



How Do You Stay in Control in a Crisis?
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The Crossing Church
Las Vegas, Nevada

OPENING

This is week #46 of our Quest 52 journey and we are coming to the end of passion Week in Jerusalem. We are going to see this week through Peter's eyes – his erratic, passionate, courageous, impulsive, loud and galvanized view. His loyalty is about to be called into question and his confidence crushed. He is about to learn that **key moments lead to critical decisions resulting in crucial consequences.**

SCRIPTURE¹

John 21:7-9 Then the disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, "It's the Master!" When Simon Peter realized that it was the Master, he threw on some clothes, for he was stripped for work, and dove into the sea. The other disciples came in by boat for they weren't far from land, a hundred yards or so, pulling along the net full of fish. When they got out of the boat, they saw a fire laid, with fish and bread cooking on it.

John 21:15-17 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Again Jesus said, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." The third time he said to him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.

John 21:19 "Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

1 Peter 5:10-11 The MSG It won't be long before this generous God who has great plans for us in Christ—eternal and glorious plans they are!—will have you put together and on your feet for good. He gets the last word; yes, he does.

OBSERVATION

The life of a 1st century fisherman was not for the weak of heart. It was physically and emotionally demanding. The waters of the lake had to be navigated; the ever-changing weather would test even the most experienced angler. For Peter, fishing was not a hobby. His life, his family and his existence depended on it. But today was the day Peter would physically walk away and mentally

¹ The NIV translation unless otherwise indicated.

move away from what had always been normal—what he considered the extent of his life—and step into a new reality. Jesus showed up, Peter loaned Him his boat, he reluctantly pushed out to fish, Jesus provided more than he could handle, but then asked for more than he was prepared for.

QUESTION: When have you accepted a challenge and then found there was more to it than you expected? How did that turn out?

Highs and Lows. “Come, follow Me.” On that day everything changed, and of course, he would never go back - ever. Peter had said yes. Leaving everything, he stepped away from his past, and over the next few years Peter would witness things he could never have imagined. He would see firsthand the healing of broken limbs and broken hearts. He would see a young girl restored to life and sight restored to a young man. He would stand on a mountain with Jesus and hear God speak. He would proclaim his undying allegiance and loyalty to Jesus.

APPLICATION

We remember that moment when we stepped out and followed. We walked away from the norm and stepped gratefully into a new life with Jesus. Now we’ve all have had and will have key moments where we make critical decisions that produce crucial consequences. We make a move, we enter into a relationship, we decide to make that relationship life long and permanent, we make a career change, we pick up and relocate to a new place. Of course, we believe two other parts of this: We believe God is intricately involved in these moments if we allow him to be; we believe these moments - decisions - consequences of our lives have a spiritual component and connection.

QUESTION: What difficulties in life have you experienced as a result of giving your life to Christ? What surprised you the most?

Life is largely a series of small, important cumulative choices we must make, but there are moments of CRITICAL DECISION that pepper every one of our life narratives - choices that change our trajectory. Decisions that determine our direction.

The CALLING. Calling always costs. Comfort is more convenient, but we’ve learned that a life centered around a clear perspective of God’s purpose is the life we should desire and it forces us to ask whether we are following or just observing. But then we fast forward to another key moment, another critical decision with crucial consequences.

QUESTION: When have you asked yourself if you are following Jesus or just observing? If your answer is just observing, what is your next step?

THE COURAGE. Some of us feel the tension between stepping out of the boat and staring at the waves. It’s a bold move you are now considering - it’s windy, scary, intimidating to step out. Staying in a marriage takes courage, for example - anyone who tells you otherwise is not being truthful or Biblical.

QUESTION: What situation have you been obedient in listening to God and been happy that you did?

THE CONFESSION. Perhaps it’s the exhilarating moment of baptism for some of us - then a few days or weeks later, we recognize that we’re not actually reflecting Christ. It’s part of the highs and lows of a life of faith as we follow.

QUESTION: What highs and lows are you experiencing today?

THE CONFIDENCE. Some of our key moments lead us to take matters into our own hands. That's what we usually do. We take control, lead the way, put ourselves in charge. We've often taken matters into our own hands. We say, "thy will be done" but we often mean "my will be done".

QUESTION: When have you taken matters into your own hands without listening to God and regretted that decision?

THE COWARDICE. Peter sat at the wrong fire. He sat at the fire of fear and doubt - the fire of present circumstances and future fuzziness. He sat in his dark moment allowing the flicker of confusion and chaos to overwhelm him. In those moments, he was confronted about his alliances, his loyalty, about what he believed and who he believed in. Our denials look differently - not loud, not angry just subtle. We deny Jesus access to areas of our lives. We deny the fullness of the transformation He wants in us.

QUESTION: If you are quietly quitting on Jesus, where are you running?

THE COMEBACK. Jesus asked three times if Peter loved Him. Each response erased one of Peter's three prior denials as Pete was redeemed. The first words that Jesus spoke to Peter at the lake were, "Come, follow me." His last words to Peter at the lake were, "You must follow Me." Going forward for him meant caring for Jesus' sheep and he did that to the end of his life as the proud, outspoken fisherman became the humble, but relentless fisher of men. And that is who we are to become.

QUESTION: When you think of the many Bible people who had difficult beginnings, but prevailed for the faith in the end, which ones do you revere the most? Why?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help us to persevere in our faith even though everything around us seems to be in chaos. In Jesus' name. Amen.

QUESTIONS

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