

All Nations Church  
Life Group Study  
Life with Purpose  
Week of May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022  
Study by Wayne Arcand

Love and forgiveness are modelled for us in the life of Jesus. An example of this can be seen in how Jesus dealt with Peter. Peter was a person who often spoke and acted impulsively, possibly with great intentions but without considering the cost. This study will look at the contradictions in Peter's life and see that though he failed in critical times, true repentance and Jesus' forgiveness restored his relationship with the Lord. His failures may have been instrumental in shaping who he became. We see the truth of Romans 8:28 in Peter's life, "*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose*".

***Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial***

***Matthew 26:***<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus told them, "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered."<sup>32</sup> But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

<sup>33</sup> Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will."

<sup>34</sup> "Truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times."

<sup>35</sup> But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same.

1. What prophecies do you see in these verses?
2. What do these verses tell us about Peter's character?
  - a. Do you think Peter gave any serious consideration to Jesus' prophecy in verse 34? Why?

***John 18:10*** Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)

***11*** Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?"

3. What do we learn about Peter in these verses?
4. What does Jesus mean by, "*Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?*"
  - a. Could there be situations in our lives where we might ask ourselves the same question? Explain.

***John 18:***<sup>17</sup> "You aren't one of this man's disciples too, are you?" she asked Peter. He replied, "I am not."<sup>18</sup> It was cold, and the servants and officials stood around a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.....

....<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, Simon Peter was still standing there warming himself. So they asked him, “You aren’t one of his disciples too, are you?” He denied it, saying, “I am not.”<sup>26</sup> One of the high priest’s servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, “Didn’t I see you with him in the garden?”<sup>27</sup> Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.

5. Why do you think Peter denied being one of Jesus disciples?
6. Have you ever denied Jesus? Your initial response considering Peter’s active denial of Jesus may be “no”. But, what about the subtle ways we deny Jesus. Discuss how the following may be subtle ways we deny Jesus.
  - a. Is there a difference between the way I speak and act versus the way someone who does not claim to know Jesus as Lord and Saviour speaks and acts?
  - b. Do I live from Sunday to Sunday without acknowledging Jesus as Lord in my life?
  - c. Do my daily decisions reflect a reliance upon the Lord?
  - d. Does the way I live my life honour Jesus?
    - i. In order to answer this question we need to answer the question, how do I honour Jesus with my life?
  - e. Are there other ways we may be denying Jesus?

**Matthew 26:**<sup>75</sup> Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: “Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.” And he went outside and wept bitterly.

7. Peter had been with Jesus for three years. He loved Jesus and was part of the inner circle of Jesus’ closest disciples, and yet in a moment when he felt threatened, he denied Jesus. As you read Matthew 26:75, what range of feelings do you think Peter was experiencing?
  - a. What does the last sentence suggest about how Peter was feeling?

**John 21:**<sup>15</sup> When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”

“Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”

<sup>16</sup> Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”

<sup>17</sup> The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.”<sup>18</sup> Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.”<sup>19</sup> Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!”

8. In the above passage from John 21, Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved him.
  - a. What do you think the significance was of asking Peter the same question three times?
  - b. How did Peter reply each time?
  - c. What was the significant revelation in Peter's third response to Jesus?
  
9. When Jesus tells Peter to "feed my lambs", "take care of my sheep", and "feed my sheep", who is Jesus referring to?
  - a. What do you think Jesus is telling Peter to do in these three phrases?
  - b. What does this passage suggest about the depth of God's forgiveness, that Jesus would entrust someone who denied him three times with the care of the flock?
  - c. What encouragement or comfort can we take from these verses?
  
10. Peter was crucified under Nero around 65-67 AD. From verse 19, we might conclude that Peter knew the kind of death he would suffer. After Jesus revealed this to Peter, he said "Follow me".
  - a. Reread Matthew 26:75 and think about how Peter felt when he denied Jesus and then read John 21:17 where Jesus asked Peter for the third time if he loved him. Do you think these two experiences changed Peter's relationship with the Lord? Why or why not?
  - b. Peter counted the cost and remained faithful. What do you think his motivation was?
  - c. What motivates you in your walk with the Lord?
  
11. What have you learned in this lesson that will strengthen your relationship and walk with the Lord?

**For Reflection:** When I was a young man, I wondered about the purpose of living. It seemed to me that if all we were on this earth for was to work, grow old and die, why do it. The struggle did not seem worth it. Then I discovered Jesus, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say Jesus revealed himself to me. Jesus loves me, he forgave me and he gave my life purpose. I can identify specific points in my life where a decision that honoured God has brought me to where I am today. Take a moment to reflect on your life. Are there decisions you have made, good and bad, that have shaped your journey? How has the Lord changed you to become the child of God you are today? Are there opportunities I feel the Lord is calling me to, that I have not been obedient in answering? If yes, what am I going to do about it? I pray the Lord will give you much wisdom and a spirit of discernment as you consider these questions.