

# THE LIFE OF PETER

*You are Peter, and on this rock I  
will build my church*

Matthew 16:18

## WALKING ON WATER

(7 BIBLE STUDIES)

**EXAMINAPPLICATION**

**BIBLE STUDIES**

# CONTENTS

Contents	page 02
Getting the most out of these studies	page 03
Introducing “The Life of Peter”	pages 04-05
Study 1: John 1:35-42 & Luke 5:1-11 – Calling and Challenge	pages 06-07
Study 2: Matthew 14:13-36 – Faith and Doubt	pages 08-09
Study 3: Matthew 16:13-28 – Identity and Lordship	pages 10-11
Study 4: John 13 – Love and Betrayal	pages 12-13
Study 5: Luke 22:24-62 – Failure and Regret	pages 14-15
Study 6: John 21 – Restored and Commissioned	pages 16-17
Study 7: Acts 2 – Transformed and Empowered	pages 18-19
Memory Verses	page 20

## THE SMALL PRINT

THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Co

Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. “New International Version” and “NIV” are registered trademarks of Biblica, Inc.™

Used with permission under fair usage.

Studies © Steve McClure 2018

Front Cover Graphic © Stephen Hartwell 2020 and (image: chris-gallimore-f9fJ6nxndoo-unsplash)

**Not to be copied for commercial purposes. Permission is granted to use unaltered and attributed for non-commercial purposes.**

## GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THESE STUDIES

### Your Commitment

I would encourage you to make a commitment to attending your group regularly. I realise that sometimes there are things that get in the way, but do prioritise studying the Bible with other. This will involve sacrifice, and effective use of your time, but I really believe that in doing so you will get the most out of studying the Bible and praying together in your small group.

### Your Contribution

What you put into the group is going to determine what you get out of the group. I encourage you to contribute honestly to the discussion and workings of the group. I understand people come from different backgrounds with unique personalities & life experiences. But, we all have a big part to play, so I encourage you to be fully present and take ownership of your group.

### Your Preparation

These materials are primarily for use in preparing and/or leading group discussions, but they will also be useful in keeping your thoughts together in one place. The materials provide you with the passage so that you can identify and highlight recurring themes and note down your own thoughts and questions. Also, the materials include questions designed to provoke thought, and help you reflect on what the passage meant, both at the time it was written, and also what it means for us now.

I would encourage you to make good use of these materials, as doing so will help you contribute and get the most out of the group discussions. The materials are, however, only “tools” – they are there to help you, and not to restrict you, or force you to think in a certain manner. I want to see God speaking to you through these passages, and if the questions or notes don't help you, simply don't use them!

I have also included within these materials an introduction to the book. Make of this what you will, but I hope that it is helpful in getting you started with these studies!

### Your Leadership

Here are some useful pointers in how to lead your Bible study group. Be aware that included in this study guide are more questions than you can possibly ask and/or answer in one session. They are not designed to be used rigidly, and there will rarely be a need to ask every question! Make sure that you spend some time praying at the start and ensure you read & re-read the passages as much as possible. In relation to the passages, then consider the suggested questions with an open mind. There is rarely “a single right answer” and I would encourage you to share your thoughts with your group.

I have also included a number of quotations from relevant Christian literature, most of which are readily available online if you want to do further thinking or study. My prayer is that as you study together you would grow to love Jesus and experience Him more deeply.

I would appreciate your feedback and suggestions on how to make these materials even better!

