

A Man Called Peter

Selected Scriptures - NCBC, February 4, 2018

Main Point: **Peter's life illustrates God's true grace in troubled times.**

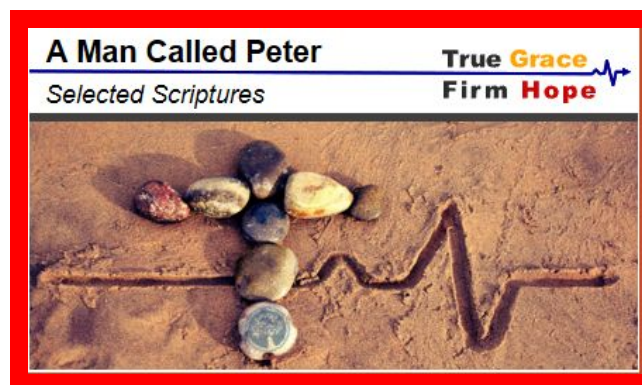
- **God's Calling: Peter becomes a disciple** (Luke 5:1-11)
 - Jesus changes your identity
 - Jesus changes your authority
 - Jesus changes your purpose
- **God's Care: Peter walks on water** (Matthew 14:24-33)
 - Jesus cares for your fears
 - Jesus cares for your storms
 - Jesus cares for your faith
- **God's Constancy: Peter falls away** (Luke 22:31-62)
 - Peter thinks too highly
 - Peter prays too faintly
 - Peter acts too quickly
 - Peter follows too distantly
- **God's Cure: Peter is restored** (John 21)
 - Jesus restores the humble
 - Jesus restores the repentant
 - Jesus restores the dependent

Application: **Trust in the God of grace to restore and strengthen you** (1 Peter 5:10-11)

Opening Announcements:

- Churchwide First Prayer Service – Weds, 2/7 6:45pm

<<There is a Fountain>>



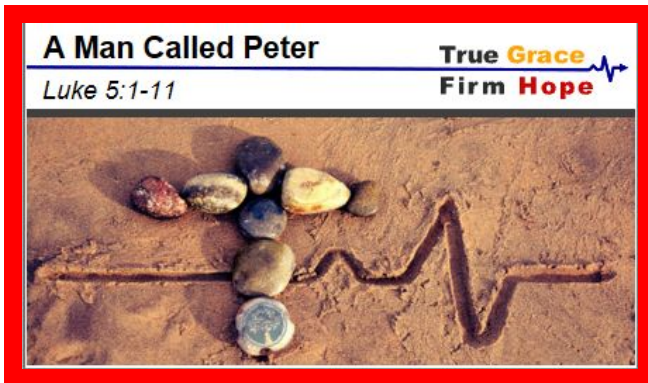
Only the blood of Jesus can wash away sin. Therefore, all who are trusting in the finished work of Jesus Christ and His resurrection gather together on the first day of each week to worship and adore Him. We open our Bibles and seek to submit our lives to His Divine commands. For there is no greater joy possible than to live in close friendship with our Holy God.

Today we begin a new sermon series on **1 Peter** called *True Grace – Firm Hope*. And to introduce our study of Peter's letter to the exiled persecuted believers... we are going to first review some key events in the life of the apostle Peter.

We will survey several Scriptures today, but I've selected **Luke 5** for our Scripture reading.



So please open your copy of God's word to **Luke 5**. If you don't have a Bible with you, simply raise your hand and we'd be delighted to give you one. You are welcome to take this Bible home as our gift to you, or just return it after our service by placing it on the table in the back of the room.



The first letter of Peter emphasizes God's true grace which gives all Christ-followers firm hope in trouble. And the more we understand about Simon Peter's own life

experiences, the more rich and meaningful his letter will be to us.

