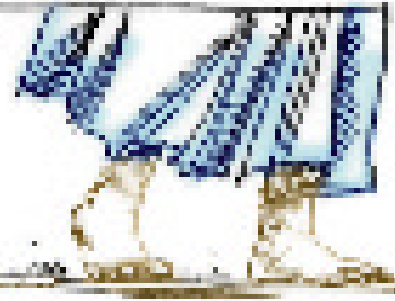


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Lesson 12 / Page 1

Loving Our Lord

In this lesson we will begin looking at the life of Simon Peter. To focus our minds on God as we begin, meditate on the words Peter wrote for us toward the end of his journey on earth:

"You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light." (1 Peter 2:9)

Do you really believe this?

Learning His Word

Peter was an ordinary man. He was a fisherman by trade in an obscure fishing village of Galilee. Looking at Peter's life and his relationship with Jesus gives us a great window into how discipleship happens. As you read about his journey, put yourself in his shoes and ask yourself these questions. How would you be feeling? What would be confusing to you? In what ways do you relate to his responses and actions?

1. Let's read about Peter's first encounter with Jesus. Read John 1:35-42. John the Baptist is out in the wilderness with his disciples. What did he proclaim about Jesus in verse 36? _____

a. After John said this, what did the two disciples do? _____

b. As they followed behind Jesus, He noticed them and asked them what they wanted. How did they answer His question? _____

c. Why would they ask that? What do you think you would have asked the one you were just told was the Lamb of God? _____

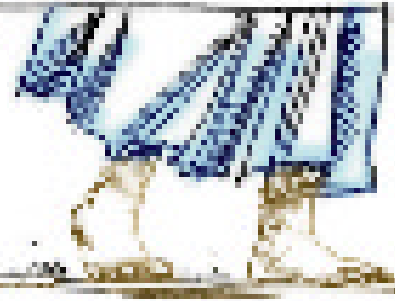
d. What invitation did Jesus give these two curious disciples? _____

2. What was the *first thing* Andrew did after finding the Messiah? _____

a. Andrew took Simon to where Jesus was staying. Look closely at Jesus' first introduction to Simon. Fill in the verbs below paying close attention to the tense of the verbs.
"You _____ Simon son of John. You _____ _____ called Cephas (which, when translated, is Peter)." (John 1:42)

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Lesson 12 / Page 2

- b. Put yourself in Simon's shoes. This Stranger *looked at him* and told him who he was going to become. Cephas in Greek means Petros, which in English translates Peter. The meaning of this name is "rock." What does this encounter reveal to you about Jesus? _____

 - c. Jesus looked at Peter and saw what he could become in His hands. Do you think this is true for all of us? _____

 - d. Sometimes we let other people's perception of us shape our thinking of ourselves. Does Jesus see us the way others do, or perhaps even the way we see ourselves? What does John 2:24-25 say? _____

 - e. Look back at Genesis 1:27. What is our God-given potential according to this verse? _____

3. At the fall of mankind (see Genesis 3) humans decided we knew better than God and our potential to reflect the image of God was seriously hindered. At that moment we actually became slaves to sin. However, Jesus is our Redeemer! He purchased our freedom and bought back our potential for spiritual growth! When you think about the image of God, what comes to your mind? _____

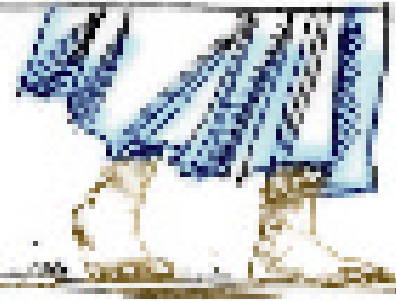
4. Think about this quote from Stuart Briscoe: "If we want to be fully the people we were created to be, we've got to think in terms of our God-given potential. We must choose whether the horizons of our lives are to be determined by our own ambitions or if we're going to open ourselves up to discovering God's perspective on our lives." (Brave Enough to Follow, Navpress)
- a. What makes it difficult for us to focus on God's perspective for our lives? _____

 - b. Jesus was giving Simon a glimpse of that potential when he told him he would become "Rock." What does Psalm 139:14 say about you? _____

 - c. Do you believe that perhaps you were made for some fearfully wonderful purpose? Share your thoughts: _____

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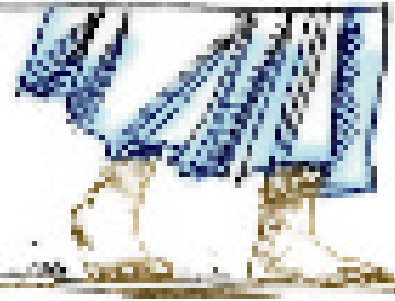


