

The Mouth Of Peter

Welcome to **Week 3** of a “**Time for Action**”. At the beginning of this series, we introduced the Greek word **Kairos** which means, “*a time when conditions are right for the accomplishment of a crucial action: the opportune and decisive moment. A moment of indeterminate time in which events happen.*”

Our theme passage for this series is

Luke 12:54-56 (NIV) ⁵⁴ He said to the crowd: “When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, ‘It’s going to rain,’ and it does. ⁵⁵ And when the south wind blows, you say, ‘It’s going to be hot,’ and it is. ⁵⁶ Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don’t know how to interpret this present time?”

Here Jesus tells the people in his audience that they can read the time of day, or even the weather from looking at the sky...but they cannot interpret what God is doing and who Jesus is. They can read the “chronos” (hours and seconds of the day), but miss the “kairos” moment before them in the person of Jesus!

For the sake of this series we could say that the “**chronos**” is “**our time**” and that the “**kairos**” is “**God’s time.**” In fact, here are two important truths we need to remember as it relates to the “kairos” moments in our lives.

#1 - Kairos moments are always initiated by God.

#2 - Kairos moments always challenge us to think more highly of God, and less highly of ourselves.

Are we wise enough, and careful enough to recognize the God given opportunities in our lives? Are we sensitive to God’s will and what He wants to accomplish?

Over this series we are looking at several key characters in the Bible and their response to their kairos moments. What separates these heroes of the faith from the average person is their ability to recognize “**God’s time**” and then act accordingly. Each of them is presented with a call that challenges what they think of God, and of themselves. They must combat these lies with God’s eternal truth so that they can follow God wholeheartedly. In each case they were all willing to surrender their own plans, and because they responded when God spoke, they were able to be effective for God. Each of them display defining characteristics which help them hear, respond, and obey God.

Our goal for this series is to help you recognize when God is speaking, and to act in faith so that you can be effective for God as well.

There are times in all of our lives that require us to adjust our normal routine and pay special attention to what God is doing.

Be careful. Be wise. Pay attention. Recognize and respond to “kairos” moments and seasons in your life because the pace, pressure, and demands of the “chronos” can cause you to miss the “kairos”. Don’t get so caught up in the mundane **minutes of life** that you miss the **moments that have eternal implications**. The Lord is calling, are we paying attention?

In week 1, we looked at the weakness of Gideon and how God worked through His weakness and the deception of who He thought he was and how God called Him to lead his people to victory over the midianites. Last week, we looked at the Fear of Joshua and how God called him to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land after the generation before him failed to obey the first time. Which leads us to our 3rd character, and that’s Peter.

Peter could be labeled as a man’s man. He was a fisherman by trade, strong willed, and a leader. Following Jesus for 3 years, Peter saw, and even took part in some amazing miracles. He stepped out of the boat and walked on water in **Matthew 14**, he cut Malchus’ ear off and Jesus put it back on in **John 18**. In **Mark 5**, he was present when Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus and even was with Jesus when the transfiguration took place in **Matthew 17**. Yet, after all that Jesus had done with and around Peter, his Kairos moment, wouldn’t have anything to do with a miracle per say, but with his mouth. Peter would have to learn how to listen and when to speak. Why? Because his calling required it! Listen to the call Jesus laid out before Peter, **Matthew 16:18-19**, “**18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.**” This was a promise to Peter who Jesus referred to as the “Rock” and how he would be instrumental in establishing Jesus’ church.

The Kairos moment for Peter was to hear what Jesus had to say, and respond appropriately but the problem for Peter and for a lot of us, Peter let his mouth get in the way of his moment! Peter had a struggle of knowing when to speak and not to speak! It’s no different for you and I, God is always speaking and we have to discern whether our response is to speak or to just listen in the moment. God does not just babble off a few words here and there and our response should not mimic that. What we do see is that God is very intentional with His words and while He speaks, our job is to listen and respond intentionally as well. We see this with Jesus and his disciples in Matthew 16.

Matthew 16:13-17, “When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” **14** They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” **15** “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” **17** Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.”

It's not that Jesus didn't know what the people thought of Him, but the question set the disciples up for a deeper question, a personal question, a kairos moment question. “Who do you say I am?” From this moment on, Peter would be faced with that question while walking out his calling. Jesus is asking us today, Who do you say I am? It's our kairos moment as well and Satan wants nothing more than for you to be hush mouth about who Jesus is and not to dig deeper in that personal relationship. As we look at Peter today, we will see that there is a thin line between speaking and not speaking but also keeping who Jesus is on the forefront of that response. There are some clear truths that we see with Peter and Jesus that we can learn from today!

Truth #1: Jesus Asks Questions That Require A Personal Response!

“13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” **14** They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” Some thought Jesus was like John the Baptist and some thought Jesus was a famous worker of miracles, like Elijah. Some thought Jesus was someone who spoke the words of God, like Jeremiah and the prophets. Perhaps in seeing Jesus in these roles, people hoped for a political messiah who would overthrow the corrupt powers oppressing Israel. If we are not careful, when we are asked a question, we will tend to answer it based on how others answered. Whether that comes from tradition, passed down from a generation or just a knowledge that is gained on a Sunday service. God isn't so much concerned with how much you know of others' belief system as much as He wants to know yours! You gotta know why you believe what you believe! Jesus goes on...