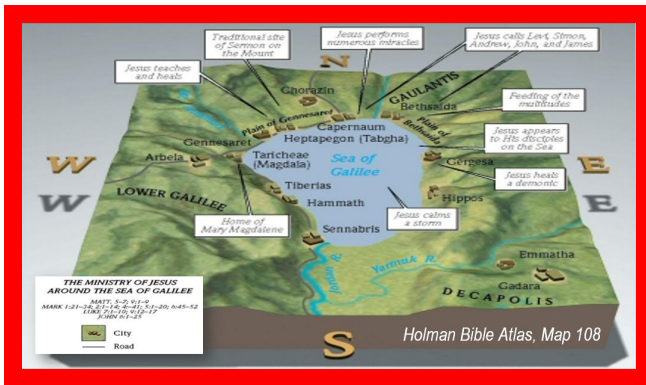
Please stand in honor of the reading of God's Word as I the **first 11 verses** of **Luke 5**, from the **English Standard Translation**:

On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on [Jesus] to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, ² and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. ³ Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. ⁴ And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." ⁵ And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." ⁶ And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. ⁷ They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸ But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." ⁹ For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, ¹⁰ and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." ¹¹ And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

This is the word of God. You may be seated.

Let's Pray.

Simon Peter was born into a Jewish family who lived in the Galilee of the Gentiles, surrounding the Sea of Galilee, otherwise known as *the lake of Gennesaret*.



He was born in the village of Bethsaida on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee around 10 A.D.¹ His father John² named him Simon³ – which was a very popular name for Jewish boys – for it was the Jewish form of the name Simeon⁴ – of one of the Twelve Tribes of Israel.⁵

At some point John moved Simon and his brother Andrew⁶ from Bethsaida to the larger city of Capernaum,⁷ where they owned several fishing boats.

¹ John 1:44

² John 1:42; 21:15-17; Or Jonas, Matthew 16:17

³ Mark 1:16, 29, 30, 36

⁴ Acts 15:14; 2 Peter 1:1

⁵ Genesis 29:33; Exodus 1:1

⁶ Mark 1:16

⁷ Mark 1:21, 29

By the time we meet Simon in the Gospels, he is married⁸ and operating a successful fishing business on the lake in partnership with a powerful man named Zebedee⁹ and his two sons James and John.¹⁰

New Testament Scriptures teach us about many of Simon Peter's miraculous experiences with Jesus. Simon is known as the disciple with a "foot-shaped mouth" but a "cross-shaped heart." He was impulsive¹¹ but brave and willing to die for Jesus.¹² He was uneducated,¹³ but a bold and clear preacher of God's saving grace.¹⁴

After Jesus' resurrection, Simon Peter became the natural spokesman and leader of all the apostles.¹⁵ He performed many miracles of healing,¹⁶ presided over the church discipline of Ananias and Sapphira in **Acts 5** and spoke at the Jerusalem council in **Acts 15**.

Peter struggled throughout his life with both racism¹⁷ and legalism,¹⁸ but God's grace preserved his faith all the way

⁸ Mark 1:30; 1 Corinthians 9:5 – contrary Roman Catholic tradition that claims Peter as their first (unmarried) pope

⁹ Mark 3:16-17

¹⁰ Luke 5:10

¹¹ Mark 9:5; John 13:4-11

¹² Matthew 26:51-52

¹³ Acts 4:13

¹⁴ Acts 2; 3:1-10, 11-26; 4

¹⁵ Matthew 16:13-20; Mark 8:27-30; Luke 9:18-21; Acts 1:15-26; 15:7-11.

C.f. Peter's name is always listed first in the listing of apostles: Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13.

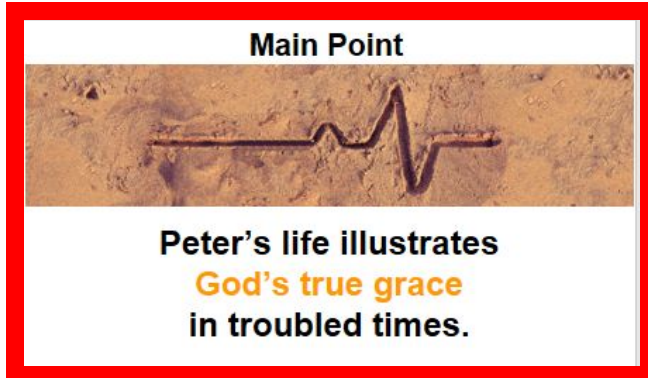
¹⁶ I.e. Acts 3:6-8; 5:15

¹⁷ Acts 10:9-16ff

¹⁸ Galatians 2:11-14

through his gruesome death in Rome. While Scripture does not provide the details of his death,¹⁹ historical tradition says that Peter was crucified up-side down on a cross²⁰ – after encouraging his own wife to “Remember the Lord” as she was led away to be crucified as well.²¹

So before studying this letter that Peter wrote from Rome to other persecuted Christians before he himself was martyred, it’s worth taking a closer look at four key events in Peter’s life.



