

Peter's Boat Lessons 2021

Pastor James Foley – Shared Sunday, January 31, 2021

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for joining us today! Whether you are here in person or watching via the livestream, you are most welcome. Please have a Bible at the ready and be prepared to take some notes. We have much to cover in a relatively short amount of time.

SETTING THE STAGE PT. 1

In recent months I have come to notice how often I teasingly say, “Never get into a boat with Jesus!” This phrase has appeared (albeit inadvertently) some five or six times in the last number of messages. After prayerful consideration I have decided to touch upon this theme, addressing the life-lessons one of my favorite characters learned on or around a boat with Christ...

SETTING THE STAGE PT. 1

Q. What character am I referring to?

A. Peter (i.e., also called “Simon Peter”)

NOTE 1 – I love the apostle Peter! He is a favorite figure of mine to read about or teach...

Q. Why? Why do I possess such an affinity for this character?

A1. He is the most prominently featured apostle in the Gospel accounts (i.e., appears and speaks often)

A2. He is the most “human” apostle (i.e., prone to act/speak rashly; prone to wrongly assess himself/sit)

QUOTE – “Peter was a failure in ways that we most dread: he was impotent in a crisis and socially inept. At the arrest of Jesus he collapsed, a hapless, blustering coward. In the most critical situations of his life with Jesus (e.g., the confession of Jesus as the Christ on the road to Caesarea Philippi or on the Mount of transfiguration), he said the most embarrassingly inappropriate things. He was not the companion we would want with us in time of danger, and he was not the kind of person we would feel comfortable with in a social occasion.”

NOTE 2 – It is this “humanity” of Peter makes that him wonderfully relatable (i.e., as I am also quite human). Like Peter, I don’t have it all figured out yet! I am convicted, challenged and greatly encouraged by the record of his life and living, coming to understand Christ’s love for and work in me accordingly.

NOTE 3 – Thus said, it is amazing how many precepts Peter learned in proximity to a boat, and I believe they are worth addressing! I purpose to cover four moments from the life of Peter that take place in or around a boat (i.e., each from a different Gospel), considering the precepts we can glean...

LET’S DELVE IN...

LUKE 5:1–11

FYI – Our first scene comes early in the ministry of Christ and centers upon an early interaction with Peter...

Luke 5:1–11 (NIV)

1 One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. 2 He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. 3 He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch."

5 Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets."

6 When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. 7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" 9 For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, 10 and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." 11 So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

Q. What Lessons Did Peter Learn?

Q. What Lessons Can We Glean in Kind?

A1. The need to lay aside excuses and say "yes" to Jesus (v. 2–5)

A2. God's ways often offend earthly or human sensibility (v. 4–5)

Isaiah 55:8–10

8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,"
declares the Lord.

9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

A3. Obedience to the Lord releases supernatural result (v. 6–7)

A4. Christ wanted someone "just like" Simon Peter (v. 8–11)

MARK 4:35–41

FYI – Our next scene also comes early in the ministry of Christ and spotlights immature disciples (e.g., Peter)...

Mark 4:35–41

35 That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” 36 Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. 37 A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. 38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”

39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

40 He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

41 They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

Q. What Lessons Did Peter Learn?

Q. What Lessons Can We Glean in Kind?

A1. The command of Christ may lead us into storms (v. 35–37)

A2. The things that frighten us do not frighten Him (perspective) (v. 37–38)

A3. Do not forget what Jesus told you before the storm (He is trustworthy) (v. 35, 40)

QUOTE – “One day, while my son and I were out in the country, climbing around in some cliffs, I heard a voice from above me yell, ‘Hey Dad! Catch me!’ I turned around to see him joyfully jumping off a rock straight at me. He had jumped and then yelled ‘Hey Dad!’ I became an instant circus act, catching him. We both fell to the ground. For a moment after I caught him, I could hardly talk. When I found my voice again, I gasped in exasperation: ‘Son! Can you give me one good reason why you did that?’ He responded with remarkable calmness: ‘Sure...because you’re my Dad.’ His whole assurance was based in the fact that his father was trustworthy. He could live life to the hilt because I could be trusted. Isn’t this even more true for a Christian?”

A4. Believers are connected to a Christ who can save to the uttermost (v. 39)

A5. Believers are not connected to a Christ who is an equal (exalted) (v. 41)

QUOTE – “There is no situation I can get into that God cannot get me out. Some years ago, when I was learning to fly, my instructor told me to put the plane into a steep and extended dive. I was totally unprepared for what was about to happen. After a brief time, the engine stalled, and the plane began to plunge out-of-control. It soon became evident that the instructor was not going to help me at all. After a few seconds, which seemed like eternity, my mind began to function again. I quickly corrected the situation. Immediately I turned to the instructor and began to vent my fearful frustrations on him. He very calmly said to me, ‘There is no position you can get this airplane into that I cannot get you out of. If you want to learn to fly, go up there and do it again.’ At that moment God seemed to be saying to me, ‘Remember this. As you serve Me, there is no situation you can get yourself into that I cannot get you out of. If you trust me, you will be all right.’ That lesson has been proven true in my ministry many times over the years.”