*Steve McClure  
Spring 2019*

## INTRODUCING “THE LIFE OF PETER”

The life of Peter is an inspiring story of how God uses us despite our failures. Peter, so adamant that he would not betray Jesus ends up doing exactly that. Yet unlike Judas his failure is subsequently turned on its head as hope wins through. Jesus restores him, commissions him and then we read in 1 Peter how he had experienced this living hope. I have always really appreciated the life of Peter. Perhaps that is because I can identify with his gung-ho, speak-before-thinking, wear his heart on his sleeve kind of faith. Or perhaps it is more because I resonate with his cycle of pride, failure and restoration. Either way there is much in his story that can encourage us and give us hope as we seek to live for Jesus amidst our three persistent enemies; the “flesh”, the “devil” and the “world”. We will look at 4 snapshots from Peter’s life which help us see that there is hope when we mess up:

**Snapshot 1: Encountering Jesus (Luke 5:1-11)** – We begin Peter’s story in Luke 5 when after a hard night’s fishing (during which they had caught nothing) Jesus tells him to put out again into the deep and let down the nets. Peter is naturally sceptical but nevertheless does what Jesus has asked and boy does it pay off. They catch so many fish that they need to call in help from other boats and even then they start to sink under the weight of all the fish. Peter’s response in v8-11 is to fall at Jesus’ feet while simultaneously telling Jesus to get away from him because of his sinfulness. Encountering Jesus caused Peter to come to terms with his own sinfulness. Likewise my experience is that encountering Jesus tends to highlight my areas of failure and weakness. Jesus’ response however warms my heart (and I hope yours too) as He tells Peter not to be afraid and tells him that from now on he would fish for people. His response is to pull up his boat, leave everything and follow Jesus. It seems that God wants to use us *in-spite* of our failures and *in-spite* of our sinfulness.

**Snapshot 2: Fearless Courage (Matthew 14:22-34)** – After feeding the 5,000 Jesus made the disciples get into a boat and go on ahead of him. Shortly before dawn we are told that Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake and when they saw him we’re told *“they were terrified. ‘It’s a ghost,’ they said, and cried out in fear”* (v26). They did not think He was real and seeing Him made them feel afraid. Jesus appears to have been walking out to them in the storm as the waves crashed up and down – this was not in calm waters! Peter speaks up *“Lord, if it’s you...tell me to come to you on the water”* and Jesus replies *“Come”* (v27-28). We’re told that Peter walked on water until he saw the wind and then he became afraid and began to sink. He followed Jesus’ instructions and he did walk on water. Peter was incredibly courageous and he followed Jesus to do something that defied nature. Peter personifies fearless courage but it doesn’t take long before things start to go wrong; as soon as he took his eyes off Jesus he became afraid and started to sink.

**Snapshot 2: Misunderstanding Jesus (Matthew 16:13-28)** – There are a number of examples that we could turn to here for how Peter misunderstood Jesus and His mission. The best known is probably in Matthew 16 when Jesus asked the disciples *“Who do people say the Son of Man is?”* (v13). The disciples suggest some of the things people had been saying but Jesus goes further and makes it personal for Peter. Peter boldly declares *“You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God”* (v16). Jesus blesses him for this and then tells him that He is going to build His church on him (v18-19). Soon after this however we find Jesus starting to teach about how He must suffer and be killed before rising from the dead. Peter however takes Jesus aside and rebukes Him saying *“Never, Lord! ... This shall never happen to you!”* (v22). From Peter’s point of view there was no way he was going to allow that to happen. Jesus responds to Peter in the strongest way thinkable saying *“Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling-block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns”* (v23). Peter had grasped who Jesus was, but he had misunderstood what

Jesus was about and why He had come. For Jesus this was an attack on his mission. Within the same breath Peter can say wonderful things and then the most ludicrous of things and yet despite the fact that Peter is not the finished article it is clear that Jesus wants to use Him.