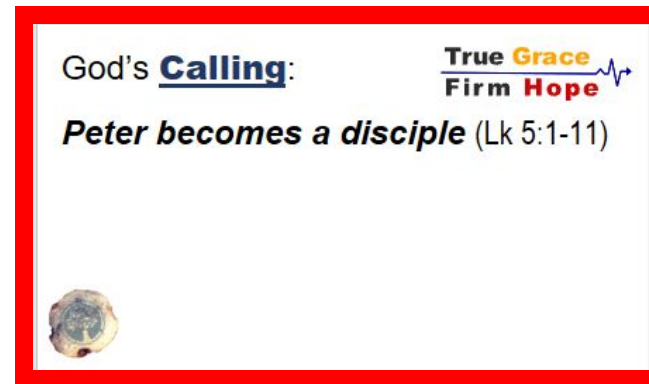
Because as we survey Peter’s life, we will discover that **Peter’s life illustrates God’s true grace in troubled times.** Peter’s own life represents the firm hope that comes from God’s true grace – even when pressured by immense and undeserved suffering.

So let’s start by considering,

¹⁹ Only John 21:18-19

²⁰ <https://www.gotquestions.org/apostle-Peter-die.html>;
<http://www.exclassics.com/foxe/foxe5.htm>

²¹ <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/all-women-bible/Peter-8217-s-Wife>



God’s Calling of Peter. How did Peter become a disciple?

We must start in **John 1, verse 35**. You see Peter and his brother Andrew were both disciples of the fiery prophet John the Baptist. But one day Andrew was with John the Baptist when Jesus walked by. And John the Baptist cried out,

*Behold the Lamb of God...who takes away the sins of the world!*²²

And after getting to know Jesus himself,²³ Andrew immediately *found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ).*²⁴ And Andrew brought Simon to Jesus.

Now do you remember what happened when Andrew introduces his brother to the Lord?

²² John 1:29, 36


²³ John 1:38-39

²⁴ John 1:41

John 1:42 says, *Jesus looked at Simon and said, “So you are Simon the son of John? You shall be called Cephas” (which means Peter).*


Jesus changed the name of Simon!

This is what happens to every person who truly comes face to face with Jesus Christ by faith:

God's **Calling**: **True Grace**
Firm Hope 

Peter becomes a disciple (Lk 5:1-11)

- Jesus changes your **identity**



Jesus changes your identity

Remember Peter was an uneducated but successful fisherman. But there was something about the urgency in his brother's voice that convinced him to stop mending his nets and go meet Jesus. And right away Jesus gave Simon the Aramaic name, *Cephas*, or the Greek name, *Peter*. These new names meant “rock.” Simon – I'm giving you a new name – a new identity – for I will change you into a rock for the Kingdom of God!

After that day Peter could always tell if Jesus was commending him, or correcting him, by the name Jesus would use for him. When he acted in faith, Jesus would call him Peter the rock. But when he faltered in faith,


Jesus would call him Simon to help him realize that he was acting like his old self.

Several weeks after Jesus gave him this new name, Peter was out fishing with Andrew and James and John. According to **Luke 5**, they had fished all night and had nothing to show for it. These professional fisherman had been skunked – and were now washing their nets along the shore with tired bodies and wounded pride. When Jesus walked up to Peter and asked if he could use his boat to preach from.

I imagine Peter just sitting in the boat – occasionally rowing to keep the boat's position – soaking in the words of Christ as He taught the crowds on the shore. And then **verse 4 of Luke chapter 5**,


And when Jesus had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.” And Simon answered, “Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.

