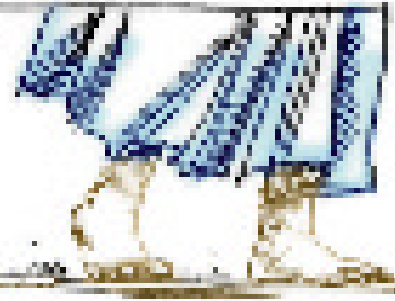


Learning from Jesus "Follow Me."

...learning to live where the load is light



Lesson 17 / Page 1

Loving Our Lord

1. In this lesson we will continue to follow Peter's journey of discipleship. As you prepare your heart to receive God's word, meditate on what Peter wrote many years later when he was further along. Meditate on 1 Peter 1:3-4. What have you been given in Jesus Christ? _____

2. What does this mean to you as you live by faith here on earth? _____

Learning His Word

1. In this lesson, we will observe Peter's continued process in learning what it means to love the Lord with all his heart, soul, mind and strength. Six days after Jesus rebuked Peter for his misguided statement, another amazing encounter occurred. Jesus did not hold Peter's failure against him. Read Matthew 17:1-9. What did Peter, James and John observe (v.1-3)? _____

a. How did Peter react to this experience? _____

b. Who interrupted Peter and what did He say? _____

c. How did the three respond now? _____

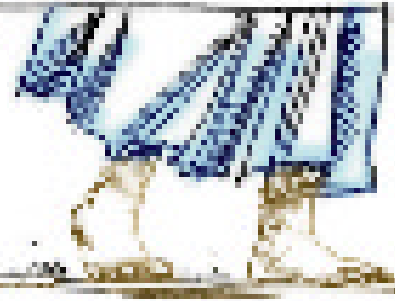
d. Jesus told them again to not be afraid. He also instructed them. What did He tell them in verse 9?

2. Peter had several more encounters with Jesus. Pick at least one from the list below and summarize it to share with your small group. Add any thoughts you have about what Peter was learning about the kingdom of God through these experiences.

a. Matthew 17:24-27 _____

Learning from Jesus "Follow Me."

...learning to live where the load is light



Lesson 17 / Page 2

b. Luke 18:18-29 _____

c. Matthew 18:21-35 _____

d. Mark 13:3-13 _____

e. John 13:2-17 _____

3. Peter remained at Jesus' side for three years. There were many things he didn't understand. Many times he displayed his ignorance, but Jesus never held it against him. Jesus knows the heart of man (see John 2:25) and is never surprised by our shortcomings. Carefully read one of the last personal conversations recorded between Peter and Jesus. Read Luke 22:31-34. What did Jesus reveal to Simon (notice He called him *Simon* here)? What do you find interesting about verse 32? _____

a. Knowing that Peter did indeed deny Jesus three times, what did Jesus tell Simon to do after he turned back to Jesus? _____

b. Did Peter believe Jesus' words? How did he respond? _____

c. Again, Jesus didn't hold Simon's *simon-ness* against him. He knows our humanity and He knows our potential in Christ. How does this perspective encourage you as you recall the times you felt like you *failed* Jesus? _____

d. What do the following verses say is happening in heaven for you as it did for Peter?

(1) Romans 8:26-27 _____

(2) Romans 8:34-35 _____

Learning from Jesus "Follow Me."

...learning to live where the load is light



Lesson 17 / Page 3

(3) How do these truths encourage your heart today? _____

4. Peter's faltering did not disqualify him for future ministry. Jesus stated that when Peter turned back to God, he would be restored and given a ministry. Read Matthew 26:33-45 to find out what happened in the next few hours. What took place in the garden of Gethsemane? _____

a. Look closely at Jesus' direct words to Peter. What stands out to you from this experience for Peter?

b. What common battle for all of us did Jesus acknowledge in verse 41? _____

5. Read what happened next in Luke 22:47-53 and summarize. (See also John 18:10) _____

6. Read Luke 22:54-62. What happened with Peter? _____

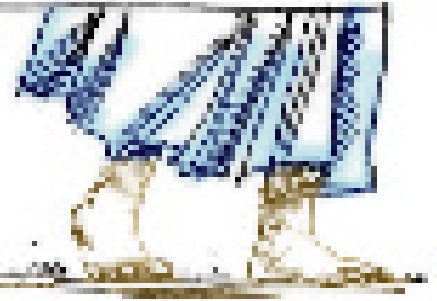
a. Think about what Peter witnessed in the garden. How do you think fear influenced his denials?

b. Think about how confused Peter must have been. Although Jesus told them He would have to suffer and die, they still were expecting to set up a kingdom on earth with their Messiah. How do you think confusion influenced his responses? _____

c. Confusion and fear were a part of Peter's failure, but the bottom line is Peter denied his Lord and ran away. Luke points out that Jesus looked straight at Peter. What do you think that moment was like for Peter?

Learning from Jesus "Follow Me."

...learning to live where the load is light



Lesson 17 / Page 4

- d. Why do you think Peter went out and wept bitterly? _____

Living His Way

1. Why do you think Scripture emphasizes Peter's failure? _____

 - a. If *the Rock* can stumble so quickly, so can we. In what ways can you relate to Peter's attitude and behavior?

 - b. When are you tempted to hide from the Lord? _____

 - c. Is it possible to hide from Him (see Psalm 139:11-12)? _____

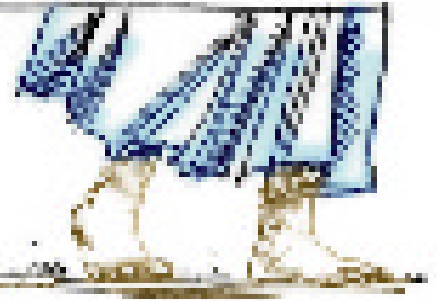
2. Despite our failures, the Lord never abandons us. Peter deserted Jesus. There is no other mention of him during the trial or crucifixion. Yet Christ's compassion for Peter's tormented soul was great. How does Mark 16:6-7 testify to this fact? _____

3. Christ's love is unconditional. All of us have denied Him at one time or another either through our words, our actions, or our silence. We can even become a bit calloused or passive knowing that God will forgive us because He loves us. Although that is true, is that a healthy mindset for a follower of Christ? Share your thoughts:

4. Look back over at what you have studied about Peter's journey. What do you want to remember about our brother in Christ? _____

Learning from Jesus "Follow Me."

...learning to live where the load is light



Lesson 17 / Page 5

5. What do you want to remember about Jesus as you've observed His relationship with Simon Peter? _____

6. When we see in ourselves how much we are like Simon, we may wonder why God would love us. Listen to how C.S. Lewis summed it up:

"God loves us; not because we are loveable but because He is love,
not because He needs to receive but because He delights to give."

John said it best in 1 John 16:

"God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.
In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have
confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him.
There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear..."

Will you take a few moments and thank God that His love is not dependent on your actions? Praise Him for His unconditional love and grace proven to you through the death of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Summary statement:

Memory verse challenge:

Review the memory verses from the past three lessons (Ephesians 2:10, John 6:35, and Matthew 16:27)