15 “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” **16** Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Peter knew the opinion of the crowd. He knew that the opinion of the crowd was not accurate. Jesus was more than John the Baptist, He was more than a prophet and a miracle worker, He was the Messiah! Peter went from seeing Jesus as just the rabbi to the Son of the living God! That requires a personal relationship. That requires intentionality. It also requires God working in your heart. **17** Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.” God speaks through Peter without Him even knowing it! We need Godly revelation btw. Too often we just respond out of experience or just to speak, when in reality, God wants to say something. How many times have YOU responded when God wanted to respond through you? Jesus tells Peter that He's blessed because God spoke through him...how many blessings have you missed?

Matthew 16: 21-23, “From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. **22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!” 23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”**

Truth #2: Jesus Does Not Need Your Approval

I want you to notice the trajectory of this conversation:

- Peter confesses Jesus as the Messiah.
- Jesus compliments Peter, telling him that God revealed this to him.
- Jesus tells of His impending suffering, death, and resurrection.
- Peter feels this isn't right, and he feels that he hears from God and therefore has some authority or right to speak.
- Peter begins to rebuke Jesus.

“REBUKE” Jesus? After calling Him the “Son of the living God,” and the very next breath rebuke Him. Sound familiar? How many times has God done something beautiful in your life and the next breath we rebuke Him for something else? Why do we think we can do that? What makes us believe we have the right to question what's already been put in place? Most people would say that it takes guts for Peter to rebuke Jesus, but Jesus says it's Satanic.

Peter hears from God without even knowing it, and then speaks when he should have kept his mouth closed! Just because God speaks to you in one moment does not mean you have to speak the next. Matter of fact, scriptures show you can speak for God one moment, and Satan the next! **22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!” 23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan!** If Peter didn't know God spoke through him, there's a possibility that he wasn't aware that Satan used his next words. Jesus reminded Peter that his place was to follow and not lead. It was his place to follow Jesus in the way he chose, not to try to lead Jesus in the way he would like Him to go. **You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.**” Peter didn't make a full blown choice to reject God and embrace Satan, but his thinking landed on the things of man and not of the things of God. **Peter could only see Jesus as the powerful Messiah and not the suffering servant, and Peter couldn't handle a suffering Messiah so he rebuked Him.** In hindsight, Peter should have listened, taken heed to what was coming and prepared himself. Instead, he tried to change the eternal plan that was already put in place. Jesus doesn't need our approval to make things happen and speaking when we should be submitting only makes it harder on ourselves.

Truth #3: Jesus Requires More Than Lip Service

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.””

As the days get closer for Jesus to take on the cross, the disciples start to feel the heat of following Jesus. They see all that is happening and Jesus sees their hearts. He knows that He is about to be deserted by the very ones that He called out to follow Him closely. He knows the pain, suffering and everything in between that is coming; yet His eyes are not just on the present suffering but the coming glory. He knows the reality of “**32 But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.**” So what does Peter do? Once again; He speaks without truly listening and Jesus has to hit him with another reality check. **33 Peter replied, “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.”** Peter is beyond confident in his ability to not leave the side of Jesus. Even if his comrades did, Peter thought he had what it took to keep following until Jesus dropped this bomb: **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.**” Jesus made it pretty clear that Peter would forsake Him, leave Him and walk away. Peter overestimating his own strength talks himself into thinking he knows better. Btw, being the leader; when he spoke, the disciples went along with what he said. He led them down a road of despair. This promise came to pass just a few verses later

Matthew 26: 69-75, “**69** Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. “You also were with Jesus of Galilee,” she said. **70** But he denied it before them all. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said. **71** Then he went out to the gateway, where another servant girl saw him and said to the people there, “This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth.” **72** He denied it again, with an oath: “I don’t know the man!” **73** After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, “Surely you are one of them; your accent gives you away.” **74** Then he began to call down curses, and he swore to them, “I don’t know the man!” Immediately a rooster crowed. **75** Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: “Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.” And he went outside and wept bitterly.”

Isn’t that a common theme in our lives? We write checks we can’t cash? We speak before we truly understand what is being spoken to us first. We try to put together a response without knowing what is really needed. We interrupt others talking because we think our words hold more power. Peter spoke without truly listening. He bit off more than he could chew. He witnessed the events around Jesus with the crowd and thought it was best to deny Jesus than stand up for Him. Remember Peter’s calling from earlier?

Matthew 16:18-19, “**18** And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. **19** I will give you the keys of the kingdom of

heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Peter watched Jesus walk in innocence but was treated as a prisoner.

Rather than let that fuel his calling, he went back fishing. He went back to his former life. When his promises didn't match his actions, he felt like a failure.

Truth #4: Jesus Does Not Let Failure Get The Last Word

Summarize John 21 (Jesus Reinstates Peter to his calling) Jesus ends the conversation with follow me! I know what our past has been, but follow me. I know that you've said things and didn't speak when you could have; even denied me, but follow me. Even though you struggled, I still have something for you. Later on, Peter would come to see his calling start to play out.

Acts 4: 1-12, “The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. **2** They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. **3** They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. **4** But many who heard the message believed: so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand.

5 The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. **6** Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest's family. **7** They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: “By what power or what name did you do this?”

It's as if Peter gets a 2nd chance to testify of who Jesus is and not deny him. Remember **Matthew 16: 15-17**, “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” **16** Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” **17** Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.” Peter didn't know when he answered this question before Jesus that one day years later, he would have the opportunity to answer a similar question. This time in front of the exact group that sent Jesus to the cross.

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: “Rulers and elders of the people! **9** If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, **10** then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. **11** Jesus is “the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.’ **12** Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”