You see loved ones, believing in Jesus doesn't just change who you are...

God's **Calling**: **True Grace**
Firm Hope 

Peter becomes a disciple (Lk 5:1-11)

- Jesus changes your **identity**
- Jesus changes your **authority**



Jesus also changes your **authority**

Peter was a local fishing expert on the Sea of Galilee. He knew the best fishing was at night. He and his partners had just exhausted their every ounce of worldly wisdom and failed.

But after hearing the authoritative words of Jesus – Peter humbled his pride and says – I can no longer trust my experience more than God's words. *At your word, I will let down the nets.*

What's your functional authority today? *At your word, I will love my spouse. At your word, I will tell the truth. At your word, I will guard my heart from sin.*

Notice the result of Peter's obedient faith in God's Word: **In verses 6-7** they caught so many fish that their nets began to break and they were concerned about the boats capsizing!


You see all the rules of engagement with this world change when you trust your life to Jesus. Jesus is making a point to Peter here. Salvation doesn't just

tweak your personality a bit. God's true grace doesn't just remodel your life. Everything changes when the grave of death is overcome by the life of resurrection! The old passes away – behold all things are made new!²⁵

Such life-granting power humbles the pride of man. For what is Peter's response in **verse 8**? *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.*


Humble confession of sin is always the response of every person who encounters the true grace of God. Saving faith is powered by an awe of God and humble brokenness of self-reliance.

Can you see the power of God's active grace in your life this morning? Can you see how God's grace has treated you far better than you ever deserved? Humble yourself – confess your sinful pride – and cry out to Jesus as your Lord and Savior. For Jesus doesn't just change your entire identity and your authority, but He also changes your,

God's **Calling**: **True Grace**
Firm Hope 

Peter becomes a disciple (Lk 5:1-11)

- Jesus changes your **identity**
- Jesus changes your **authority**
- Jesus changes your **purpose**

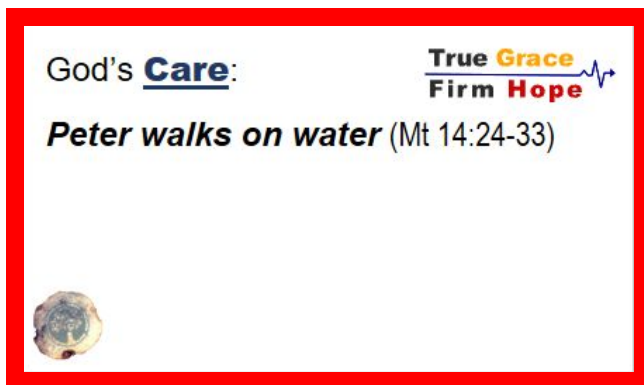


purpose

²⁵ 2 Corinthians 5:16-17

In verse 10 Jesus responds graciously to Peter's confession, and says, *Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men. And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.*

Listen – every disciple of Jesus is a disciple-maker. For the glory of God, we are all fishers of men. And just as God's power supplied the fish in Peter's nets...so likewise believe it is God's power that makes your witness effective in the hearts of your loved ones. Learn from God's calling of Peter, and then turn over to **Matthew chapter 14** where we see



God's Care for Peter as he walks on water

Peter's now been following Jesus for more than 2 years, and all the disciples are exhausted by the pace of ministry. John the Baptist had recently been killed by Herod²⁶ and Jesus and his disciples just need some "R & R."²⁷

²⁶ Matthew 14:1-12

²⁷ Military slang for Rest and Recuperation

But the crowds interrupt their retreat in **verse 13 of Matthew 14**...and out of His Divine compassion Jesus feeds the huge crowd of over 10,000 people with just five little biscuits and two sardines.²⁸

Then around 6pm²⁹ Jesus sends the disciples back across the lake while he dismisses the crowd³⁰ and gets alone for some much-needed prayer time.

