


TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

2019.5.5



Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- Who has lived as a resident alien in a foreign country for an extended period? Tell us about it. What was your most embarrassing moment? What in their culture did you "never get the hang of"? What did **you** misunderstand? How were you misunderstood by local citizens? In what ways—positive and negative—did it differ from times you were simply a tourist?
- Peter was a "natural born leader". Who do you know well who has significant leadership ability? Tell us about a time when you experienced great **benefit** from his/her leadership. Do you mind following that person? Why or why not? How do these experiences shed light on Peter?
- Choose one of the bulleted "leadership events" from Peter's life described in the Book of Acts (see Sermon Summary). How did that event benefit from Peter's confident leadership? What could go wrong if a person without Peter's gifting were thrown into a similar situation?
- Peter had an "epic fail"—but Jesus sought him out, forgave him, and reinstated him to leadership. Who would be willing to tell of a personal failure that likewise **didn't** define you?

Biblically, what should we do when we **do** feel immobilized by failure—either an actual one in our past, or the risk of one in the future?

Need help becoming a faithful disciple?
For free hope and help, write to:
counseling@tcc.org

Application-Challenge

Today, find a quiet place and ask God to speak to you from 1 Peter. Then, read through the entire book of 1 Peter in one sitting. (Your goal is to get a feel for the book.)

Monday through Friday, follow the "Digging Deeper" instructions found on the next page. Conclude by writing a short summary of your overall impressions of that chapter—especially noting what you believe God would have you apply in some way. Then, **do it!**

Sermon Summary

We are beginning a study of the New Testament letter of 1 Peter. Of all Jesus' disciples, none stands as front and center as does Peter. Chuck Swindoll says this about him: "Whether sloshing around in a sinking boat weighted down with fish or wielding a sword in a torch lit garden, Peter dominates every scene he's in." No disciple is so pointedly reproved by our Lord as Peter, and no disciple ever ventures to reprove his Master but Peter. No other disciple ever so boldly confessed and outspokenly acknowledged and encouraged our Lord as Peter repeatedly did; and no one ever intruded and interfered and tempted Him, as Peter repeatedly did. Peter was interesting—both faithful and frustrating!

We first catch sight of Peter in Mark 1:16-18. Peter and his brother Andrew were full time fishermen. All of this changes however when Jesus called them to follow him. It didn't take long for this Galilean fisherman to rise to a position of prominence. Matthew 10:2, refers to Peter as "the first" among the twelve. Peter not only often spoke on behalf of the other disciples (Matthew 18:21-22 and 19:27-30), he often found himself fielding questions from outsiders about Jesus (Matthew 17:24-25). As a result of Peter's faith, Jesus praised him and changed his name from Simon, to Peter, which means "rock" (petros). But it wasn't all praise. Peter also had the dubious role of being the most rebuked of Jesus' disciples, especially when his Galilean impulsiveness merged with his heartfelt loyalty (Matthew 16:21-23)

There is no question that Peter was loyal—but then there's that now infamous denial of Christ. If you were to graph Peter's spiritual life on a piece of paper, there would be extreme highs and lows. If the highest point was Peter's experience with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration as recorded in Matthew chapter 17, his denial of Christ in the temple courtyard would be the lowest of the lows (Mark 14:27-31, 66-72). When a person experiences that kind of spiritual crash, when you fail God, you feel as though God could never use you again. But in John 21:15-17, Jesus let Peter know that he wasn't done with him. With the command, "Follow me", Jesus reestablished Peter's leadership role in the kingdom. This second chance turned Peter's life around!

- Peter took the initiative in choosing Judas' replacement (Acts 1).
- Peter was the spokesman for the first evangelistic outreach at Pentecost (Acts 2).
- Peter, together with John, healed a lame man at the temple gate (Acts 3).
- Peter defied the Sanhedrin, refusing to be silent about Jesus (Acts 4).
- Peter presided over the grim task of dealing with Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5).
- Peter dealt decisively with the deceit of Simon the magician (Acts 8).
- Peter reached out to Gentiles, revealing that the gospel is for everyone (Acts 10-11).

1 Peter is written to believers who reside as "aliens" scattered throughout the Roman Empire. As non-citizens they often were looked upon with suspicion, as being potentially subversive to the established social order. As a result they were marginalized. Not much has changed—we are often looked upon with suspicion because our world view and moral values are out of step with modern western culture. We are mocked and marginalized for our beliefs today. Peter reminded his readers who they were in Christ. We are resident aliens; our home is heaven (Philippians 3:20). But we must be careful to not adopt the mentality of an "immigrant", for they are attempting to become a citizen of their host country. We must not allow concerns about fitting in to supersede our role as God's representatives. On the other hand, we must not assume the role of a "tourist", never really getting involved. With that mentality we will fail to interact with the world on behalf of God and have no long-lasting spiritual impact. We are to live as "resident aliens", planting our lives in a new country while retaining the character of our real home. This allows us to build redemptive relationships with our neighbors, but to do so as people who are "in the world, but not of the world."

Hostility and opposition were mounting against Christians in the empire, and they were being reviled and abused for their lifestyles and their subversive talk about another kingdom (1 Peter 1:6; 3:13-17; 4:12-19; 5:9-10). Peter wrote to give suffering believers divine perspective on trials and to encourage us to endure persecution without wavering in our faith. He tells us that we shouldn't be surprised when our association with Christ results in ridicule or outright persecution—but to do this we must have the eternal perspective that Peter writes to instill in us.

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any passage. Let's use it to learn to begin getting an overview of the book of 1 Peter...

Monday— **Chapter 1** of the New Testament book, **1 Peter**

Tuesday— **Chapter 2** of the New Testament book, **1 Peter**

Wednesday— **Chapter 3** of the New Testament book, **1 Peter**

Thursday— **Chapter 4** of the New Testament book, **1 Peter**

Friday— **Chapter 5** of the New Testament book, **1 Peter**

Saturday— ***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** carefully study 1 Peter 1:1-12

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) is it found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text?