

PETER



3. Further Lessons on Discipleship

(Leader's Notes)

Introduction

When Jesus called Peter to be his disciple he acknowledged him as Lord, and left all to follow him. However Peter still had much to learn about his new Master and what it really meant to be a disciple. Over the next year Peter's understanding grew and now he confesses that Jesus is indeed the Son of God. Along with a deeper understanding of who Jesus is must come a greater commitment to him as Lord.

Bible Reading: Matthew 16 and 17

A. Learning more about the Master

1. Jesus : The Messiah and Son of God Matthew 16:13-17

- ❖ What two questions did Jesus ask his disciples? V13, 15
(He asked who people said he was and who did they think he was.)

- ❖ How did the disciples answer the first question? V14
(They said that some said he was John the Baptist, others said he was Elijah, others Jeremiah, or one of the other prophets.)



How would people answer that question today? Discuss.

- ❖ How did Peter answer the second question, and how did he come to that understanding? V16-17
(Peter declared that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and Jesus told him that God the Father had revealed that to him.)

- ❖ Many people know who Jesus is intellectually. What difference will it make when a person has a revelation from the Holy Spirit of who Jesus is?
(When a person has a revelation from the Holy Spirit they have an inner conviction that this is true and it causes them to want to surrender to him as their Lord and Savior.)

2. Jesus : The Son of God Matthew 17:1-8

Peter had come to a realization of who Jesus was. Six days later God shows him, in a wonderful way, that his confession that Jesus is the Son of God is true. This is called 'the Transfiguration'.

- ❖ Who witnessed the Transfiguration? V1
(Peter, James and John witnessed the transfiguration.)

- ❖ Describe what happened in your own words.



How did the Transfiguration confirm to Peter that his confession in Matthew 16:16 was true?

- ❖ What was wrong with Peter's suggestion to build shelters for Jesus, Moses and Elijah? V4
(It wasn't God's purpose to turn this amazing revelation into something that would become a shrine to remember it by. Peter had missed the point! God was showing them that Jesus was superior to Moses and Elijah, and that the focus was to be on him.)



Having realized Jesus was the Messiah and Son of God, Jesus now begins to teach more about himself – something that is totally new to their thinking.

3. Jesus : The Savior who must suffer Matthew 16:21-23

- ❖ What new truth does Jesus now begin to teach them? What 4 specific things does he mention? V21
(Jesus began to tell them he must go to Jerusalem, he would suffer, be killed and rise again.)
- ❖ How does Peter react to this teaching? Why do you think he said this? V22
(Peter didn't want this to happen to Jesus! No doubt it was because he loved Jesus and did not want him to suffer.)
- ❖ Jesus had commended Peter, but now he rebukes him. What was wrong with Peter's reaction? V23
(This was going against God's purposes for Jesus and he was allowing the enemy to influence his thinking, instead of God.)



What can you learn from Peter's experience?

B. Learning more about Discipleship Matthew 16:24-27

As Peter's understanding of who Jesus was had deepened, it was time for him to also understand more about the true meaning of discipleship. Jesus began to speak about his coming suffering and death. To be a disciple meant to follow in his footsteps.

- ❖ What are the conditions of discipleship given in verses 24 and 25? What does this really mean?
(The conditions are that we must deny ourselves, take up the cross and follow Jesus.)
- ❖ If a person chooses not to follow Christ what could he gain, but what will he lose? V25-26
(A person can lose his own soul. He could be separated from God for eternity.)
- ❖ Why is it worth following Christ? V25, 27
(We will be with him for all eternity and he will reward us for what we have done.)

Conclusion

Just as Peter had been called to become a disciple, so have we. The one we are following is not an ordinary man – he is the Messiah, the Son of God and our Savior. To follow him means to ‘take up the cross’, it means to die to self and make him Lord of our life. But it is infinitely worthwhile! Never be afraid to surrender to him, as there is no one who loves you more than he does.