We pick up the story in **verse 24**,

but the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them. ²⁵ *And in the fourth watch of the night [that's between 3am and 6am] he came to them, walking on the sea.* ²⁶ *But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear.* ²⁷ *But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid."* ²⁸ *And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."* ²⁹ *He said, "Come."* *So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus.* ³⁰ *But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me."* ³¹ *Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"* ³² *And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.* ³³ *And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."*

²⁸ Matthew 14:14-21

²⁹ Mark 6:47


³⁰ According to John 6:15, Jesus also prevents a premature attempt at making Him king

Now on a calm day, the disciples could get across the Sea of Galilee in about an hour or two. But for the last 9-12 hours – Peter and the rest of the disciples had been fighting the wind and the storm with all their might – and they were only half-way across the lake!!

And the entire time the disciples were fighting the storm – Jesus was praying.


Loved ones – do you believe that God cares for you? Are you straining at your oars?³¹ You can cast your cares upon a God who cares for you this morning!³²

This experience from Peter’s life reminds us that no matter what you are going through right now,

God's **Care**: True Grace
Firm Hope 


Peter walks on water (Mt 14:24-33)

- Jesus cares for your **fears**




Jesus cares for your **fears**

In **verse 27** Jesus says, *Take courage. Do not be afraid. I am here.* In the middle of your darkness – behold the comforting presence of Jesus your Savior!

God's **Care**: True Grace
Firm Hope 

Peter walks on water (Mt 14:24-33)

- Jesus cares for your **fears**
- Jesus cares for your **storms**



Jesus cares for your **storms**

Learn from God’s care for Peter in his storm. In **verse 28**, Peter cries out, “Lord if it’s really You – I want to come close to you. I need you Lord. I need you!” And with Jesus’ invitation, Peter jumps out of the boat and landed on the water.

It must have been a strange sensation – feeling the wetness and cold on his feet, but not sinking. The water was not still – the waves were still swelling and splashing up against Peter’s face. Peter must have been wobbling towards Christ just trying to keep his balance. And then the wind blew a large wave right into him – and **verse 30** says Peter took his eyes off Jesus, and immediately began to sink.

And in that moment – Peter shouted out a simple pray of faith – “Lord, Save me!”

³¹ Mark 6:48

³² 1 Peter 5:7

Immediately Jesus took hold of Peter, and rescued him saying “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”

God's **Care**: **True Grace**
Firm Hope 

Peter walks on water (Mt 14:24-33)

- Jesus cares for your **fears**
- Jesus cares for your **storms**
-  • Jesus cares for your **faith**

In other words, **Jesus cares for your faith** church.

Learn from Peter's experience with God's care.


As you go through the fearful storms of life – realize “your greatest enemy is not the winds, nor the waves, nor anything physical. My greatest enemy is the unbelief which seeks to dominate my soul and take over my heart.”³³ Unbelief drowns souls.

While you may suffer now – know that God has a purpose for your storms that you may not yet be able to see. The disciples were straining at their oars for hours while Jesus was watching from the mountaintop the entire time. Jesus had a plan for that storm – a plan to show the disciples that He really loved them and cared for them. A plan to strengthen Peter's weak faith.


³³ Pastor Ritch Boerckel, “The Life of a Fisherman – Peter”, May 22, 2011
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So stand firm in the grace of God, dear Christian. “For the water that threatens to be over your head is still under Christ's feet!”³⁴ No matter if you're enduring a financial storm, or a relationship storm, or a physical storm, or a spiritual storm... Jesus is still Lord of the Storm. Keep your eyes riveted on Jesus. Remember – while the storm rages around you – the greatest threat to your soul is unbridled unbelief that can distract your awe from the supreme sufficiency of Jesus Christ!

Next then, let's learn of,

God's **Constancy**: **True Grace**
Firm Hope 

Peter falls away (Lk 22:31-62)



God's Constancy even when Peter falls away.

We must keep moving here, but open to **Luke chapter 22**. It's now the night before Jesus' death, and all the disciples are around Jesus in the upper room when Jesus says in **verse 21**, *Behold the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table.*

³⁴ I believe this quote may have originated with Living Truth Ministries, in Canada?

Peter joins all the disciples in asking, Lord, is it me?³⁵
Then after Judas leaves, Jesus turns to Peter and says in **verse 31**,


Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.

Verse 31 is quite a humbling warning and hope-filled promise all at the same time, right?

