

Series: Reintroducing Jesus
Text: Luke 6:12-16 part 4
June 14 , 2015: Gospel Community Study Guide

This Study Guide is based on a sermon by Dr. Joshua Mack. You will find the link to the sermon here.

<http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?sid=7715553590>

Getting Started:

Over the past several weeks we have been looking at the apostles Jesus chose to serve as His authorized messengers. Recently, we have been looking more closely at the life of Simon Peter, who in many ways serves as a representative of the rest. One of the things that Simon Peter is known for in the history of the church is his leadership. Simon Peter was a leader. Yet, at the time of Jesus' death Simon looked like anything like someone whose life would make an impact.

The Big Idea:

This evening we want to look at Simon's greatest failure and to think together what was at the root of it so that we can by God's grace not make a similar mistake in our lives as well.

Into the Bible:

Have someone read Luke 22:54-62 out loud and answer the following questions:

What does Peter do here?

How many times does Peter do it?

Who does he do this with? In other words, describe the people to whom he was speaking.

Are there any indications in the text of over how long a period of time all this was taking place?

Why do you think Peter did this?

While this text shows us the great failure of Peter, the rest of the gospels often show us some great things he had done as well. What are some of Peter's best moments before this moment? What are some of Peter's best moments afterwards?

One of the reasons it is important to remember what Peter had done well is because we need to remember as we look at this great act of betrayal we are looking at someone whom we have every reason to believe is a genuine follower of Christ. In

our study together this evening we are looking at someone who like most of us who was a Christian and yet someone who failed Jesus significantly and we want to think together a little bit about exactly what Peter's failure has to teach us.

Why is it important to know that real Christians can sin in tragic ways?

Now to get some context for Peter's betrayal of Jesus, it helps us to rewind a bit. We know that Jesus had just celebrated the Last Supper with the disciples, and immediately after the Last Supper he warned the apostles of what was coming.

Have someone read Luke 22:31-33. What does Jesus tell Simon? How does Simon respond to Jesus?

A short while after this, after they had sung a hymn, Jesus and some of the other apostles went to the Mount of Olives where Jesus once again speaks to the apostles. Have someone read Matthew 26:30-35. What does Jesus say here? How does Simon respond?

What do you think about how Simon is reacting to what Jesus is saying so far?

After telling Peter that he is going to deny him, Jesus takes Peter and James and John to a place called Gethsemane. Have someone read Matthew 26:36-46. What does Jesus do to prepare for his crucifixion? What do Simon and the sons of Zebedee do? How many times does it happen? What does that tell you about Simon at this point?

Next, soldiers come to arrest Jesus. Read Matthew 26:44-52. What does "one of those who were with Jesus" do here? Have someone read John 18:10. Who was this one who reacted this way? While this seems somewhat brave of Simon, what is it really? What has Jesus told him must happen?

After the soldiers take Jesus, where does Peter go? Have someone read Mark 14:53,54. Why do you think he is doing this? We get a little more of the picture if we read John 18:15-6. How does Peter get in? Why was he allowed in? Now read Luke 22:54 and 55. What details does this add to the picture?

When Simon was confronted by the soldiers he was ready to go to battle, but here he is confronted by a servant girl and he's caught totally off guard. He denies Jesus and tries to get away by going out to the entrance where another servant girl sees him and says this man was with Jesus, and he denies it, this time with an oath. Finally, the group of bystanders who had been watching the whole scene come up and say that they are sure he was with Jesus, and he starts cursing and swearing and saying, he doesn't know the man, when the rooster crows, Simon remembers, and weeps, bitterly.

Bringing it Home:

How could Simon have failed like this? After all that time with Jesus and the great things he had seen Jesus do, how could Simon have failed like this? One author explains what is at the root of Simon's failure like this, "He boasted too much...He listened too little...and He prayed too little...He acted too fast...and he followed too far." Why do you think he says that? What proofs are there in Simon's story that would lead to that conclusion? What are some of the lessons you can learn from Simon's failure for your own life?

Digging Deeper:

One lesson we can learn from Simon's failure is the danger of self-confidence. We live in a world that is telling us that we are great. We love to hear people tell us we are great. The Bible tells us something very different.

What does the Bible say about our nature apart from Christ?

When we become Christians, we change, but does that change mean we don't still struggle with temptation?

Knowing that we are living in a world battling a fierce spiritual enemy while we ourselves still struggle with temptation should impact us as Christians – how? What difference should this reality make on the way we live and think?

One way it should impact us is that it should cause us to not put very much trust in ourselves.

As one pastor explains,

"We want to be honest about that. We want to be forthright about that. We cannot trust ourselves. We cannot trust in our own flesh. We certainly have to have a healthy distrust of what we are and what we are capable of.

Why am I saying all of that? Because to fail to have that, is to put yourself in even greater jeopardy. To fail to distrust yourself is to put yourself in a very dangerous place. And that is exactly the experience of Peter. He learned the lesson of the deadly consequence of self-confidence, and we need to learn it as well."

What does it look like to not put much trust in yourself spiritually? What would be the practical implications of this?

Finding Hope:

It's sad to see Simon failing like this, but we can be encouraged because this failure is not the end for Simon and that very fact is incredibly encouraging for us! God is willing to forgive and use failures

!

How is Simon Peter's response to his failure different than Judas'?

Have someone read John 21:4-8. What does Simon Peter do when he knows it is Jesus? What does that tell you about him? Now have someone read John 21:15-19. What does Jesus ask Simon here? How many times does he ask him this? Why do you think Jesus does this?

Simon was a great leader, but for him to become a great leader he had to learn a very important lesson, a lesson that every one of us must learn as well, and that is not to trust ourselves, but to trust in Christ.