



A Meet and Greet with Peter

September 18 2022

WORSHIP

Living Hope
No Other Like Jesus
Bless the Lord

WELCOME

Who is the most famous person you have met personally? What kind of conversation were you able to have with him or her? Do you think he or she still remembers meeting you? Tell us the story.

WORD

1 Peter 1:2

who has been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with His blood:

Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

As we begin a new series on the 1st letter of Peter entitled Holiness and Hope in a Hostile World, it is best to get to know the writer himself in order to better understand his letter to us.

We first meet Peter as Simon, the brother of Andrew. Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist who declared Jesus as the Lamb of God, after which Andrew started following Jesus and told his brother Simon that they have found the Messiah. Andrew then brought Simon to Jesus, who gave Simon a new name "Peter" which means rock. After this encounter with Jesus, Simon Peter did not immediately follow Jesus and did not use his new name. In fact he went about his usual activities and went back to fishing in the Sea of Galilee the next day. But we know that God has other plans for Simon Peter. On the same day that Simon Peter was fishing with his friends, Jesus decided to go to Galilee. As Jesus was preaching, he got into the boat of Simon that was parked along the shore. After His preaching, Jesus told Simon to put out into deep water and let the nets down. Despite his doubts of not being able to catch any fish, Simon did as Jesus told him. Simon and the other would-be disciples miraculously caught 2 boatloads of fish. After witnessing this miracle, Simon Peter then fell to Jesus' feet and begged Him to go away as he found himself unworthy of Jesus' presence, being a sinful man himself. But Jesus told Simon Peter not to fear because from thereon, he would be fishing for people. So Simon, together with his partners, James and John left everything and followed Jesus.

Has it ever occurred to you that nothing has ever occurred to God? The truth is He knows everything even before it happens. Nothing takes God by surprise. His knowledge of all things is perfect and complete. Because God's knowledge is complete, He never reacts or responds to something we do. Instead, He gives us the opportunity to respond to Him, to His choices, to His decisions. We live in a God-centric universe and not a man-centric one. So when Simon Peter did not choose to follow Jesus the first time he met Him, he was given another opportunity to respond to

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

Thanksgiving

Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

Country and World

Repentance and salvation
Peace in Ukraine and healing for those infected by the virus

Church

CCF members would honor God & love God and make disciples.
Core, pastors and leaders.
Ministries and church worldwide

Personal Concerns

Share your problems and concerns with your group and pray for one another.

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His calling. Simon did not immediately use the name that Jesus gave him, but in the first letter he wrote, he introduced himself as Peter.

Peter addressed his first letter to the “elect”, God’s chosen ones. We must understand that God always knew that there will be persecution in the early church, causing Jesus’ followers to be exiled, to be scattered abroad and to settle in unfamiliar places. Hence, Peter wrote to them, to Jesus’ followers who were driven out of Jerusalem. And he began his letter encouraging them by reminding them that everything is happening according to God’s carefully orchestrated plan. As followers of Jesus today, we too are God’s chosen people and we too are recipients of the message of this letter of Peter.

Peter was not the only early church writer who said that God chose us to be holy and blameless in His sight and predestined for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ. In fact, Paul wrote exactly this in his letter to the Ephesians. Not only that, but according to what Peter wrote in verse 2, all three persons of the Trinity not only agreed with the Father’s choice and His right to choose, they also all worked together to make the Father’s choice a reality in the world in which we live. That is why Peter was so confident in saying that God knows and has chosen you to be right where you are, amidst the trials, for His glory and purpose. Yes, God choosing someone implies that He did not choose somebody else and that this is not fair nor just. But God’s justice and fairness is different from how we define it. Instead of applying our own definition to God, we should apply God’s definition of justice and fairness to ourselves, according to His perfect character. How then should we respond to the idea that God chose us? This should prompt us to praise God for His grace and not question or argue with other believers.

Going back to Peter’s story – we know that Peter failed Jesus several times. At the beginning, Peter questioned and doubted Jesus’ decision to ask him to follow Him. Towards the end of Jesus’ ministry, after He was arrested, Peter denied Jesus three times right after he professed he will not leave Jesus’ side. When Jesus rose from the dead, He appeared to His disciples and to Peter. In one of those walks they had together, just before Jesus went up to heaven, Jesus asked Peter three times whether he loved Him to which Peter responded yes every single time, alluding to Peter’s denial of Jesus three times. His final words to Peter: Follow me. And Peter devoted the rest of his life faithfully following Jesus, encouraging others to also do the same. At the end of his life, when Peter was about to be executed, he refused to be crucified the same way as his Lord and Savior and begged the executioners to crucify him upside down. That was Peter then and now. And his blessing of grace and peace to be ours in abundance not only speaks to the early church exiles, but to any of us who may be going through



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trials or persecution for our faith. We can rest in God's foreknowledge and infinite wisdom.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The Doctrine of Election says that God **CHOSE** us before He created the world. According to Ephesians 1, what was God planning for us when He chose us? How does this work out in our lives?
2. The Doctrine of Predestination says that God **PREDETERMINED** that we would experience something awesome. According to Ephesians 1, what is this experience that God has planned for us to have? How does that work out in our daily lives?
3. The doctrine of Election and the doctrine of Predestination have created controversy in the church today. What is controversial about these two doctrines in the 21st Century church? How should we react to these two truths instead of arguing over them?
4. Peter denied knowing Jesus and we want to condemn him for that, but we all stop short of condemning him. Why do we stop short? What is it in our lives that keeps us from pointing fingers at Peter?
5. Matthew West and Mark Hall wrote a song that Casting Crowns performed entitled This Is Now. What is the song about and why is it so meaningful to us considering what John wrote in chapters 18 and 21? (Find and listen to the song This is Now by Casting Crowns before and after answering this question).