

## LIFE OF PETER

Intro. The first account we have of Jesus coming in contact with Peter is recorded in John 1:35-42. Notice John 1:41. . . We know very little of Andrew's activities as an apostle, but it is not likely that he ever did a greater work than he did in bringing Simon to Jesus. He brought one to Christ who later brought thousands of others to Jesus the Christ; and Peter still lives and blesses many in his writings.

When you think of Peter, you may think "impulsive." It seems that he never forecast the future or attempted to count the cost. He acted as the impulse of the moment directed him. This helps us to understand why he made some mistakes. At one time he would swear allegiance to his Lord, and then at another he would deny him. Peter could confess Jesus as the Son of God in one breath and then could turn and rebuke Jesus in the next. Jesus rebuked Peter more severely than he did any of the other apostles. Not even Judas received the rebuke that Jesus gave to Peter. At one time, Jesus said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan!" (Matt. 16:23). He also prayed for Peter and blessed him. Such a description was true, but Jesus could see in him what others could not see, namely, a steadfastness of purpose that would not give up. The life of Peter covers such a broad area that we will only be able to "touch the hem of the garment" in one lesson.

One list that I have contains the following titles: [1] Peter's call to serve. [2] Peter's confession; [3] Peter sees Christ' Glory; [4] Peter Denies His Lord; [5] Peter declares his love; [6] Peter preaches on Pentecost; [7] Peter heals a lame man; [8] Peter in Samaria; [9] Peter preaches to Gentiles; [10] Peter Delivered from Prison; [11] Peter exhorts to Christian living; [12] Peter interprets Christ's suffering and death.

### I. Life of Peter.

- A. No other disciple of the Lord occupied such a prominent place during the personal ministry of Jesus and during the early days of the church as Peter did.
- B. Name change. (John 1:41-42).
  1. Simon, son of Jona to Cephas.
  2. Cephas means a stone.
  3. Thus, the name Peter.
  4. Sometimes he is called "Simon Peter."
  5. This name suited the character into which Peter would develop.
- C. Fishers of men. (Mark 1:16-18).
  1. They were fishers by trade.
  2. Called to a similar business, but of a much higher order.
  3. From supplying the needs of the physical body with perishable food, they were to turn to the nobler work of furnishing spiritual food to the souls of men.
  4. Fishing for men is the highest calling known to man.
  5. They forsook their nets and followed him. [Could we do that?]
- D. Similar statement made in Luke 5:
  1. Preaching from Simon's boat.
  2. Launch out...
    - a. Launching out into the deep and making another effort was a test of Peter's faith.
    - b. So also, launching out into the deep of bigger programs of work and worship is a test of our faith today.
  3. Master...
    - a. They had toiled all night, using the best knowledge of the lake and of the tactics of fishermen, and in spite of the best efforts, they had failed to take anything.
    - b. They had fished hard, they were weary.
    - c. However, they had been fishing without the direction that Jesus could give them.
  4. Peter said, "at thy word..."
    - a. The direction Jesus gave was contrary to Peter's knowledge of the situation.

- b. He is willing to obey the direction which Jesus gave him. A
  - c. All of us should have that attitude.
  - d. The thing which the Lord directs may not be in harmony with the so-called findings of our society, yet the very fact he has given his word is sufficient for those who have faith in the Lord.
5. Depart from me... (v.8,11).
- a. The humility of Peter is suggested.
  - b. Peter felt that he was not worthy to be in the presence of such a being.
  - c. If all of us could learn that near the Lord is a good place to be in time of trial and of adversity, as well as times of joy and prosperity, we would have learned a valuable lesson.
- E. Peter's Confession (Matt. 16:13-19).
1. With characteristic impulsiveness, Peter answered the Lord.
  2. The question was addressed to all of them, not to Peter alone.
  3. That they all shared in the belief expressed seems clear from the fact that the honor of binding and loosing was later bestowed upon all of them.
  4. The special honor upon Peter was in recognition of his first making the confession.
  5. Peter did not hesitate; he did not say, "Well, in the midst of so much opposition and variety of opinions, how are we unlearned men to know what to think?"
  6. They were able to weigh the evidence, and to form conclusions, regardless of the opinions of others.
  7. The truth that Peter confessed is the central truth of all revelation, the foundation upon which rests the whole structure of Christianity.
  8. Eliminate that truth, and the Bible is an empty shell and Christianity a huge fabrication.
  9. Peter was the pebble... Christ is the rock. . .
- F. Peter's Rebuke (Matt. 16:21-25)
1. Jesus told the disciples plainly of his approaching death.
  2. Peter had something to say. He rebuked Jesus.
  3. Certainly this was a rash thing for Peter to do, but he could not understand why Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God should allow himself to be put to death.
  4. Besides, how could he be the Messiah, if he were killed?
  5. Jesus rebuked Peter for his rashness.
    - a. "Get thee behind me, Satan."
    - b. The word Satan means "adversary."
  6. Peter put himself forward as an adversary against Jesus in his plans.
  7. "Thou art a stumbling-block.."
    - a. Jesus needed encouragement for what was before him . . .
    - b. But Peter was putting himself in the way of his doing it.
  8. "For thou mindest not the things of God..."
    - a. Peter had in mind a triumphant Messiah.
    - b. But one who would lead them to victory over their enemies without the suffering of death.
    - c. He still held the Jewish idea that the Messiah would be a great warrior at the head of a great world kingdom.

Con: So much more that we could say about Peter. We will look more at his life in the months to come. Peter, impulsive, rash, but always seemed to be there. God saw the qualities in this man. What about you?