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02-15-2026, COTR Texarkana

Title: What Would I Do If I Was Peter?

Purpose: Provoke people to imitate Peter's good decisions and reject the wrong ones.

Truth for Today: Nothing in this life is more important than following God's will, God's Word and God the Holy Spirit.

Topic: Discipleship, Peter, God's Will, God's Word, Sacrifice, Suffering

Text: Luke 9: 23-25

Series title: What Would I Do If...

Series purp.: Provoke people to follow God's will, God's Word and the Holy Spirit above all else  
What Would I Do If I Was Peter?

## I. Introduction

- A. New series: "What Would I Do If..." We're going to pretend we were in the shoes of Biblical characters and ask ourselves what we would do if we had to make the decisions they did. The overarching theme is nothing in this life is more important than following God's will, God's Word and the Holy Spirit.
- B. Jesus predicted His death and resurrection to the apostles and then broadens it to all His followers, [Luke 9:23-25 (NLT)] Then he said to the crowd, "**If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me.**"<sup>24</sup> If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But **if you give up your life** for my sake, you will save it.<sup>25</sup> And what do you benefit if you **gain the whole world** but are yourself lost or destroyed?] The cross is a metaphor. For Jesus it meant literal death, for us it dying to self-will and following God's will.
- C. Today's Title: What Would I Do If I Was Peter? E.g. put on Peter's sandals

## II. What would I do if Jesus asked me to change the direction of my life?

- A. [Mt. 4:18-20 (NLT)]...as Jesus was walking along the shore...he saw two brothers... Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for **they fished for a living.**<sup>19</sup> Jesus called out to them, "**Come, follow me**, and I will show you how to fish for people!"<sup>20</sup> **And they left their nets at once and followed him.**] There was no guaranteed salary and no 403b plan, but Peter chose God's will. He made a major lifestyle change and gave up his old life and dreams and began a new life with Jesus at the center. Am I willing to do that? I did 45 years ago, ministry and CA. Pers test

## III. What would I do if God asked me to give away or give up control of my possessions?

(This may be our biggest test if we're successful and prospering)

- A. [Mark 10:17-30 (NLT)]...a man came running up to him (Jesus)...and asked, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit **eternal life?**"...
  1. He didn't quote John 3:16 but his response would reveal He didn't believe because he wasn't willing to follow Jesus. **True believers in Jesus follow Him.**
- B. Verse 19...you know the commandments: 'You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. You must not cheat anyone. Honor your father and mother.'"<sup>20</sup> "Teacher,"... "I've obeyed all these commandments since I was young."..."There is still **one thing you haven't done**," he told him. "**Go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and**

**you will have treasure in heaven.** Then come, **follow me.**<sup>22</sup>...he went away sad, **for he had many possessions**” ...] This is not God’s will for all Christians. Having money and possessions aren’t sinful. Most of the time they’re a blessing from God. The Bible is filled with wealthy people. However, This man had a heart problem. Money and possessions had become an idol, i.e. they were more important than God, He broke the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 commandments.

C. [Vs 28 **Then Peter began to speak up. “We’ve given up everything to follow you,”**...] Mk. 1:29, Peter still had a house after following Jesus, but Jesus was more important than his house. But *given up everything* implies Jesus was more important and he’d give it away if Jesus asked Him, unlike the rich ruler.]

1. *Left everything* is to be understood in the sense of renunciation (relinquish, give up, surrender) rather leaving things behind.<sup>1</sup> Peter gave up his right to control everything he had to Jesus. E.g. this would be harder than the football cleats.

D. [Vs. 29...Jesus replied, “and I assure you that **everyone who has given up** house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or property, **for my sake** and for the Good News, <sup>30</sup> will receive **now** in return a **hundred times** as many houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and property—along with persecution. And in the world to come that person will have **eternal life.**] Following Jesus is worth it now and eternity.

IV. What would I do if I had to face rejection, suffering or even death for following Jesus?

A. [Luke 22:54–57 (NLT) So they arrested him (Jesus)...And **Peter** followed at a distance.<sup>55</sup> The guards lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard...and Peter joined them there.<sup>56</sup> A servant girl noticed him...she said, “This man was one of Jesus’ followers!”<sup>57</sup> But **Peter denied it.** “Woman,” he said, “I don’t even know him!”] [Mt.26:33 (NLT) Peter declared, “Even if everyone else deserts you, **I will never desert you.**”] Peter wasn’t willing to suffer for following Jesus, but what would we do? Christians don’t face prison or death in America, but we don’t like to be made fun of on social media, so maybe we keep silent about the Bible on cultural issues. Maybe we’re afraid to pray over our food or share our faith with friends.

B. How can we face rejection, suffering or even death for following Jesus? (1) Decide to stand for Jesus no matter what, e.g. Pastor & wife in Pakistan. (2) Willpower def: determination, resolve. But the problem is we don’t/ can’t always do what we say we will..stop smoking, start exercising. Gethsemane [Mark 14:38 (NCV) Stay awake and pray for strength against temptation. **The spirit (ESV is willing) wants to do what is right, but the body is weak.**] Sometimes decisions and willpower aren’t enough. (3) Rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to help us. After the baptism of the HS, Peter had spiritual power to face the Jewish leaders who killed Jesus. Arrested [Acts 4:8–12 (NLT) **Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit**, said <sup>10</sup>...he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ...the man you crucified but whom God raised from the dead...<sup>12</sup> There is salvation in no one else!] The same HS lives in us who lived in Peter. He will help us face opposition just like he did Peter. E.g. Stephen, Paul, martyrs

V. Conclusion: Was taking up his cross and following Jesus worth it for Peter?

A. He became one of the 1<sup>st</sup> apostles, he was in the upper room when the Holy Spirit fell, he was the 1<sup>st</sup> preacher on Pentecost when 3,000 people got saved and the church was

born, he was the leader of the church in Jerusalem, he wrote 2 books of the Bible, and he will spend eternity in heaven.

1. YES! If it was true for Peter, it's true for us. **The big question for us is, are we willing to follow God's will, God's Word and the Holy Spirit above all else.** If we say yes like Peter, we'll be glad we did.

## VI. Response

- A. Prayer: **Lord help me follow Your will, Your Word and the Holy Spirit.**
- B. Souls: The Bible teaches we can have eternal life if we believe and follow Jesus.

## VII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

- A. Bratcher, R. G., & Nida, E. A. (1993). *A handbook on the Gospel of Mark* (p. 326). United Bible Societies.

## VIII. Supplemental material

- A. Story Russian soldiers raided a church and said, "Leave now or all Christians will be shot. Most left. We just wanted to see who the real Christians are. We want to be saved.
- B. What would I do if what Jesus asks me to do is hard?
  1. John 6:53–68 (NLT) So Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you cannot have eternal life within you...<sup>55</sup> For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink...<sup>58</sup> I am the true bread that came down from heaven...<sup>60</sup> Many of his disciples said, "**This is very hard to understand. How can anyone accept it?**" <sup>61</sup> Jesus was aware that his disciples were complaining, so he said to them, "Does this offend you?...<sup>63</sup> The Spirit alone gives eternal life. Human effort accomplishes nothing. And the very words I have spoken to you are spirit and life...<sup>66</sup> At this point **many of his disciples turned away and deserted him.** <sup>67</sup> Then Jesus turned to the Twelve and asked, "Are you also going to leave?" <sup>68</sup> Simon Peter replied, "Lord, to whom would we go? **You have the words that give eternal life.**