**Snapshot 3: Denying Jesus (Luke 22:54-62)** – All four gospels record Jesus' prediction that Peter would deny him and disown him before the rooster crowed the next morning (Matt 26:33-35, Mark 14:29-31, John 13:36-38 and Luke 22:31-34). In each, Peter is adamant that even if the others fell away he would not, and he declared that he was willing to go even to prison, and to death. In Luke 5 we read that Jesus has been praying for Peter that his faith may not fail (Luke 22:31-34). Yet his bold and determined declarations soon pale into insignificance when having been asked three times whether he was one of Jesus' disciples, the cock began to crow. Each time Peter had denied that he had known Jesus. It is such a far cry from the man who drew his sword at the Mount of Olives to cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest (Luke 22:50). In the following verse (v61-62) we read that Jesus turned and looked straight at Peter and then he remembered and wept bitterly. This 'look' was not the kind of look that said "I always knew you were going to fail" or "You've failed me". It was a look of concern and Jesus' commitment to Peter. This is not the end of the story however and there is a fascinating contrast to be made between Peter and Judas. Both men failed Jesus and let Him down; one gave up hope while the other was repentant and subsequently restored. The life of Peter is a clear lesson in the fact that with Jesus there is always hope when we mess up.

**Snapshot 4: Experiencing Grace (John 21)** – John 21 is one of my favourite chapters and it fits wonderfully here with the things we have been talking about. It is another account of Jesus' appearances to the disciples by the sea of Galilee. The chapter begins with the disciples going fishing. It is however another one of those nights where they worked hard all night but caught nothing. Then early in the morning they see Jesus (though they do not realise it) on the shore and he asks them "*haven't you any fish*" (v5). When they respond negatively Jesus tells them to "*Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some*" (v6) and it is no surprise to learn that when they did, they were unable to haul in the net because there were so many fish. At this point John recognises that He was Jesus and Peter immediately jumps into the water. The rest follow in the boat and they soon find Jesus with breakfast awaiting them.

Now things become really personal for Peter as Jesus asks him "*Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?*" (v15). Peter responds saying "*Yes, Lord*" and "*you know that I love you*" and Jesus says "*Feed my lambs*". This is repeated twice more until we read "*Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, 'Do you love me?' He said, 'Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you'*" (v17). One final time Jesus told him to "*Feed my sheep*" and then he told him about the kind of death by which he would glorify God. Finally Jesus says to him "*Follow me*" (v19). Peter had messed up big time but Jesus was gently restoring him and commissioning him for the future ministry that He had for him amongst His harvest. Peter was the rock upon whom Jesus would build His church (Matt 16:18). He was the one who stood up and preached to the masses at Pentecost (Acts 2) and it was he who wrote about a "living hope" at the start of his first letter. You see there is nothing that we can do that can put us beyond the reach of God's grace. There is nothing we can do to make ourselves unusable in God's service. The life of Peter should be a huge encouragement to us all amidst all of our failures and weaknesses – we can all share in this living hope and we all have an inheritance that is kept in heaven for us. I can identify with Peter, I too am quick to speak, quick to jump in feet first and quick to mess up. Yet I am thankful that when I do so I too can experience this living hope...

**Steve McClure 2015**

(Quoted from <http://www.the-mcclures.co.uk/2015/11/07/life-of-peter-hope-when-we-mess-up/>)

**STUDY 1 – JOHN 1:35-42, LUKE 1-11 – CALLING AND CHALLENGE**

**INTRODUCTION:** One of the first steps Jesus takes when he begins his ministry is to draw together a group of disciples who would come and follow Him. These passages recount the story of how Jesus met Peter and called him to 'come and see' and later to 'come and follow'. These invitations would begin a journey which would turn his whole life upside down.

**SETTING THE SCENE:** What would you describe as the biggest challenges you have faced in your life so far (think about steps of faith and/or sacrifices you have made and why you have taken them)? When you think about the idea of calling, what is it that you feel called to in life?

.....

.....

**COME AND SEE (JOHN 1:35-39):** Why do you think that Jesus' invitation to 'come and see' (v39) was so enticing to these disciples of John the Baptist? What is the background to the title John gives Jesus of the 'lamb of God' (v36)? How crazy was it to drop everything and go spend the day with Jesus?

.....

.....

.....

