



PETER

SESSION 2

- **Main Passage:** Luke 22:31-34, Luke 22:54-62
 - **Purpose:** To highlight how the story of Peter teaches us of God's faithful love even in our failures.
 - **Session Snapshot:** Peter denies Jesus three times after promising he would go to prison or even death for Christ. As we spend time in this text, we see the consistency of Christ even when we are inconsistent.
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GETTING STARTED

Kick-off your time together with a quick connection time or reviewing what you did in the last session.

FIRST, explain to your group that they will be continuing a video series on Peter that is part of a larger study on men of the Bible.

If Peter is your first study in the Real Men curriculum, even though it's your second session as a group, consider re-introducing yourself and having the men in your group re-introduce themselves. Then, ask for volunteers to share any thoughts they took away from last week's session. If you want to pass around a contact sheet, again, or do any other second-session "housekeeping tasks," this is the time to do it.

FINALLY, if there are no questions or other input, transition into the *Digging In* section of your leader's guide.

DIGGING IN

Jump into the session by watching this week's video.

FIRST, play the video. You can access the video by logging into your Iron Hill Press account.

When the video is over, lead men in a short discussion based on what Rick covered. Feel free to come up with your own questions, or consider asking some similar to those below:

- **This particular chapter in Peter's life is hard to read. Do you have an example of a time you felt like you were being "sifted like wheat"?**
- **The fear of prison caused Peter to deny Jesus. What are some things that cause you to do so?**
- **Rick says early on, "If you follow Jesus, you will be marked for refinement." Why do you think sifting will be eventually beneficial? Why do you think it is necessary?**
- **Rick says that Peter relies on his own boldness, strength, and power as opposed to that of Christ's. How do you explain the difference between the two?**

- Jesus says that when Peter is strengthened, he wants Peter to “come and go with me.” Later in Luke 22, we see Peter is following at a distance. If you are willing to be transparent, can you recall any moment in your life when you were unsure how much you wanted to associate with Jesus? What was the circumstance? What was the result?
- Your current story does not have to be your whole story. How do you see that in the passages we spend time in today?

FINALLY, transition into the *Opening the Word* portion of your time together by saying something like the following:

- In this passage, it seems clear God wants us to turn to Him in the struggle as much as the celebration. Let’s take a look at this moment in Peter’s life and what we can learn from it.

OPENING THE WORD

Spend time going deeper into a specific concept Rick introduced in the video.

FIRST, explain that you will take a more in-depth look at Luke 22:31-34, Luke 22:54-62. We must make sure your people have a good understanding of the context of the passage you'll be studying. Provide the context for the passage using the following bullet points:

- **Author:** Luke was a doctor, a Gentile Christian, and a companion of Paul.
- **Time frame:** The Gospel of Luke was written around 60 AD.
- **Purpose:** Luke is the only Gentile author of the Bible. His entire purpose was to write an accurate account of Jesus's life to present Jesus as Savior, fully God and fully man. It is one of the synoptic Gospels, having much in common with the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

THEN, read or have a volunteer read Luke 22:31-33. Lead the group in a brief discussion. Ask something like:

- **What do you think it means for Peter to be ‘sifted’?**
 - *Answer:* Peter is told that he will be “sifted like wheat.” Sifting is a way of separating the good wheat from the bad wheat after the harvest. In a society that relied heavily on bread for sustenance, this comparison would land heavily. Satan desires to put Peter through "the ringer" and show that there is nothing good in him and that Christ has not changed anything.
- **Satan makes similar demands on Job. (Consider having two group members read Job 1:9-12 and Job 2:4-6.) How do you see Satan’s desire for Job repeat itself in Peter?**
 - *Answer:* In both situations, Satan wants to make God look ‘lesser’ through the failures of God’s servant. Do you have areas where your failures make God look to be ‘lesser’? How do you respond when you notice those things?
- **Jesus tells Peter he will “fail.” How does Peter respond to this possibility?**
 - *Answer:* Peter says, “I will go to prison or death for you!” Rick points out that these are empty words. If you are familiar with this story, you know that Peter will fail Jesus (as Christ points out!) but will eventually be restored. In reality, it is the possibility of prison and death that puts Peter “at a distance” when Jesus is arrested.
- **In your own life, what have you learned upon realizing you were “following at a distance”?**
 - *Answer:* Think about this: Jesus tells Peter he will fail, but also tells him that He will pray for Peter's faith to be strengthened. Similarly, Jesus prays for all who will believe because of the disciples' message (John 17:20-23). The Holy Spirit prays for us as well (Romans 8:26-27).

Have a group member read Peter’s denial aloud (Luke 22:54-62) then ask:

- **Put yourself in the “distant” place of Peter. How do you feel as you realize you are doing what you never said you would do? What runs through your mind as you hear the rooster crow? How do you process the eye contact with Jesus, knowing you have done the very thing you said you would not?**
 - Answers will vary. But do your best to try to think about what it must have felt like.

NEXT, read John 21:1-19 as a group. Then, ask:

- **What was Peter doing when Jesus came to get him?**
 - *Answer:* Peter was fishing. Because of his failures, Peter had returned to the mundane, ordinary, necessary thing that he knew and was his identity before Jesus. As they approach Jesus, they see He has bread and fish laid out for them and tells them to “add their fish.” Jesus had provided for them and allowed them to offer what they brought as well.
- **If you have a spiritual failure, to what do you return?**
 - Answers will vary.
- **How does this passage in John align with what we learn of Jesus’s desire for Peter in Luke?**
 - *Answer:* Jesus mentions in Luke that Peter will be reinstated and serve his brothers. All the while, Jesus never walks away. He never tells Peter to pick up his pieces. He is there to do so.

FINALLY, say something like:

- **Whatever you may be facing, the God who we served not only died for you. He is with you. He will never leave you or forsake you. He has promised this trouble-filled world will not overcome you because it cannot overcome Him! In John 21, Jesus reinstates Peter by telling him to “feed his sheep.” As you live out your walk with Jesus, take necessary steps to identify the sheep-feeding moments where you have lived out God's love for you.**

Ask if there are any questions. If there are none, transition into *Accepting the Challenge*.

ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE

Focus your group’s attention on one key takeaway from your time together.

FIRST, explain that you want to challenge the group to focus on the takeaways from this session. Consider starting this portion of your session by asking your group what they think are the main application points from your session. Allow discussion to go until there are no more suggestions.

Then, if necessary, supplement your discussion with the following application points. Say something like:

- **What are some truths about Jesus and His love for you that are more evident through our time in this text?**
- **Can you identify your “I would go to prison or die for you” missteps that have eventually been part of your growth?**
- **To close out your time, ask your men to write out their current story. Underneath that, have them write out what they want their stories to be.**

Allow the group to consider where they find themselves on this spectrum of evaluation. If it feels appropriate, allow some discussion about the kind of evaluation they find themselves considering.

FINALLY, encourage men to process these questions in the week to come. Challenge them to listen to what God is trying to tell them and to respond accordingly. If there are no more questions or input, close your time together in prayer.