**Twelve – Wk 3 – Peter: The Stumbler**

**We are walking in the footsteps of the disciples - exploring standout moments in their life with Jesus and what we can learn about being a disciple.**

**Luke 6:12 In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God. 13 And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles: 14 Simon, whom he named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, 15 and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot, 16 and Judas the son (brother) of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.**

**They were not the most gifted or qualified, but God took these ordinary people and did extraordinary things.**

**THE TWELVE: All four gospels and Acts list the twelve.**

**The lists are slightly varied as nicknames and surnames were used.**

**1. Simon (Peter) - Son of Jonah / 2. Andrew (Simon's brother)**

**3. James - Son of Zebedee / 4. John (James’s brother)**

**5. Philip / 6. Bartholomew (Nathanael)**

**7. Matthew (Levi) / 8. Thomas (Didymus = the twin)**

**9. James / 10. Jude (Judas/Joses/Thaddeus)**

**11. Simon (the Zealot) / 12. Judas Iscariot (the traitor)**

**They were called as disciples and became Apostles.**

**They started out as learners; they ended up as messengers.**

**\*\* Today, the most famous of all the disciples – Peter.**

**There are many stories of Peter in the Gospels and Acts, he wrote two letters and was believed to be the one Mark based his Gospel after.**

**Though Andrew was the first to meet Jesus, Peter is always the first on every list – considered the spokesman for the 12.**

**There is a total of seven Simon’s in the New Testament.**

**He is one of the two Simon’s in the 12 Apostles.**

**What we know about Simon**

* **Name - Simon Bar-Jonah (son of Jonah) – raised in Bethsaida.**
* **Nicknamed Peter by Jesus (Cephas/Aramaic – Petros/Greek)**
* **Peter and Andrew (brother) had a fishing business.**
* **They lived together in a house in Capernaum.**
* **Peter was married - Jesus healed his mother-in-law.**

**Last week, we saw how Andrew met Jesus first, and then he introduced Peter to Jesus while in Bethany with Johny B. (John 1:35-42).**

**A year later, in Galilee, Jesus showed up at work (fishermen) and called Peter (and Andrew, James, and John) to follow him as disciples.**

**Matthew 4:18 While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. 19 And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” 20 Immediately, they left their nets and followed him. (Luke 5:4-11 tells us it was after a fishing miracle, and James and John were with them.)**

**So, Peter leaves everything to follow Jesus with his brother and a couple of friends. Soon other disciples join them.**

**With so many passages that tell us about Peter, it’s hard to narrow it. He is the 2nd most mentioned person in the Gospels (Jesus being 1st).**

**With so many amazing stories, we are going to focus on,**

**Two Major Themes in Peter’s Life:**

**1. God can truly transform anyone**

**We know more about the life of Peter than any other disciple which means we can trace his growth as a disciple.**

**Peter Gospel Highlights:**

* **He speaks more than any disciple – and Jesus speaks to the most.**
* **No one is praised and applauded by Jesus more than Peter.**
* **No one is rebuked more than Peter – and surprisingly**
* **Peter is foolishly the only disciple who tries to rebuke Jesus (Matt 16:22)**
* **He is called a Rock and Satan in the same conversation. (Matt 16:23)**
* **He walked on water, when no one else would get out then sank (Ma 14:28-31)**
* **One of three who witnessed the Transfiguration, tried to sat there (Ma 17:1-8)**
* **Anxious of taxes, Jesus told him to go fishing (coins in mouth) (Ma 17:24-27)**
* **He in fury and fear cut the ear off a soldier and ran away (Luke 22:51)**
* **He said he would die for Jesus, only to deny during crucifixion (Jo 18:15-27)**

**Personality traits seen in Peter in the Gospels.**

* **Brash, outspoken, impulsive – often speaking without thinking.**
* **Bold, confrontational, and in your face.**
* **He often stepped up when others did not.**
* **Was passionate about Jesus and very emotional.**
* **He suffered from foot-mouth disease (open mouth insert foot)**
* **Seemed at first unstable and unreliable.**

**Matthew 16:13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” (Great question to ask people…) 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” let’s make it personal – what about you?) 16 Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”**

* **Jesus is the Savior, King, Lord and God in the flesh!**

**Peter made one of the clearest declarations: You are the long-awaited promised anointed one, the savior King - God in the flesh!**