**ANDREWS TESTIMONY (JOHN 1:40-42):** Why do you think that Andrew was so eager to go and tell his brother, Peter? What does his description of Jesus as the Messiah tell us about what he now believes about Jesus? What is the big deal with the change of name to Cephas (meaning *Rock*)?

.....

.....

.....

**PETER'S STEP OF FAITH (LUKE 5:1-7):** After spending time with Jesus, Peter goes back to his fishing business. How do you think Peter felt when Jesus told him to take the boat back into deep water and let down the nets (note the time of day, lack of fish & work done cleaning)?

.....

.....

.....

All of Peter's experience as a fisherman would have rung warning bells here: why do you think he goes ahead and takes this step of faith in obeying Jesus? What were the results of this obedience: how big a catch was this for these fishermen?

.....

.....

**SEEING OURSELVES AS WE REALLY ARE (LUKE 5:8-10a):** What do you think causes Peter to respond to Jesus with "Go away from me, Lord, I am a sinful man!"? What impact has realising your own sinfulness had on your life? What do you think Peter was afraid of (v10a)?

.....

.....

.....

**COME AND FOLLOW (LUKE 5:10b-11):** What do you think Jesus meant when He tells the disciples that from now on they will fish for people (v10b)? Why did the fishermen leave their boats and nets "at once"? If you were called in a similar way to follow Jesus, would you leave at once?

.....

.....

.....

**THE CHALLENGE:** Why was pulling up their boats and leaving everything such a challenge for these fishermen? What might such a step of faith to follow Jesus look like for you today?

.....

.....

**DRAWING IT TOGETHER:** Very quickly Peter's whole life has been turned on its head as he has followed Jesus, left home and his livelihood. What do you sense that God wants to do in and through your life? What steps can you begin to take towards this over the coming term?

.....

.....

**IDEAS FOR PRAYER:** Thank Jesus for His patience with us, and that He has a plan for each of our lives. Ask God to call you to Himself and to begin to reveal what it is that He wants to do in and through your life. Ask God to help you take steps of faith and begin to face up to who you really are.

**MEMORY VERSE: LUKE 5:10b-11**

**STUDY 2 – MATTHEW 14:13-36, JOHN 6:16-71 – FAITH AND DOUBT**

**INTRODUCTION:** The two incidents in our passage are well known stories but highly significant in the life and development of Peter. The second passage comes during a further discussion about the feeding of the five thousand when Jesus claims to be the Bread of Life.

**SETTING THE SCENE:** How do you tend to respond to seemingly impossible situations? Do you think that miracles are possible? Why or why not? Can you give examples of how such situations have helped you to move from a place of doubt to a place of faith?

.....

.....

**JESUS' COMPASSION ON THE 5,000 (v13-14):** What motivated the crowds to follow Jesus to this solitary place? How would you feel if you wanted some time out and when you got there you were confronted by crowds? What do you make of Jesus' compassion and the healings he performed?

.....

.....

**YOU FEED THEM (v15-21):** Why do you think the disciples were so eager to send the people away to eat? To what extent can you relate to their disbelief when Jesus tells them to feed the crowds? Given what happens next how do you imagine the disciples responded to the leftovers (v20)?

.....

.....

.....

**BELIEVING THE IMPOSSIBLE:** Why do we find it so difficult to believe that Jesus can do the impossible? Are there times when you've been amazed by how God has exceeded your expectations?

.....

.....

**TOO BUSY NOT TO PRAY (v22-23a):** Jesus sends on the disciples ahead of him presumably to get some rest (See Mark 6:31) while He dismissed the crowd. Why do you think Jesus carves out times for Himself to spend alone with His Father on the mountainside (Mark 1:35, 14:32-39, Luke 5:16)?

.....

.....

.....

**BUFFETED AND FEARFUL (v23b-26):** In light of the conditions (v24), what do you imagine that it would have been like to be out on the lake that night? To what extent can you identify with the terror felt by the disciples when they saw Jesus coming towards them (v26)?

.....