God's **Constancy**: **True Grace**
Firm Hope

Peter falls away (Lk 22:31-62)

- Peter **thinks** too highly




But Peter **thinks too highly** of himself, as he answers in **verse 33**, *Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.*

Then in **verses 39-46**,

God's **Constancy**: **True Grace**
Firm Hope

Peter falls away (Lk 22:31-62)

- Peter **thinks** too highly
- Peter **prays** too faintly



Peter **prays too faintly**.


He falls asleep instead of watching and praying. Don't miss this lesson from the life of Peter – your commitment to God is only as good as your dependence on God.

When you think too highly, and pray too faintly, you'll be like Peter who

God's **Constancy**: **True Grace**
Firm Hope

Peter falls away (Lk 22:31-62)

- Peter **thinks** too highly
- Peter **prays** too faintly
- Peter **acts** too quickly



acts too quickly

In **verse 50** when the Roman soldiers showed up with Judas in the middle of the garden, Peter flashed his


³⁵ Matthew 26:22; Mark 14:19; Luke 22:23
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sword and cut off the ear of a servant boy named Malchus.³⁶ Then after being rebuked by his Savior,

God's **Constancy**: **True Grace**
Firm Hope

Peter falls away (Lk 22:31-62)

- Peter **thinks** too highly
- Peter **prays** too faintly
- Peter **acts** too quickly
- Peter **follows** too distantly




Peter follows too distantly in **verse 54**. And when you follow Peter's progression it's a bit easier to understand how he denied His Lord three times in **verses 55-62**.

Yet the true grace of God still offers firm hope for those who boast too much, pray too little, act too quickly, and fall so far.

In **John chapter 21**,

God's **Cure**: **True Grace**
Firm Hope

Peter is restored (John 21)



God's Gospel **Cure** is demonstrated as Peter is restored by Jesus.

Turn over to John 21 now, and note **verse 3**


Simon Peter decides to go back to fishing.

I imagine Peter was tempted to think that God couldn't use him anymore after such a public and repeated failure. But church – there's good news for those who stand firm in the grace of God.

God's **Cure**: **True Grace**
Firm Hope

Peter is restored (John 21)

- Jesus restores the **humble**



Jesus restores the **humble**

³⁶ John 8:10


As the disciples are back out trying to fish – but catching nothing – suddenly Jesus shows up on the shore. They don't recognize Him at first – until He tells them to fish differently and they are overwhelmed by their catch!

You see Peter's humility evidenced in **verse 7**. When John recognizes Jesus – Peter immediately throws himself into the water and starts swimming towards Jesus – not away from Him!

By the time the rest of the disciples get their catch to shore, Peter is already with Jesus around the charcoal fire.


Only humility is powerful enough to run towards God after you've sinned against Him. Humility always welcomes God – and never regrets His presence. God gives grace to the humble – but opposes the proud.³⁷

Jesus restores the humble, and

God's **Cure**: **True Grace**
Firm Hope 

Peter is restored (John 21)

- Jesus restores the **humble**
- Jesus restores the **repentant**




³⁷ 1 Peter 5:5-6
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Jesus restores the repentant

More than likely the strong scent of the charcoal fire on the beach awakened Peter's memory to the charcoal fire of **Luke 22:55** when he had betrayed his Lord and Savior.

But the true grace of God brings Jesus to ask Peter three times, "*Peter – do you love Me?*" Peter do you love Me enough to believe in Me? Do you love me more than your sin? Will you trust me more than your own self-will and self-power?

God's **Cure**: **True Grace**
Firm Hope 

Peter is restored (John 21)

- Jesus restores the **humble**
- Jesus restores the **repentant**
-  • Jesus restores the **dependent**

Jesus restores the dependent

And so Peter is restored to the shepherding ministry of an apostle with the three commands of Jesus to feed His sheep.