**17 And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.**

* **You can’t convince or argue anyone into faith in Jesus**

**Like with Peter it’s something only God himself must reveal to one.**

**18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**

**Roman Catholic tradition often uses this to claim Peter was the first pope. And that the church is built upon Peter and those who follow as Pope of Rome. Let’s take a closer look.**

**18 And I tell you, you are Peter, (petros - a stone) and on this rock (petra – the massive rock/mountain of what you just said – on that unmovable mountainous declaration of what you just said – on that truth…) I will (not a person, pastor or personality) build my church, (Who's is it? It’s not about you or me. Jesus birthed it, empowers it, gave his life for it, is coming back for it, and says don’t you dare make it about you!) and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**

**Church = Ekklesia - first use in NT - new assembly of impactful citizens. Ekklesia means to gather / to assemble.**

**Ekklesia is not and cannot be solo. It take community.**

* **Jesus – not Peter – is THE ROCK of the church**

**This is the rock: - Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God.**

**It was on this truth that Ekklesia is built - Ekklesia is about Jesus!**

**“and the gates of hell shall not prevail”- It has been said that gates are defensive - Hell is on the defensive! The church is on the offensive - we do not “hold the fort – we harass the foe”**

**Peter, you are a strong part of this - a stone in it – but you are not it.**

**Peter, you're a stone / a tool - a piece of Ekklesia – But true Ekklesia will be built on the unmovable boulder of who I am!**

**Today true believers around the world gather under this foundation.**

**Matt 16:19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” (this is apostolic authority- wk one, given to the Apostles) 20 Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ. (They were to wait to tell the world until after his death and resurrection).**

**Whoa, Peter was on a role - but then… open mouth, insert foot.**

**21 From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. 22 And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” (you’re wrong Jesus – this will never happen! Trying to tell Jesus he was wrong – have you ever been an idiot with God?) 23 But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”**

**Jesus starts talking persecution, arrest and death… Peter jumps up – no way – not gonna happen, not on my watch - I’ll make sure.**

**Jesus - The cross is the plan – this is why I came!**

**“Peter, get in the back, you're being demonic.”**

**Aww man, that’s harsh. You didn’t have to say that in front of everybody. others laughing – he just called you Satan… shut up!**

**We do the same. I have a relationship with Jesus… now I have some control of God. I called you Lord, now do this… bring this person back, heal my body, get me a job, etc. I said “in Jesus’ name” now God has to do it.**

**Peter - Jesus you’re the Lord. Jesus - great now let me tell you about suffering. Hold on - time out! Never! Well, now you’re thinking like Satan. You claim the faith of Jesus, but like Peter you have your own motives – your own plans. Like Peter, some of our prayers and attitudes are Satanic.**

**How could Jesus call Peter the rock? Does he sound familiar?**

**He is the seesaw disciple: Many of us can relate to this guy.**

**• One moment, he is walking on water – the next, he is swimming with the fish.**

**• One moment, he is saying Jesus, you are the Christ, God in the flesh – the next**

**he wants to stop the plan of God.**

**• One moment Jesus calls Peter a rock – the next Jesus calls Peter Satan.**

**• One moment, he is declaring he would die for Jesus and never let Jesus down**

**- the next, he is denying Jesus three times.**

**\*\*\* One thing is for sure - Jesus is in the business of taking who we are and transforming us into who He wants us to be.**

**God took Simon (an impulsive, manic, unreliable person) and transformed him into a stable, unshakeable force who turned the world upside down. God can change anybody!**

**His is the story and process of a hothead, impulsive, emotional, and at times unstable man named Simon who became a Rock by *The* Rock.**

**The Peter of Acts is a different Peter of the Gospels.**

**The Peter of Acts is walking in miraculous boldness and power.**

**Transformed into the head of the early church in Jerusalem.**

**2. God can forgive anyone**

**The first recorded conversation with Peter and Jesus was him asking for forgiveness (Luke 5:8-11). Peter, like all of us, need a lot of it.**

**After a few years, Peter has seen Jesus – heal diseases, raise the dead, miraculously feed thousands, open blind eyes, and embrace the outcasts, the rejected, the lonely, and forgive the sinner.**

**Peter at this point was willing to do anything for Jesus, with conviction. But then, he hits his lowest point.**

**Matthew 26 – it’s the last meal of Jesus before the crucifixion. Jesus says he will be betrayed, arrested, abandoned, crucified, & resurrected.**

**Peter hears arrested and abandoned, and Peter declares,**

**(33) "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will."**

**(35) "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you."**

**(34) Jesus reply’s, “you will deny me three times before the rooster crows.**

**As the night follows - Jesus is arrested – the disciples scatter like cockroaches. Peter follows close in the courtyard – trying to watch…**

