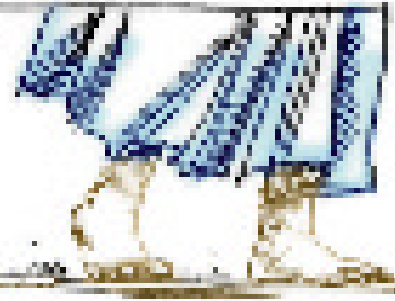


Learning from Jesus "Follow Me."

...learning to live where the load is light



Lesson 18 / Page 1

Note: There is more reading in this lesson than normal. Intentionally try to make time in your week for concentrated time to absorb what you are reading.

Loving our Lord

Peter became a great evangelist. His commitment to follow Christ impacts us today. Peter's final recorded words were written to encourage all who would choose to follow Christ as he did. He wrote this:

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

To Him be glory both now and forever!"

(2 Peter 3:18)

Peter learned that following Christ was a lifelong commitment. In order to stay the course we need to know Jesus and grow daily in our knowledge of His grace. In this lesson we will examine one of Peter's most poignant encounters with the grace of God.

1. If you were asked to explain how you've experienced God's grace personally, what would you say? _____

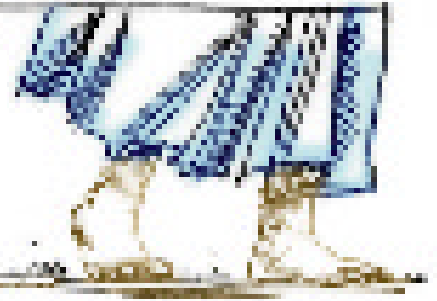
2. Why do you think it is important as followers of Christ to keep growing in our knowledge of our Savior? _____

3. Paul prayed for us along these same lines. Rewrite his prayer from Ephesians 3:17-19a using personal pronouns to ask the Father to increase your knowledge of Him. _____

4. Is there someone else you would like to pray this prayer for? Insert their names and pray again! _____

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Lesson 18 / Page 3

3. Who buried Jesus? _____
4. Who would you have expected to bury the Lord? _____

5. The first two appearances of Jesus to His disciples occurred in Jerusalem while they were hiding in fear. Soon after those appearances, at least six of His chosen twelve went back to Galilee (which was their home city). Read John 21:1-14 and briefly describe what happened early one morning, again taking special note of Peter's experience. _____

6. John 21:15-19 gives us the incredible privilege of watching Jesus reinstate Peter as a follower of His. Carefully read these verses again. What stands out to you from this exchange between Peter and Jesus?

 - a. Why do you think it hurt Peter that Jesus asked him this three times? _____

 - b. What did Jesus ask of Peter to do because he loved Him? _____

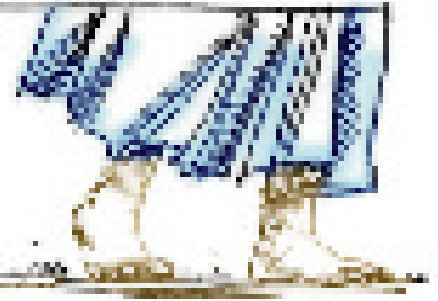
7. Jesus clearly reveals that what qualifies us to serve Him is not a spotless track record. It is not a degree from a seminary or even years of experience and education. What is required of a follower of Jesus Christ (v. 15-17)? _____

8. Jesus told Peter that because he loves Him, he must love His sheep. As Peter loves Jesus, he will want to tend the flock (to love them, feed them and care for them). Peter has heard this principle truth before. What did Jesus say in Mark 12:29-31? _____

9. Peter's physical, earthly experience with Jesus is coming to a close, but his ministry is just beginning. And what an incredible journey is ahead! It's interesting that Jesus gives Peter a snapshot of the end for him. What does he tell him in John 21:18-19? _____

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Lesson 18 / Page 4

a. Why did Jesus tell Peter this according to verse 19? _____

b. What is the basic call Jesus states again in verse 19? _____

10. Peter is still Peter, and just like us he is tempted to compare his journey with someone else's. Read John 21:20-22. How does Jesus respond to Peter's inquiry about John? _____

11. Jesus told Peter to *follow Him* knowing He would soon be ascending into heaven so He would need to give them instructions on what that meant after He was gone. What are some of His instructions as recorded in Matthew 28:18-20? _____

12. How will Jesus be with us and be the source of our power to follow Him according to Acts 1:8? _____

Living His Way

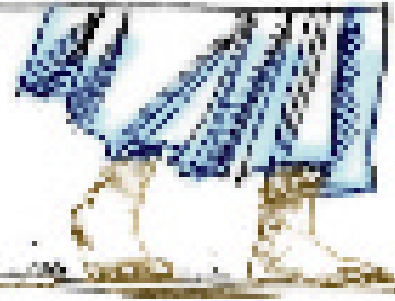
Many years after Jesus ascended into heaven, Peter wrote his first letter to the church (believers) of Jesus Christ. At the end of this first letter he writes:

"And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast". (1 Peter 5:10)

1. Peter in his letter is encouraging followers to hold on knowing that Jesus will restore us completely one day. However, Jesus Himself restored Peter and gave him the power to be strong, firm and steadfast while on earth. He will do the same for us. Do you ever feel like you've blown it too much to be used by God to love His flock? What do you learn from Peter's experience? _____

Learning from Jesus "Follow Me."

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Lesson 18 / Page 5

2. Once we confess our love for Christ we become a child of His and are asked now to love His other children. Jesus asked Peter to be intentional about feeding and tending His lambs and sheep. We know that many of the other apostles fulfilled the same call as well as millions of others in the next 2000+ years. *The call is to follow by loving Christ and loving others.* In what ways do we complicate this simple truth? _____

3. In what ways has observing Peter's journey encouraged you to get back to the basic call? _____

4. The condition for being a follower of Jesus Christ is that you love Him. Do you qualify? If Jesus were to meet you for breakfast and ask, "Do you love Me?" What would you say? _____

5. Think about it: Peter's confession of love for Christ changed the course of his life. The purpose of his existence was no longer centered on his own needs, but the needs of God's people. How has your love for Christ affected your purpose for living? _____

C.S. Lewis wrote:

"When I have learnt to love God better than my earthly dearest, I shall love my earthly dearest better than I do now. In so far as I learn to love my earthly dearest at the expense of God and *instead* of God, I shall be moving towards the state in which I shall not love my earthly dearest at all. When first things are put first, second things are not suppressed but increased."

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

To Him be glory both now and forever!"

(2 Peter 3:18)

Summary Statement:
