

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL – Fall 2024 – FBC

The Life of Peter

Lesson #5 – “Failure and Forgiveness”

October 13, 2024

Texts: Luke 22:31-34, 47-62 and John 21: 1-19

Stories of Peter so far: Generally it is thought that Jesus was active as a rabbi and teacher for 3 years before he was crucified. This means that Peter has been with Him for that same time frame and we can be sure there were many stories that were not recorded about his interactions with Jesus. But we do have these:

- Andrew says to Simon (Peter): “we have found the Messiah” and when Jesus first sees Simon he gives him a new name
- Jesus walks by the Sea of Galilee, sees Peter and Andrew and says: “follow me” and they do
- Peter is instructed to “go out into the deep water and let down your net for a catch” and does so, catching many fish. His response to Jesus: “Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man”
- Peter walks on the water at Jesus command but when he sees the strong wind, he becomes frightened and begins to sink. Jesus say: “you of little faith, why did you doubt?”
- Peter identifies Jesus as the Messiah, the son of the living God and is affirmed by Jesus
- Jesus on observing that many followers are leaving him asks the disciples: “do you also wish to go away?” Peter: “Lord to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life...”
- Peter, James and John witness the transfiguration of Jesus and Moses and Elijah who are talking to Jesus about “his departure”. They hear God’s words from heaven.
- Peter (and the other disciples) vow never to disown Jesus. Peter, James and John cannot stay awake in the Garden when Jesus prays.

1. The two stories we look at today are among the last ones in which Peter personally encounters Jesus – one takes place before His crucifixion and one after the resurrection. These are, I think, particularly dramatic stories and one way to “get into them” is to imagine them as one would a play or a drama. To set the scene for the first story let’s READ Luke 22: 31-34.

2. At your tables, choose one person to read Luke 22:47-62, one verse at a time and then as a group, decide where to position the figures so as to enact this story. Move the figures of Jesus, the soldiers, Judas, Peter and the other participants in this story as it is being read out loud. Discuss as the story goes along.

3. In John 21: 1 –19 we have a very different story – a lot has happened since the denial in the courtyard and what happens in this story takes place after the resurrection. Although it would seem that Peter has already seen Jesus once or twice, this is a very pointed encounter with Peter. For the sake of brevity, see verse 1-14 as setting the scene for what comes next. As a choreographer, plot Jesus, Peter and the other disciples in relationship to each other. Watch where Peter goes. How does his movement perhaps match his feelings?

What are the “awkward” moments in this drama beside the seashore?

4. Although difficult to show with the figures you have, try to imagine the turmoil in Peter’s heart in both of these stories. Put yourself in the courtyard with Peter and ask yourself, why is he there? What is he thinking?

Can you imagine his feelings after the 3rd denial and Jesus looking at him?

Then at the lakeshore, what indications are there that Peter’s heart is in turmoil?

What do you make of the questions Jesus has for Peter? What is going on here? To where or to what is Peter being invited to go?

Reflect together on the way Peter experienced failure and forgiveness.

THREE SCENES ENACTED:

Figures available: Jesus, Peter, 5 Disciples, Judas, 2 soldiers/officers, servant and 4 extras. Plus a “firepit”!

Scene #1: This takes place in the Garden of Gethsemane when the soldiers arrive.

As you listen to the story (verse by verse) found in Luke 22:47-53, place figures (and move them) as you imagine them when Jesus, Peter and the disciples meet Judas, the soldiers/officers and extras.

Continue to move the figures as the story moves along: Jesus is led to the High Priest’s House, the disciples fade away but Peter enters the courtyard where he is confronted 3 times and denies knowledge of Jesus on each occasion. Note how Jesus saw Peter (vs 61) and Peter’s response (vs 62).

Scene #2: This scene takes place beside the Sea of Galilee, after the resurrection of Jesus.

Place figures as per the description in John 21: 1-3 beginning with Peter the disciples by the seashore. Continue to move the figures as the story moves along: the disciples fishing, Jesus arriving on the scene, the conversation “over the water”, Peter’s response, his arrival on the seashore with only Jesus present and then when they are all on shore.

And finally the back and forth conversation Jesus has with Peter – is it front of the other disciples?

Luke 22:31-34

³¹ 'Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, ³²but I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.' ³³And he said to him, 'Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death!' ³⁴Jesus said, 'I tell you, Peter, the cock will not crow this day, until you have denied three times that you know me.'

Luke 22:47-62

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him;

⁴⁸but Jesus said to him, 'Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?'

⁴⁹When those who were around him saw what was coming, they asked, 'Lord, should we strike with the sword?'

⁵⁰Then one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear.

⁵¹But Jesus said, 'No more of this!' And he touched his ear and healed him.

⁵²Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, 'Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit?

⁵³When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness!'

⁵⁴ Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance.

⁵⁵When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them.

⁵⁶Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, 'This man also was with him.'

⁵⁷But he denied it, saying, 'Woman, I do not know him.'

⁵⁸A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, 'You also are one of them.' But Peter said, 'Man, I am not!'

⁵⁹Then about an hour later yet another kept insisting, 'Surely this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean.'

⁶⁰But Peter said, 'Man, I do not know what you are talking about!' At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed.

⁶¹The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, 'Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times.'

⁶²And he went out and wept bitterly.

John 21:1-19

¹After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. ²Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples.

³Simon Peter said to them, 'I am going fishing.' They said to him, 'We will go with you.' They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

⁴ Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.

⁵Jesus said to them, 'Children, you have no fish, have you?' They answered him, 'No.'

⁶He said to them, 'Cast the net to 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 there were so many fish.

⁷That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord!' When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the lake.

⁸But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

⁹ When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread.

¹⁰Jesus said to them, 'Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.'

¹¹So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn.

¹²Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, 'Who are you?' because they knew it was the Lord.

¹³Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴This was now the third time that Jesus appeared 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.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.'

¹⁶ A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.'

¹⁷ He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.'

¹⁸ Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.'

¹⁹ (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, 'Follow me.'