**Matthew 26:69 Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came up to him and said, “You also were with Jesus the Galilean.” 70 But he denied it before them all, saying, “I do not know what you mean.” 71 And when he went out to the entrance, another servant girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.” 72 And again he denied it with an oath: “I do not know the man.” 73 After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, “Certainly you too are one of them, for your accent betrays you.” 74 Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, (btw – the clearest way to distance yourself from God before others… your language. You talk like a fisherman) “I do not know the man.” And immediately the rooster crowed. 75 And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly.**

**Many have fumbled here too. God, I give my life – I will live for you always… until I get to work - to school - with friends - online – in the gym – till I am in the barracks - at practice. I will follow you… until I get asked.**

**\*\* Jesus is then crucified – buried – and rises again. He appears to his disciples several times over the following 40 days. On one occasion after the resurrection. The brothers were fishing again in Galilee.**

**John 21 - Just like the first time Jesus shows up at work – and tells them to throw the net on the other side… and again fish everywhere. Peter can se it’s Jesus – and gets so excited he jumps in the water, leaves the catch and the boats to swim to Jesus. Jesus cooks breakfast on the beach for them.**

**John 21:15 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love (Agape) me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love (Phileo) you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” 16 He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” (Agape) He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” (Phileo) He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” 17 He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” (Phileo) and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” (Phileo) Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.**

**Peter – do you really love me? Am I here just to bless you or are you going to follow me? 3X you denied me – I want to clear it up - 3X do you love me? – because I still love you.**

**Peter is also well-known for his denials of Jesus, but after Jesus rose from the dead, Jesus made sure to let Peter know that he was still loved, accepted, and forgiven.**

**18 Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.” 19 (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.”**

**Agape vs. Phileo – you may not see it – But you will get there.**

**He once ran for fear of his life and denied Jesus to protect his hide and reputation – then in Acts we see a man in the boldness of the HS stand in the face of opposition, torture, and persecution.**

**\* Jesus' grace is greater than our deepest sin and most regrettable acts**

**Peter, you blew it, but my grace is sufficient. I still call you my own. I know you are a work in progress. But I will never let you go.**

**Maybe you feel like you have absolutely blown it with Jesus. Betrayed him and walked out on him? If you sense that pull in your spirit – that is Jesus saying I am not done with you yet.**

**After Jesus’ Ascension: Acts records a lot about Peter**

* **He preached the first sermon – 3000 got saved – Acts 2**
* **He was a major figure in the early church - Acts 3-6, Ga 1:18, 2:1-10**
* **He was often arrested for his bold proclamation of Jesus.**
* **He was miraculously set free from prison.**
* **Performed miracles: raising the dead, healing the sick, the lame, lepers.**
* **Led the first gentile to Jesus - Ac 10-11; 15:6-11**
* **It is recorded that Mark’s Gospel is the dictation and accounts of Peter.**
* **Paul records that Peter and his wife traveled together (1 Cor 9:5).**
* **He traveled throughout Judea building the church and then was believed to have gone to Rome.**

**Death: Early church fathers record, while in Rome, Peter was arrested and thrown into the Mamertine Prison in Rome – by Nero. He was tortured for nine months; it is recorded that he led 47 jailers to Christ.**

**He, like other Christians in Rome, were taken to the spectacle of Nero’s Circus. An arena used for racing & Christian torture.**

**History tells us he was forced to watch his wife be crucified.**

**Upon seeing his own wife led out to die, he rejoiced because of her summons to go home to the Lord. - Eusebius / Clement - He called out to encourage and comfort her. Crying out her name, he shouted, "Remember the Lord." As she hung upon a cross.**

**When his time came, He asserted that he was unworthy to die like in the same manner as Jesus and was crucified upside down in 67 AD.**

**As Jesus prophesied, Peter was arrested and martyred (John 21:18-19)**

**He did truly agape Jesus – love without condition.**

**Centuries later, that very same place where Peter and countless other Christians were crucified - became the very site of St Peter’s Basilica on Vatican Hill.**

* **Perhaps you have fumbled with Jesus – more than once…**
* **Maybe you have blown it with Jesus - betrayed him & walked out.**

**Take a look at Peter – Jesus is in the forgiveness and transformation business.**

**Like Jesus asked his disciple that evening…**

* **Who do you say that Jesus is?**
* **Jesus is the Savior, King, Lord and God in the flesh!**