For the sake of our time – here's the point: Satan wants to destroy your faith. You have an adversary who prowls around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.³⁸

³⁸ 1 Peter 5:8

But by the grace of God, Jesus restores us to joy – especially when we don't deserve it! Though we fail God in many ways, we can still stand firm in God's grace! This is why Jesus suffered for sins – the righteous for the unrighteous – so that He might bring us joyfully to God!³⁹ Jesus bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. For by the wounds of Jesus – we have been healed!⁴⁰

So as we prepare to study **1 Peter** together, please remember that

Main Point



**Peter's life illustrates
God's true grace
in troubled times.**

The author's own life illustrates God's true grace in troubled times. Therefore,

³⁹ 1 Peter 3:18

⁴⁰ 1 Peter 2:24

Application




**Trust in the God of grace
to restore and strengthen you.
1 Peter 5:10-11**

Trust in the God of grace to restore and strengthen you.

Our trust is not in our own commitment. Nor in our own wisdom or faith itself. Peter teaches us to trust in Jesus – the great Shepherd and Overseer of our soul.⁴¹ For in Christ alone we find the true grace which secures our hope in the middle of the storm.

A Man Called Peter **True Grace**
Firm Hope

Selected Scriptures

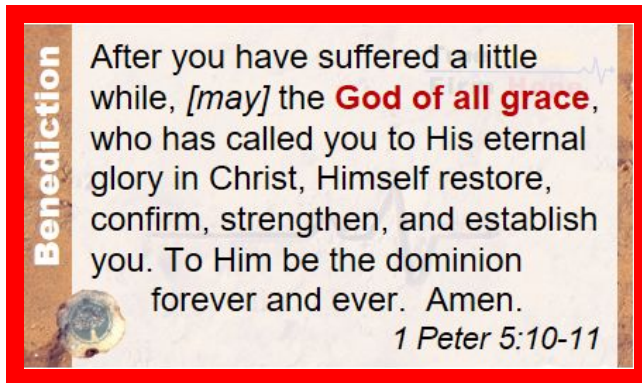


Let's Pray.

<<In Christ Alone>>

⁴¹ 1 Peter 2:25

Let's pray our Benediction now as we are dismissed,



*And after you have suffered a little while, [may] the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹ To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen. **1 Peter 5:10-11***

Recommended Resources on The Man Called Peter:

- Matthew 4:18-20; 14:24-33; 16:16-19, 21-23; 17:1-8
- Mark 1:16-18, 29-30; 9:2-8; 14:18-21
- Luke 5:1-11; 9:29-36; 22:31-62
- John 1:40-44; 4:38-39; 13:3-26; 21:1-22
- Acts 1:13-15ff; 2:14-40; 3:1-10; 4:8-13; 5:3-11, 15-32; 8:20; 10:9-16; 12:3-19; 15:7-11
- 1 Corinthians 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5
- Galatians 2:11-21

- <http://bethanycentral.org/resources/the-life-of-simon-peter/>
- <https://bible.org/seriespage/peter-man>
- <https://goo.gl/Yjw2zC> (lessons by Sinclair Ferguson & Eric Alexander)

- Twelve Ordinary Men, John MacArthur
- A Fragile Stone, Michael Card
- Life of Peter, F.B. Meyer

Growing Deeper: Life Group Questions

1. Share: What is your favorite story from Peter's life as recorded in Scripture? Which account is most surprising to you, and which one can you most relate with?
2. Read Matthew 16:13-23 to compare the highs and lows of two interactions between Jesus and Peter. What is the significance of these two interactions for Peter's future? What can we learn from Peter's experiences here?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 9:5. Peter's wife accompanied him on his ministry travels. (c.f. Luke 4:38-39) Does this change how you think of Peter, or how you read 1 Peter 3:1-7? Why or why not?
4. Read 1 Peter 1:5-9, 14; 2:4-8, 20-25; 3:14-17; 4:7, 12-19; 5:1, 5-8. How does Peter's earlier life experiences deepen our understanding of his teaching?
5. Read John 21:3. Have you ever been tempted to give up on God and walk away from your spiritual calling? Share testimonies with each other of God's rescuing grace in your life, and how God has proven Himself true to 1 Peter 5:10-11 in your past.
6. What are you most excited about learning from 1 Peter this year? What questions are you hoping to get answered through this study? What pressures or temptations are currently threatening your hope? Pray together for God to strengthen your faith in His grace of life.