.....

**WALKING ON WATER (v27-31):** The words "It is I" can be translated literally as "I am": why do you think Jesus uses this phrase? To what extent can you identify with Peter's bold request to Jesus to ask him to come out on the water? What do you think it was that caused Peter to begin to sink?

.....

.....

**RESPONDING IN WORSHIP (v32-36):** How do you think the disciples' perception of Jesus might have changed after this incident? How important do you think this was for Peter specifically?

.....

.....

**DESERTING JESUS (JOHN 6:66-71):** These words are recorded after John's parallel account of these events. What do you make of the fact that *many* turned back and no longer followed Jesus? How do you understand Peter's response to Jesus' question about their own decision to follow?

.....

.....

**DRAWING IT TOGETHER:** What might it look for you (figuratively of course) to get out of the boat and walk on water? How do these events help you to move between faith and doubt in your own journey of discovery with Jesus?

.....

.....

**IDEAS FOR PRAYER:** Share a little about how you are feeling just now: perhaps in need of a rest, buffeted / out of control or feeling like you are sinking. Ask God to continue to lead each of you toward Himself and make Himself known to you. Ask God to help you respond in trust rather than fear.

**MEMORY VERSE: MATTHEW 14:31**

**STUDY 3 – MATTHEW 16:13-28 – IDENTITY AND LORDSHIP**

**INTRODUCTION:** This passage is a huge turning point both in the life of Jesus (as the emphasis shifts from His identity to His mission) and the life of Peter (as Jesus boldly declares that He would build His church on him). We wrestle here with these themes of identity and Lordship.

**SETTING THE SCENE:** What kind of things do we find ourselves being followers of? What do you imagine it might mean to be a follower of Jesus? What would you say are your biggest questions about the identity of Jesus, and what it might mean for you to follow Him?

.....

.....

.....

**YOU ARE THE MESSIAH (v13-16):** According to the disciples who did people think Jesus was (v13-14)? Who would people say that Jesus was today? What do you think Peter really meant when he said Jesus was the Messiah (See Psalm 2:2-7, Daniel 9:25)?

.....

.....

.....

**I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH (v17-20):** Jesus seems thrilled with Peter's response, which He says has come from His Father. What do you think Jesus means when He says He will build His church upon him (v18) and the gates of Hades will not overcome it? How do you think Peter might have responded?

.....

.....

.....

Verses 19-20 are very difficult verses to understand and there are many interpretations! What do you think is the general gist of what Jesus is saying here? Do you have any initial ideas of what Jesus means by the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven and the process of binding/loosing?

.....

.....

.....

**GET BEHIND ME SATAN (v21-23):** Why do you think Peter was so shocked by Jesus' prediction of rejection and suffering (think about what Peter understands and fails to understand)? Why does Jesus respond to Peter so harshly? According to Jesus, what's Peter's major mistake? What do you think it would look like for us to be guilty of the same charge?

.....

.....

.....

**TAKE UP YOUR CROSS AND FOLLOW ME (v24-28):** How do these verses relate to what Jesus has just been saying about His future? What do you think it looks like to follow Jesus every day and to take up our cross (a symbol of death)?

.....

.....

.....

What practically do you think that it means to "lose your life"? In what way does this passage give you the confidence to let go and "lose your life"? How do you feel about the idea of rewards in accordance with what we have done (v27)? To what extent do you think that following Jesus is worth it?

.....

.....

.....

**DRAWING IT TOGETHER:** Jesus has explained the implications of how we answer this question of identity. How confident are you about your own answer to the question of Jesus' identity? What areas of your lives do you find most difficult to surrender to Jesus in?

.....

.....

.....

**IDEAS FOR PRAYER:** Share together the things that have touched your heart or challenged you from the passage this study. Pray together that you would learn to follow Jesus and be willing to pay the cost involved with following Him.

