

Pictures of Peter's Faith

"Living Large", part 12, Insights from Acts 9:32-43
Pastor Bob Johnson, September 10th, 2023

Two Stories and Five Statements:

<i>'they turned to the Lord'</i>	v35
<i>'a disciple'</i>	v36
<i>'full of good works and acts of love'</i>	v36
<i>'saints'</i>	v41
<i>'many believed in the Lord'</i>	v42

Four Pictures of Peter's Faith:

1. A Personal ...

(Luke 5:1-3, John 5:39-40, Luke 5:8)

2. A Pursuit of ...

(Luke 5:4-5, Proverbs 3:5-7)

3. A Persevering ...

(John 6:63-69, John 15:5-11)

4. A Promoting of ...

(Acts 9:32-35, Acts 9:40-42)

(Luke 5:24-25, Acts 9:34, Luke 8:49-54, Acts 9:40a)

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This Week's Discussion Guide

Welcome to our first week of our 10 week study and discussion based on our current Sunday series at GPC called, "Living Large". In this series, we are slowly unpacking the Book of Acts. Each week we will read and reflect on a passage and discuss ways we can apply what we reflect on to our daily lives. Our last week in this small group season will be the week of Sunday November 12th.

It is our prayer at GPC for our Sundays and small groups to provide the encouragement we all need to support each other as we desire to grow closer to God and build friendships as part of our vision at GPC to raise up committed Christ followers in a healthy church community.

Getting Started:

Each week, we typically start out with a few lighter questions to get us warmed up :).

In Acts 9, we looked at 5 statements that described a Jesus follower.

Speaking of statements, what are a few statements that would describe you?

What do you like, not like, what is something that most or all of us don't know about you?

One of the "pictures of Peter's faith" that we looked at last Sunday was having a personal encounter with Jesus. Speaking of personal encounters, when did you have an interesting encounter with either a person or an animal? What made this encounter interesting?

A personal encounter is not the same as a vicarious encounter. What's the difference?

Even though we must all have our own personal faith, whose faith has inspired you to walk more closely with Jesus?

Another description of Peter's faith was the 'pursuit of Lordship'. When Jesus is our Lord, we let Him lead. In Luke 6:46, Jesus asks a pointed question to some who were listening to his teaching? "Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and not do what I tell you?" Speaking of following God's promptings, when have you chosen to do what you knew would please God that you didn't partially or fully want to do in the moment?

One of the stories we looked at last Sunday was in John 6:63-69, where after hearing Jesus' teachings, some in the crowd chose to no longer walk with Jesus.

Time to be honest, was there ever a time in your life where you were struggling to walk close with Jesus? What made that time in your life difficult?

What helped you develop a stronger faith and a closer walk with Jesus since then?

Reviewing and Reflecting on last Sunday's Passage:

Let's read the passage from last Sunday. (Acts 9:32-43)

After reading these chapters and looking back on our notes from Sunday, was there a particular thought, verse or comment that caught your attention, encouraged you, challenged you or raised a question for you?

Digging Deeper:

1. One of the terms used for maintaining a 'persevering trust' in Jesus is to 'abide'. As mentioned last Sunday, the word 'abide' or 'remain' is used repeatedly in John 15.

In this passage, Jesus uses a vineyard analogy to provide some insights on how to stay connected to Him so we can experience the power to live an abundant life.

Let's read John 15:1-11 and highlight the role God plays and the role we play in our spiritual growth process.

What are some challenges for you to consistently remain in Christ?

2. Consistently living as a follower of Jesus is a challenge. One might ask, "How can we expect to be able to act like the sinless Savior of the world when we live in a fallen world and we have a sin nature still inside us?"

What insights and encouragement do the following passages provide for how following Jesus is possible and why we don't have to accomplish it by sheer determination alone?

Acts 1:8, John 16:7, Galatians 5:16-26

3. Another picture of being a disciple of Jesus is to pursue developing His character in our lives. In Romans 8:29, we learn that God's plan for us is to be conformed to the image (or character) of Jesus.

In 2 Peter 1:3-9, the Apostle Peter gives a list of character qualities God calls us to develop so we can be more like Jesus. Let's read this passage and share some insights with each other.

From this passage, is there one quality that you think you need to be more intentional in putting into action?

Can you think of any potential roadblocks that keep you from developing godly character?

How could Philippians 2:12-13 help us with our perspective in pursuing Godly character?

Wrapping Up:

What is an application from what we read or discussed together that you would like to practice in the coming days? Is there anything that came up from this week's sermon or discussion that you would like prayer for? Is there anything else that you would like to express prayer for?