

# **Life of Peter: Lessons In Discipleship**

Life Group Series, Autumn 2020 – Birmingham City Church

## **Part 1:** **Discipleship**

## Series Overview

There is a huge amount we can learn from the disciple Peter!

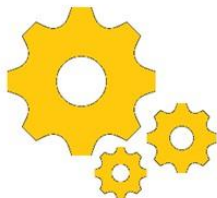
This series unpacks key experiences and events from Peter's life to see what discipleship lessons there are for our own lives, as follows:

- Part 1 Discipleship
- Part 2 Friendship
- Part 3 Destiny
- Part 4 Insight
- Part 5 Faith
- Part 6 Integrity
- Part 7 Leadership
- Part 8 Suffering

## Introductions

Check out these 12 icons, and tell the people in your group the one that best describes a part of your day and why.

If there are no icons that can explain your day, make up an icon that will!



## Searching the Scriptures

Let's read Luke 5:1-11 together.

We are going to uncover 12 great discipleship foundations from this amazing passage of the bible:

One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding round him and listening to the word of God. <sup>2</sup> He saw at the water's

edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup> He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

<sup>4</sup> When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.'

<sup>5</sup> Simon answered, 'Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.'

<sup>6</sup> When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. <sup>7</sup> So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

<sup>8</sup> When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!' <sup>9</sup> For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, <sup>10</sup> and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people.' <sup>11</sup> So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

## **1. Are you willing to listen to the Word of God?**

Verse 1: "...the people were crowding round him and listening to the word of God."

Embedded in the core of being a disciple of Jesus is a willingness to hear from God's Word.

## **2. Are you already busy making your life happen?**

Verse 2: "...left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets."

Hard work, taking risks, being in a routine, supporting yourself, having customers, steering through setbacks and hardship – all these things are good disciplines from the world of work.

Jesus loves to call people who are already having a go at making their lives happen, because He can see evidence of your readiness for discipleship.

## **3. Are you willing to respond helpfully to a request?**

Verse 3: "...asked him to put out a little from the shore"

When we follow Jesus, we follow a king who served. Key to being a great disciple is being willing to be helpful to others. Peter helped Jesus with his request. Perhaps it was Jesus' initial little test of Peter.

## **4. Do you mind if Jesus interrupts your plans?**

Verse 3: Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

I wonder if Peter didn't quite get that he was lending the boat for quite a bit! Following after Jesus is going to inconvenience you, and He will interrupt your life, a lot.

Let's go into groups for 5 minutes, and discuss whether you agree with this statement:

"The more you let Jesus interrupt your life, the more fulfilled your life will become."

## **5. Are you willing to try something well beyond what you may have already proven to yourself?**

Verses 4-5: When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.' Simon answered, 'Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.'

We have to recognise that where we have come to in our humanness is limited. Our own experience is not necessarily what we should be guided by. Even if we have just proven something to ourselves, a disciple is a person who lets Jesus show them something more is possible.

- How obedient are you, to Jesus – really?
- What forms does 'obedience to Jesus' take? Is it just what the bible says? Or is it bible and church? Or is it just the pastor? How about the government?

## **6. Are you open to something incredibly miraculous happening to you personally?**

Verse 6: When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break.

- If you have been a Christian a long while, when was the most recent thing God did for you personally that can't be explained in the natural?
- If you have only been a Christian a little while, what have you seen of God's miraculous ability so far?
- Is there anything we can do to open ourselves up to more miracles from God in our lives?

## **7. Are you telling your friends about it?**

Verse 7: So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come...

In this amazing miracle it was inevitable that Peter might call on his friends to help respond to the miracle – but underneath this fact, there is an important principle: that you let the people around you know about what is happening.

## **8. Can you kneel in God's presence?**

Verse 8: When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees

Being a disciple includes the ability to get down on our knees from time to time in God's presence. We have to be able to make ourselves smaller and more humble regularly if we are going to follow Jesus.

## **9. Does an encounter with God make you examine your own life honestly?**

Verse 8: 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!'

One way to show that an encounter with God is genuine is a stark realisation of our own sin. Isaiah suddenly realised he was a man of unclean lips. Zacchaeus suddenly saw that he had been cheating. And Peter suddenly got convicted of his own sin.

- Would you say the opposite is true: the more distant you get from God, the more relaxed or blind you become about sin?

## **10. Can you receive a bigger vision for your life than you've had for yourself?**

Verse 10: '...from now on you will fish for people'

A massive part of discipleship is a huge invitation to take up the massive plan Jesus had in mind for you when he created you.

Ephesians 2:10 says: For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Often in our human efforts before we come to know Jesus, we get glimpses of what this is – but Jesus adds the full spiritual focus and design into the equation as we start to follow Him.

## **11. Can you make the decision to follow Jesus?**

Verse 11: So they... followed him.

Bottom line: a disciple is someone who has decided to follow Jesus, and become more and more like Him.

## **12. Can you end some things when you start following Jesus?**

Verse 11: So they... left everything...

If you decide to follow Jesus, you might need to lay some things down and walk away from them. In fact, I would argue – you have to do this!

What that might be can differ for each of us. For the rich young ruler (Matthew 19:16-22), it happened to be his wealth that was a stumbling block to following after Jesus.

Private reflection for a moment: what have you laid down in order to follow Jesus?

## **Holy Spirit Pause**

Of these 12 foundational discipleship points from Luke 5:1-11, as the Holy Spirit to:

- Encourage you by showing you the one which one have you excelled in the most
- Chase you up about the one you have resisted the most

## **Life Application**

- What is something in your life that you would like Jesus to take from nothing to so overloaded with blessing that it breaks?
- If Jesus did that, what would be the discipleship growth needed from you to see that happen?
- And if Jesus did that, what would be the outcome for others?