

“The Rock”

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I. Introduction

A. As Peter prepared to die

1. Persecution in Rome under Nero in 67 A.D.
2. Peter is now an old man
 - a. Facing a certain death
3. He pleaded to be crucified upside down
 - a. He didn't feel worthy to die as his Lord had died.
 - b. He died while nailed to a cross head downward.
4. Before his crucifixion he was forced to watch a terrible sight
5. The death of his beloved wife
 - a. Watching as she was burned alive
 - b. While the crowds cheered
6. We forget that Peter was a family man
 - a. Wife named **Perpetua or Concordia**
 - b. Daughter named **Petronilla**

B. What his dear wife went through with Peter

1. Not the easiest man to live with
2. The struggles of ministry
3. Watching her husband's disappointments

4. People called him **“The Rock”**
 - a. But Perpetua was his rock
 - b. Now in her late 60’s
 - c. Serving side-by-side with Peter
5. About to be killed for her faith
 - a. As he watched her being led to her death, Clement says, Peter called to her by name, saying, ***“Remember the Lord”***
 - b. And then he watched as she died
6. What a team

C. Peter....man of so much contrast

1. Many days of disappointment
 - a. Like when he deserted Jesus
 - b. His boast
 1. He’d talked big
 - c. But the big talker got scared
 1. Three denials
 2. Then the rooster crowed
2. And he was the leader of the twelve?
 - a. Who’d want to follow him now
2. Seven weeks later, something had changed in Peter
 - a. The fear was gone!
 - b. Could not be silenced
3. Let’s meet this man

D. The calling of the Twelve....Luke 6:12-16

(12) One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. (13) When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: (14) Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, (15) Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, (16) Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

II. Background

A. Name: Simon (whom He named Peter)

1. His name was “Simon”
2. Jesus gave him the name Peter
 - a. Greek for “Rock”
3. Sometimes called “Cephas”
 - a. Aramaic for “Peter”
 - b. The spoken language of the day
4. Sometimes called “Simon Peter”

B. Family: The son of John

1. John a very common name
2. Had a younger brother named Andrew
 - a. Next week
 - b. Living in the shadow of greatness
2. Wife named Concordia or Perpetua
3. Daughter named Petronilla

C. Occupation: Fisherman

1. Partner with his brother Andrew

2. As well as James and John

a. Two brothers they called “The Sons of Thunder”

D. Wrote: I & II Peter

E. Personality:

1. He exemplified two truths

a. *“God doesn’t call the equipped...He equips the called”*

b. *“Our vices and virtues are often the same”*

2. Impetuous and Impulsive

a. Cutting off Malchus’ ear (Matt. 26:52)

3. He could talk big...and yet turn into the cowardly lion

a. “I’ll never desert you” (Matt. 26)

b. The same night he denied he was with Jesus

1. Three times

2. When the rooster crowed

3. When he looked into the eyes of Jesus

4. He could be insightful...and dense as a rock

a. Insightful (Matt. 16:16)

b. Dense (Matt. 16:21-23)

F. He became the leader of the Twelve

Peter’s name is mentioned in the Gospels more than any other name except Jesus. No one speaks as often as Peter, and no one is spoken to by the Lord as often as Peter. No disciple is so frequently rebuked by the Lord as Peter; and no disciple ever rebukes the Lord except Peter. No one else confessed Christ more boldly or acknowledged His lordship more explicitly; yet no other disciple ever verbally denied Christ as forcefully or as publicly as Peter did. No one is praised and blessed by Christ the way Peter was; yet Peter was also the only one Christ ever

addressed as Satan. The Lord had harsher things to say to Peter than He ever said to any of the others.

All of that contributed to making Peter the leader Christ wanted him to be. God took a common man with an ambivalent, vacillating, impulsive, unsubmitive personality and shaped him into a rocklike leader—the greatest preacher among the apostles and in every sense the dominant figure in the first twelve chapters of Acts, where the church was born. (MacArthur)

G. We'll see Peter throughout the book of Luke

1. Today, one episode that Luke didn't include
 - a. I preached on it years ago from Matthew
2. It shows the best and worst of Peter in vivid detail
 - a. His virtues and his vices
3. It illustrates some of the essential traits of an effective leader
 - a. How God uses flawed people as “servant” leaders
 - b. Challenge to you....to lead

III. Text....Matthew 14

(13) When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. (14) When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. (15) As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.” (16) Jesus replied, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.” (17) “We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,” they answered. (18) “Bring them here to me,” he said. (19) And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. (20) They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. (21) The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

#1.....Servant leaders genuinely care about the people they lead

1. As the sick were brought to Jesus

a. ***“Jesus had compassion on them”***

*one word in Greek

*He physically hurt because of their pain

b. He healed them

2. As the day ended, the disciples wanted to send them away

a. But Jesus wouldn't hear of it

b. “These people are hungry....feed them”

3. Servant leadership is not about using people

a. It's about caring for them

4. The role of the local church

a. Where people genuinely care about you, but also

b. Where you can care for the needs of others

5. Leadership is “giving” not “taking”

(22) Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd.

