?** Have you ever noticed how people in general have some internal instinct that there must be more to life than what we're seeing? There must be more to life than getting up, going to work or school, coming home for a few minutes of time with the family and the TV and then off to bed again to get ready for another day of work. And on some internal level, each of us knows this whether we are saved by Christ or not. If we have *not* trusted Christ as our Savior than there is an internal emptiness that leaves us unsatisfied and searching. If we *have* trusted Christ as our Savior and are not in an obedient relationship with Him, we experience an internal emptiness that leaves us unsatisfied and searching. The difference with believers is that we should be searching for the areas of our lives where we're not surrendered to God and make the choice to obey Him and trust Him through the consequences.

**What are some of the similarities between the believer and Peter?**

**Question 1:** Do believers have a new name?

**Revelation 3:12** Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God: and I will write upon him **My new name**.

**Acts 11:26** And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called **Christians** first in Antioch.

**Philippians 1:1** Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the **saints** in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

**Answer 1.** Our new identity is permanently connected to Jesus. All born again believers are called **Christians** (Christ-ones); and all born again believers are called **saints** (holy ones).

**Question 2.** Are believers supposed to quit their present jobs and go into full time ministry like Peter did?

**Ephesians 4:11** And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (some

**Matthew 28:20** Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

**Answer 2.** Some Christians are called to **full time** ministry but the majority of Christians are called to **obey** everything that Christ taught His disciples to practice.

**Question 3.** Once a Christian has read or heard from the Bible that he is to obey something, how much time can he delay before God considers it to be disobedience?

**James 4:17** Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

**Romans 6:16** Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey...

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20** What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

**Answer 3.** God paid the highest price to be in relationship with us. The Bible teaches that we don't even own ourselves; therefore **delayed** obedience is really **disobedience**.

**Question 4.** What conflicts do Christians face today as a result of their answering Christ's call in their lives?

**John 15:18-19** If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. 19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

**Matthew 10:35-37** For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. 36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. 37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

**Answer 4.** While the Bible teaches we are to try to live **peaceably** with all people (Romans 12:18), Jesus wants Christians to not be **disillusioned** when the world and even loved ones turn against us because of our faith in Him.

## ∞ THE CATCH

ALL OF PETER'S LIFE HE HAD BEEN WAITING FOR THE MESSIAH. ONCE PETER MET THE MESSIAH, HE LEARNED THE MESSIAH HAD BEEN PURPOSEFULLY WAITING FOR HIM.

1. Do I believe that Christ would want to use me to influence others for His eternal Kingdom? Yes No
2. If it is true that God can use anybody to grow His Kingdom, what do I see myself doing to get the news to others about the Messiah?
3. Are the obligations I am committed to in my life right now helping others to become born again into God's family?
4. If I feel I am already "doing my share" of ministry in my church family, on a scale of 1 to 4, how would God rate my effectiveness in leading outsiders to a relationship with Jesus Christ and then helping them mature in their faith? *Leading unbelievers to Christ: 1 2 3 4*  
*Helping believers to mature their relationship with Christ: 1 2 3 4*
5. Which of the following is (are) hindering your being used by Christ to grow His Kingdom for eternity? Sin? Apathy? Lack of confidence? Too busy? Uncertain of what to do? Laziness?

# REMEMBER

ALL OF YOUR LIFE YOU HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR THE MESSIAH. IF YOU KNOW THE MESSIAH, YOU MUST BELIEVE THAT HE HAS BEEN PURPOSEFULLY WAITING FOR YOU.

## **Growing Your Relationship with Jesus Christ**

To grow in a relationship requires a better understanding of the other person. Here are some other passages in the Bible that help believers understand the Person of Jesus Christ.

**2 Corinthians 5:17-20** All born again believers are compelled to let God call unbelievers through them to invite outsiders into relationship with God by believing in Jesus Christ.

**Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-16** Each born again believer has at least one special ability to reach unbelievers and help mature fellow believers.

**2 Timothy 2:21-22; James 4:8; 1 Peter 3:15-17** Believers must stop sin in their life for God to use them.

**1 John 2:15-16; 2 Timothy 2:4** Believers must not get so wrapped up in the things of this world that they fail to please God who saved them.

Take time this week to ask God to show you what He wants you to do with your life here and now. Take time to read His Word and prayerfully consider the things He shows you from your Bible readings.