**MEMORY VERSES: MATTHEW 16:24-25**

## STUDY 4 – JOHN 13 – LOVE AND BETRAYAL

**INTRODUCTION:** Chapter 13 is the beginning of Jesus' Upper Room Discourse. Turning to those His Father had given Him Jesus now shows them His love and begins to prepare them for His leaving. Woven throughout this extravagant story of love is a story of betrayal and denial.

**SETTING THE SCENE:** How would you define love? What is the greatest act of love that you have ever experienced, or heard about? What do you think it would have been like to witness this event?

.....

.....

.....

**SELF-SACRIFICE (v1-3):** What does Jesus mean when He says His hour has come? How do you think you would respond to Jesus trying to wash your feet? What does John mean when he says that Jesus "loved them to the end" or Jesus "showed them the full extent of his love" (v1)?

.....

.....

.....

**FOOT WASHING (v4-15):** Why do you think Jesus washes His disciple's feet? Do you think we should wash each other's feet today? Why would Jesus not wash *all* of Peter when he asked him to? What did washing their feet symbolise? What lesson did Jesus teach in response to Peter's interruptions?

.....

.....

.....

**NO SERVANT IS GREATER THAN HIS MASTER (v16-17):** What does it mean that no servant is greater than his master (v16)? What does this passage teach us about the character of Jesus?

.....

.....

.....

**A STORY OF BETRAYAL (v18-30):** Read the build-up to this section in v2 and in 12:35-36: what do you make of Jesus' foreknowledge that Judas would betray Him? Does this mean that Judas had no

choice in the matter? Do you think that all the disciples heard John's question, and Jesus' reply in v25? How does that help us to understand the dynamics of what was going on here?

.....

.....

.....

**GLORY AND DEPARTURE (v31-33):** What do you think John means when he talks about being glorified? When are/were the Father and the Son glorified? Why could the disciples not go where Jesus was going? Why does Jesus tell them these things? Was Judas crucial in God's plan of glorification? What then was his significance (See Psalm 41:9)?

.....

.....

.....

**LOVING OTHERS (v34-35):** What calibre of love should we show to others? How can we show this kind of love? Do others know we are disciples by the way we live (v35)? Why is it a 'new' commandment (v34)? How is our love for others evidence of our faith in Christ?

.....

.....

.....

**DRAWING IT TOGETHER (v36-38):** How are Peter and Judas different and how are they similar? What should a right perspective be on the times when we fail or even deny Christ? If we can, and indeed, do fail God what other scripture can we take comfort in (See 6:37-39)?

.....

.....

.....

**IDEAS FOR PRAYER:** Think together about what servant-hearted self-sacrifice for others would look like today. Pray for one another that the quality of our love for one another would show the world around us that we are Jesus' disciples.

**MEMORY VERSES: JOHN 13:34-35**

**STUDY 5 – LUKE 22:24-62 – FAILURE AND REGRET**

**INTRODUCTION:** The scene is set for the moment for which Jesus came: namely to die for us at the hands of sinful men. Interwoven through this story is another story about Peter and his own journey of faith. Jesus prayed for him that though he would fail he would turn back and strengthen others.

**SETTING THE SCENE:** Think of a time when you have messed up: what were the steps and choices you made at that time which helped you recover from your failure?

.....

.....

.....

**WHO IS THE GREATEST (v24-30):** There is an irony here that Luke records this incident immediately prior to Jesus' words about Peter's denial and then the beginning of his own path of suffering. To what extent do you agree with Jesus that the greatest is actually like the youngest, and the one who serves?

.....

.....

.....

**I HAVE PRAYED FOR YOU (v31-34):** What does, and doesn't, Jesus pray for Peter in these verses, and how does that stack up with what Jesus seems to know about what is going to happen? How do you respond to the reality of spiritual attack: namely that Satan wanted to sift them as wheat?

.....

.....

.....

