

The Inner Circle

Peter

Matthew 16:13-28

We are in a series examining the Inner Circle of Jesus. The three men who were with him the most, knew him the best, & became leaders of the movement after his death, resurrection & ascension were Peter, James, and John. This week we look at Peter.

Various Names: Simon bar Jonah (Simon Son of John), Simeon (Hebrew), Peter (nickname given by Jesus) & Cephas (Aramaic).

Leader & Spokesman for the 12: Always listed first in lists of the 12; mentioned & speaks more than any of the 12.

Fisherman & Businessman: From Capernaum, had a brother named Andrew & a wife who was not named in the Bible.

Often Rebuked, Often Praised: Jesus directed his strongest rebukes & his greatest affirmations to Peter.

*“Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’ Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ. From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, ‘Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.’ But he turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.’ Then Jesus told his disciples, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.’” **Matthew 16:13-28***

Main Idea: Every Inner Circle Needs Someone like Peter

Peter's Life on Display in Matthew 16:13-28

I. The Good – Vs. 13-20

“To know the Lord in mere doctrinal statement, no such divine teaching is required; but Peter's full assurance of his Lord's nature and mission was no theory in the head: the truth had been written on his heart by the heavenly Spirit. This is the only knowledge worth having as to the person of our Lord.”

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Peter's Good Days: He had the Holy Spirit, and he was willing to share what he knew. Jesus commended him for this boldness with a promise.

*“Being a Christian is less about cautiously avoiding sin than about courageously and actively doing God's will.” **Eric Metaxas (summarizing Dietrich Bonhoeffer)***

II. The Bad – Vs. 21-23

Peter's Bad Days:

- **Jesus Washes Peter's Feet (John 13)**
- **Peter Sinking (Mathew 14)**
- **Promising to Die with Jesus, Then Denying Jesus (Matt 26 & Luke 22)**

*“But he turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.’” **Matthew 16:23***

*“What was Peter's mistake? He was thinking like a man, for most men want to escape suffering and death. He did not have God's mind in the matter...Peter had enough faith to confess that Jesus is the Son of God, but did not have the faith to believe that it was right for Jesus to suffer and die. Of course, Satan agreed with Peter's words...” **Warren Wiersbe***

III. The Opportunity – Vs. 24-28

Deny self VS live for self

Take up the cross VS ignore the cross

Follow Christ VS follow the world

Lose life for Christ's sake VS save life for self's sake

Forsake the world VS gain the world

Keep soul VS lose soul

Share Christ's reward and glory VS lose His reward and glory

*“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.” **2 Peter 3:9***

So, regardless of who's in your inner circle, trust in the grace of God that is yours in Christ Jesus, ESPECIALLY when you mess up.

Sources & Further Reading Opportunities:

- *Swindoll's Ultimate Book of Illustrations* – Charles R. Swindoll (1998)
- *Tony Evans Book of Illustrations* – Tony Evans (2009)
- *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* – Elwell & Comfort (2001)
- *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary* – Hughes & Laney (2001)
- *New Bible Commentary* – D.A. Carson, R.T. France (1994)
- *CSB Study Bible* – Editor Trevin Wax (2017)
- *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible* – Richard J. Erickson (1995)
- *Bible Exposition Commentary* – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- *The Gospel of the Kingdom* – Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1893)