Lesson 12 / Page 3

5. Apparently Andrew and Simon returned to their fishing village after their initial meeting with Jesus. Luke helps enlighten our outlook on the next encounter these brothers have with the Messiah. Read Luke 4:31-44. What is keeping Jesus busy? _____
- _____
- a. Where does Simon meet up with Jesus again? _____
- b. What is one detail about Simon's personal life that we learn from verse 38? _____
- _____
- c. The crowds were following Jesus by this time. They wanted to keep Jesus there with them. (Wouldn't you?) What did Jesus tell them in verse 43? _____
- _____
6. Read Luke 5:1-7. Describe the scene in verses one to three. _____
- _____
- a. What was Simon doing? _____
- b. Simon had met Jesus earlier. He saw Him heal his mother-in-law as well as many others in Galilee. He heard about how Jesus expelled demons. Simon must have replayed his first conversation with Jesus many times in his mind. However, Simon was still cleaning nets and catching fish. Read what happens next in verses 4-7. Did Simon seem excited about Jesus' request? _____
- _____
- c. Why did Simon paddle out to the deep waters? _____
- d. Put yourself in Simon's shoes. You've worked hard ALL night. You've washed the nets. You're ready for your afternoon nap before the work begins again! However, in a moment, Simon surrendered his will to the voice of Jesus. "But, because you say so...." Can you think of any situations in your life where you feel like God is asking you to do something that might not make sense? _____
- _____
- _____
- e. What happened when they let down the nets? _____
- _____
7. Simon had an amazing response to this miracle. Read Luke 5:8-11. Why do you think Simon reacted this way (there is no right or wrong answer; just try and put yourself in his shoes)? _____
- _____

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Lesson 12 / Page 4

- a. Simon had a glimpse of the majesty of Jesus and he was completely humbled. Do you think Peter may have had this encounter in mind when he penned 1 Peter 5:6? What does it say? _____

- b. Read again in Luke 5, verses 8-11. Who else witnessed this astonishing catch? _____

- c. These verses give us more insight into Simon's personal life. Was he just a casual fisherman? _____

8. Write out Jesus' words to Simon in verse 10: _____

9. What is the response of Simon and his companions to Jesus' proclamation? _____

10. What approach did Jesus take to reach these men for His kingdom work? _____

Living His Way

1. What's your story? Who first introduced you to Jesus? _____

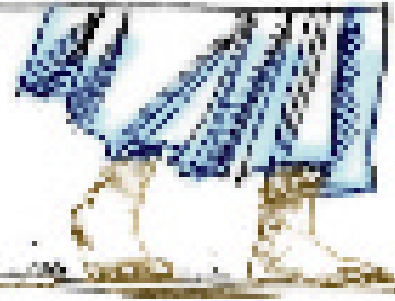
2. Has God given you glimpses of your potential in Him? What do you think He sees in your future? _____

3. Simon had to let go of his agenda for the day and submit to Jesus' agenda. When is the last time you felt like you had to surrender your agenda simply because *He said so*? _____

4. Seeing Jesus for Who He was caused Simon to take a good look at himself and realize his own sinfulness. We tend to compare ourselves to others and can rationalize our behavior. However, when we look directly at Jesus our self-sufficiency or self-righteousness can't hold us up. When was the last time you were driven to your knees upon realizing who you are/were without Christ? _____

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Lesson 12 / Page 5

5. Simon was humbled completely. In front of all his peers he was proved wrong. What other ways could he have reacted? _____

6. Simon was convinced (along with others) that Jesus' word is true and is to be heeded. At that moment he left his home, his business and his personal agenda behind. Did he know what was coming next? _____

7. What if Jesus asks you to do something you can't control? How will you respond? His invitation is the same for *all* of His disciples. "Don't be afraid, come, follow Me." What holds you back? _____

End your time thinking about the commission Jesus gave us, His disciples, in Matthew 28. He said, "Go and make disciples." Do you find yourself tensing up and wanting to make excuses? Maybe things like,

I've tried before... I failed.

I don't know what to say.

I'm not ready.

No one will listen to me.

I'm tired, I've been working all night....

Jesus says to you, "Don't be afraid. I am with you." Kneel before the Father and if your heart agrees, be willing to say as Simon Peter did: "*Because You say so, Lord Jesus, help me to listen, to trust and to follow wherever You lead.*"

Summary Statement:

What is one principle or thought you want to remember from this lesson?

Memory Verse challenge:

Review Matthew 28:18-20 and John 15:5