MATTHEW 14:22–31

FYI – Our next scene comes at a mid-to-late point in the ministry of Christ. Peter has some experience herein...

Matthew 14:22–31

22 Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. 23 After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, 24 and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

25 Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. 26 When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear.

27 But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”

28 “Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.”

29 “Come,” he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!”

31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”

Q. What Lessons Did Peter Learn?

Q. What Lessons Can We Glean in Kind?

- A1.** Jesus shows up in the midst of the darkest moments (v. 24–25)
- A2.** You have to get out of the boat if you want to walk on water (v. 28–29)
- A3.** When Jesus is your focus you can rise above the wind and waves (v. 28–29)

Colossians 3:1–2

1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

- A4.** When Jesus is not your focus the storm can easily “overwhelm” you (v. 30)
- A5.** It is the nature of Christ to lift us when we fall—not push us down (v. 31)

Isaiah 42:3

3 A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.

QUOTE – “He will have pity for the broken-hearted, compassion for the humble, affection for the penitent, and healing for the afflicted. Come to Him in faith, humbly trusting His strength, and find that He is gracious to all.”

KEY – Christ evidenced tenderness and compassion for the broken, downtrodden and the weak in His ministry.

- A6.** Growth and cultivation is the expectation of Christ (v. 31)

JOHN 21:1–19 PT. 1

FYI – Our final scene comes after the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ...

KEY 1 – Allow me to set some necessary context for this lengthy portion of Scripture and varied lessons...

- 1) At the Last Supper Christ spoke of His betrayal
- 2) Peter pridefully declared his “superior” love and allegiance
- 3) The Lord Jesus notified Peter of his imminent betrayal and denial

Matthew 26:31–35

31 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.’ [cf. Zech. 13:7]

32 But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.”

33 Peter replied, “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.”

34 “Truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.”

35 But Peter declared, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the other disciples said the same.

- 4) Peter—mere hours later—did ‘betray’ Christ thrice in a moment of crisis
- 5) Christ is crucified, dies and is buried into a tomb (i.e., “death of a dream”)

KEY 2 – Here is where our final account picks up. Let us note the following one section at a time...

John 21:1–6

1 Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way: 2 Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. 3 “I’m going out to fish,” Simon Peter told them, and they said, “We’ll go with you.” So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

4 Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.

5 He called out to them, “Friends, haven’t you any fish?”

“No,” they answered.

6 He said, “Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.” When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

Q. What Lessons Did Peter Learn?

Q. What Lessons Can We Glean in Kind?

A1. Not even death can stop the person and work of Christ (v. 1)

Acts 2:24

24 God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

A2. Christ is powerful and is able to accomplish His will and purpose (v. 1)

A3. Often the Lord will lead us back to the moment of our first love (v. 4–6)

JOHN 21:1–19 PT. 2

John 21:7–14

7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, “It is the Lord,” he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. 8 The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. 9 When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.

10 Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish you have just caught.” 11 So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. 12 Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” None of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. 14 This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Q. What Lessons Did Peter Learn?

Q. What Lessons Can We Glean in Kind?

A1. Jesus still wanted someone just like Peter (i.e., sharing of a meal) (v. 9–12)

JOHN 21:1–19 PT. 3

John 21:15–17

15 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.”

16 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.”

17 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.”

Q. What Lessons Did Peter Learn?

Q. What Lessons Can We Glean in Kind?

- A1.** True restoration can be a painful process (thrice repeated) (v. 15–17)
- A2.** The necessity of humility & brokenness before God (i.e., Greek) (v. 15–17)
- A3.** Christ is able to transform the human heart and utilize them (Feed/Care For)

FYI – Speaking of humility, transformation and service to the Lord...

JOHN 21:1–19 PT. 4

John 21:18–19

18 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.” 19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!”

Q. What Lessons Did Peter Learn?

Q. What Lessons Can We Glean in Kind?

A. We are to serve the Lord according to His will and unto His ends—despite the cost...

Matthew 16:24–25

24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.

SUMMATIONS

KEY 1 – Many life-lessons were shared this morning—life-lessons discovered by Peter on or around a boat...

Q. Which lessons resonate the most in your heart this morning?

Q. Which was used of God to convict, encourage or comfort you?

KEY 2 – I have teasingly said, “Never get into a boat with Jesus!” I will close out by saying, “Maybe we should!”

CONCLUSION

Thank you for taking the time to join us today. Should those of you who have joined us online wish to give, please do so through the giving portal of our church website (www.NewLifeBarre.org). For those who are present, you may place your donation in one of our offering boxes.

Numbers 6:24–26

- 24 The Lord bless you
and keep you;
- 25 the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
- 26 the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.