6. The search for the Messiah...King

a. After the healing and feeding of the 5,000

1. Wow!

b “Could Jesus be the one?”

c. He certainly had the power

7. The crowd was ready to march

a. John 6:14-15.... ***“After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, ‘surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.’ Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.”***

- b. An army of 5,000 men
- c. And the Twelve were ready to rule
 - 1. Especially Judas Iscariot and Simon the Zealot
 - 2. They could taste victory
- 8. The temptation for Jesus
 - a. A throne without a cross
 - b. Satan's offer during the 40 days of temptation
 - "All of this if you will just once worship me!"*
- 9. ***"Go to Bethsaida and wait for me"***
 - a. A relatively short 4 ½ mile trip by boat
- 10. He sent the multitude home
- 11. The Twelve may have thought Jesus had blown it
 - a. Had squandered a great opportunity

#2....Servant leaders spend time alone with God

(23) After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone,

- 1. Jesus got alone with God.....v.23
 - a. The source of his strength
 - b. The temptation must have been strong
 - c. Keep your eyes on God
- 2. As the night passed
 - a. Jesus prayed
 - b. The crowd slept

- c. And the disciples rowed for their lives....v.24

(24) but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

- a. They were way off course

- 1. In the middle of the Sea of Galilee

- b. ***“the wind was against it”***

- 1. A major storm

- 3. They were extremely distressed

- a. Even though they were fishermen

- 4. An all night adventure....v.25

(25) During the fourth watch of the night (between 3 – 6 a.m.) Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. (26) When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear.

- 5. They feared the sea....

- a. Now they really get scared!

- b. ***“It’s a ghost!”***v. 26

- c. Walking on the water!

(27) But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”

- 6. Easy for him to say

#3.....Servant leaders are never out of God’s sight

- 1. Mark 6:48..... ***“Jesus saw the disciples straining at the oars”***

- a. While he was on the Mountain

- b. You will never be out of his sight

- 2. When you’re “straining at the oars”

- a. God won't give you a test you can't pass
- b. I Corinthians 10:13..... “

No temptation/test has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tested beyond what you can bear. But when you are tested, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”

3. The Plimsoll Mark

- a. It was due to the efforts of Samuel Plimsoll (1824-1898), British reformer, that the Merchant Shipping Act of 1876 was passed, requiring all ships to bear a mark known as the Plimsoll mark and indicating the maximum load line. By this act the Board of Trade of England was empowered to detain any vessel deemed unsafe, and the amount of cargo was restricted, this making the long and perilous ocean voyage of those days much safer. Because of his work, Plimsoll became known as the sailor's friend. The Plimsoll mark, with its gradations and figures, may be seen on the bow of ships near the water line as they lie at anchor in a harbor.
- b. God knows your Plimsoll mark

#4.....*Servant leaders grow by getting stretched*

- 1. They didn't learn a thing during the feeding of the 5,000
 - a. They needed to be stretched
- 2. Stretching hurts....but is necessary
 - a. Stretching muscles
 - b. Malcolm Muggeridge
 - 1. *“Contrary to what might be expected, I look back on experiences that at the time seemed especially desolating and painful with particular satisfaction. Indeed, I can say with complete truthfulness that everything I have learned in my 75 years in this world, everything that has truly enhanced and enlightened my existence, has been through affliction and not through happiness.”*
 - c. C.S. Lewis

1. *“Pain is God’s megaphone. He whispers to us in our pleasures, but He shouts to us in our pain.”*
3. “He’s okay. He’s already been broken!”
4. Peter’s question

(28) “Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.”

- a. An honest question
- b. Not sinning
5. The eyes must have been rolling in the boat
 - a. “There he goes again...”

#5....*Servant leaders are bold and willing to risk failure*

1. The importance of bold steps
 - a. Fortune favors the bold...and so does God
 - b. Willing to risk failure
2. Then came the response

(29) “Come,” Jesus said.

- a. The other disciples were enjoying this!
- b. All eyes on Peter

(29) Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

3. Good for you Peter!
4. I wonder how he got out of the boat....
5. Jimmy Carter’s grandfather’s 1st flight

My grandfather Carter lacked but one week of being 98 years old at the time of his death. He was past 80 when he took his first airplane ride. He had been visiting one of his daughters who lived in Kansas City, Missouri and flew from there to Indianapolis, Indiana, to visit another daughter. On my next visit to him,

he told me about the trip. ‘Son,’ He said, ‘I didn’t put my full weight down on that seat the whole trip.’”

6. The need to “get out of the boat”
 - a. The bold seem to experience God the most
 - b. To put yourself totally into his care....the blank check
 - c. To let him show you what he can do
7. People are searching for the “supernatural”
 - a. Looking for God and can’t find Him
 - b. Even in the church
8. You won’t experience God fully if you play everything safe
9. We experience God when we boldly step out of the boat

#6.....Servant leaders live lives of no regrets

1. None of the other 11 ever walked on the water
 - a. They missed the opportunity
 - b. Opportunity sometimes knocks but once
2. Wishing you had taken advantage of an opportunity
 - a. What opportunities are facing you now?

#7.....Servant leaders move with a sense of urgency

1. Satan’s strategy.....do it later...no hurry
2. Missed opportunities...
 - a. High school friends
 - b. Phone call with Dan K
3. Leaders do things “NOW”

4. The death of a dream?
 - a. "I'll do it later"
5. Oh...by the way...Peter sank!....v.30

(30) But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, and beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

- a. He took his eyes off Jesus
 - b. He focused on the wind and waves
 - c. He got scared
6. You don't really know God deeply until He's had to rescue you
 - a. When you're sinking and can't save yourself
 - b. When you're only hope is to cry "Lord, save me!"
7. Leaders are a work in progress
 - a. Peter was deeply flawed
 - b. But greatly used
8. How Jesus caught him....v.31

(31) Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

9. Throwing Peter into the boat
 - a. I don't think so
 - b. Jesus is a patient teacher
10. What he can do with you...

#8.....Servant leaders give God the glory

(32) And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. (33) Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

1. Once Jesus got into their boat...v.32
 - a. The storm stopped
 - b. Their boat was at its destination
2. They got the picture...v.33
 - a. This is more than a man
 - b. **“Truly you are the Son of God”**
 - c. They worshipped him
3. The key truth in life?
 - a. ***“Truly, Jesus is the son of God and we are to worship him”***
 - b. He is Holy