**GETHSEMANE (v39-46):** Why does Jesus ask the disciples to pray that they will not fall into temptation (nb: Mark 14:34,38 records that Jesus asked them to watch and pray)? In what ways do these verses illustrate just how hard it was for Jesus to undertake his mission?

.....

.....

.....

**ARREST AND DENIAL (v47-61):** In John 19:10-11 the person who cut off the right ear of the servant of the High Priest was Peter! How is Jesus' response saying "Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?" reminiscent of Peter's rebuke in Matthew 16?

.....

.....

.....

After Jesus was arrested why do you think Peter followed from a distance? To what extent can you understand Peter's denial of His Lord when asked about his connection to Jesus? How would you understand what happened when Jesus looked over at Peter in his moment of weakness (v61-62)?

.....

.....

.....

**DRAWING IT TOGETHER:** What emotions or experiences does this chapter about failure and regret stir up within your hearts? How can we be encouraged by Jesus' care and concern for Peter even before he had messed up? Do you think that Jesus is praying for your faith also?

.....

.....

.....

**IDEAS FOR PRAYER:** Share together of some of the things you are struggling with. Encourage one another with the good news of what Jesus' death means for us and our sin. Ask God that He would forgive you, restore you and help you start over.

**MEMORY VERSE: LUKE 22:32**

**STUDY 6 – JOHN 21 – RESTORATION & COMMISSION**

**INTRODUCTION:** In scenes reminiscent of when Jesus called Peter to follow Him Jesus appears again to the disciples at the Sea of Galilee. Following Peter's threefold denial Jesus now asks him three times whether he loved Him before recommissioning Him to care for His church.

**SETTING THE SCENE:** Think of a time when have you experienced that sense of déjà-vu: what was it that jogged your memory or what was it that made it feel so memorable?

.....

.....

**FINDING FISH (v1-8):** What are the similarities and differences between the account of them fishing here, and the one we saw in Luke 5? What do you think made the disciple who Jesus loved (most likely John) realise that this was Jesus?

.....

.....

.....

What do you make of Peter's subsequent reaction to jump in the lake and swim to the shore? What do you think the other Disciples made of this and why didn't they do the same thing? How has your experience of Jesus served to make you all the more ready to jump out of the boat for Him?

.....

.....

.....

**BREAKFAST ON THE BEACH (v9-14):** What do you imagine it was like to be present at this breakfast? What would a catch of 153 large fish look like? Why does Peter want to bring it ashore and what might that show about what Peter has learnt from Jesus?

.....

.....

.....

For what reason do you think that Jesus does this miracle (John includes signs which point to something)? Why does John record the observation that none of them dared ask 'who are you'?

.....  
.....  
.....  
**DO YOU LOVE ME (v15-19):** Why do you think Jesus asks Peter three times whether he loved him? What do you make of Peter feeling hurt (v17) after Jesus asked a third time? How do you understand Jesus's instructions to Peter to "feed my lambs", "feed my sheep" and "take care of my sheep"?

.....  
.....  
.....  
How might Peter's death for Jesus bring glory to God (v18-19, & See also John 13:37-38)? Are you willing to follow Jesus even if it involves such suffering? Is this reasonable? What other kinds of things are people willing to die for?

.....  
.....  
.....  
**FORGET ABOUT HIM (v20-23):** What does Peter's question in v21 (about John) reveal about where his own thinking was about his future? Why do we so love to compare ourselves to others rather than focusing on what God is asking of us? What is God saying to you?

.....  
.....  
.....  
**DRAWING IT TOGETHER (v24-25):** John makes clear that he has selected the things included in his Gospel from a wealth of material. To what extent do the things John has written here contain that feeling of truth? How do you think the events of this chapter would have further shaped Peter's faith?

.....  
.....  
.....  
**IDEAS FOR PRAYER:** Thank God that He is in the business of forgiving those who are willing to believe and repent. Ask God to continue to work in your life, help you to follow Jesus, and serve Him in the things He has planned for you.

**MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 21:16**

## STUDY 7 – ACTS 2: TRANSFORMED AND EMPOWERED

**INTRODUCTION:** In Acts 1:7-8 Jesus tells His disciples that they will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes and then they will be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth. Acts 2 is about Pentecost when this promise is fulfilled and Jesus pours out His Spirit.

**SETTING THE SCENE:** What do you know about the work of the Holy Spirit (the third person of the trinity)? Would you say that He is a power or a person? Why?

.....

.....

**THE SPIRIT COMES IN POWER (v1-13):** How would you describe in your own words what actually happened on the Day of Pentecost? How do you think that you would have felt if you had been there?

.....

.....

.....

**FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY:** In what sense were the events of Acts 2 the fulfilment and beginnings of what the prophets and Jesus himself had spoken of? Read the following passages: Ezekiel 36:24-32, John 14:15-20 & 25-27, 16:5-16 and Acts 1: 4-8?

.....

.....

.....

**MIRACULOUS SIGNS:** What was the significance of the three signs (wind, fire & speech) that accompanied the pouring out of the Holy Spirit that day (See Luke 24:49 & Isaiah 6:6-7)? Is there a difference between the tongues (languages) referred to here and those referred to in 1 Cor 12-14?

.....

.....

.....

**PETER'S TRANSFORMATION (v14-40):** Contrast the Peter we see in Luke 22: 54-61: How do you account for the drastic change in Peter from that of a broken man weeping at his failure to a big stage preacher? What are the main points of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost?

.....  
.....  
.....

**ROOTED IN SCRIPTURE:** How does he use the Old Testament to support what has happened (See Joel 2:22-24, Psalm 16:8-11 & Psalm 110:1)? Do you think he is justified in his use of these passages (the whole Bible bears witness to Jesus who spent 40 days explaining it to them: see Lk 24)?

.....  
.....

**JOINING THE DOTS:** What connection is there between repentance, baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit (v38)? What do you think that Jesus (through the Holy Spirit) is asking of you today? What does (or would) it look for Jesus to turn your life upside down in the same way as Peter's?

.....  
.....

**RESPONSE (v41-47):** What do you think caused the drastic changes in the 3,000 people who became believers that day? How does that compare to your experience? What do you notice about the way that the believers subsequently began meeting together (the start of the early church)? How does this compare with your own experiences (if relevant) of being part of a church?

.....  
.....  
.....

**DRAWING IT TOGETHER:** Why were the events of Pentecost so important, both for Peter, and for the Church in general? What would be the implications if the events of Pentecost had never happened?

.....  
.....

**IDEAS FOR PRAYER:** Thank God for the way that He transforms lives. Continue to pray for such transformation, both in your own lives and in those of your friends. Ask God to empower you for the task of sharing your life and your faith with those around you.

**MEMORY VERSE: ACTS 2:38**

# MEMORY VERSES

## **STUDY 1: JOHN 1:35-42, LUKE 5:1-11 – CALLING AND CHALLENGE**

<sup>10</sup>...Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people.' <sup>11</sup> So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

**Luke 5:10b-11**

## **STUDY 2: LUKE 14:13-36 – FAITH AND DOUBT**

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

**Matthew 14:31**

## **STUDY 3: MATTHEW 16:13-28 – IDENTITY AND LORDSHIP**

<sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup> For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.

**Matthew 16:24-25**

## **STUDY 4: JOHN 13 – LOVE AND BETRAYAL**

<sup>34</sup> 'A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.'

**John 13:34-35**

## **STUDY 5: LUKE 22:24-62 – FAILURE AND REGRET**

But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.'

**Luke 22:32**

## **STUDY 6: JOHN 21 – RESTORED AND COMMISSIONED**

Again Jesus said, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He answered, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Take care of my sheep.'

**John 21:16**

## **STUDY 7: ACTS 2 – TRANSFORMED AND EMPOWERED**

Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**Acts 2:38**