

BRBC Bible Study Series - The Apostle Peter

Bible Study #1: Peter's Call

Main Passages:

Matthew 4:18–22; Mark 1:14–20; Luke 5:1–11

Purpose of the Study

This study explores Peter's call by Jesus, examining how God calls ordinary people into extraordinary service. We will consider Peter's response, the cost of discipleship, and how Jesus still calls believers today.

Opening Prayer

"Lord Jesus, thank You for calling ordinary people to follow You. Open our hearts to hear Your voice clearly and give us courage to obey wherever You lead. Amen."

1. Read the Passages

- Read Matthew 4:18–22, Mark 1:14–20, and Luke 5:1–11 together.
- Notice both the similarities and the unique details in each account.

Questions

- What stands out most about Jesus' call to Peter?
- Why do you think Peter responded so quickly?
- What might Peter have been leaving behind?

2. Context and Summary

- Peter (Simon) was a fisherman from Galilee.
- Fishing was physically demanding, uncertain work.
- Jesus entered Peter's ordinary working life and transformed it into a kingdom calling.
- Luke's Gospel adds the miraculous catch of fish, revealing both Jesus' authority and Peter's unworthiness: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." (Luke 5:8)
- Yet Jesus responds with grace: "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." (Luke 5:10)

OT Connections

- Jeremiah 16:16 - God sending "fishers."
- Isaiah 6:1–8 - Isaiah overwhelmed by holiness yet commissioned by God.
- Exodus 3:1–12 - Moses called during ordinary work.

NT Connections

- Philippians 3:7–8 - Leaving all things for Christ.
- 1 Peter 2:9 - Called out of darkness into light.
- John 15:16 - "You did not choose me, but I chose you."

Questions

- Why does God often call people during ordinary life?
- How does Peter's awareness of sin prepare him for service?
- What does this teach us about grace and calling?

3. Key Themes and Reflections

- **Jesus Calls Ordinary People** Peter was not wealthy, educated, or influential. Jesus delights in using unlikely people.
- **St. Augustine** wrote: "God does not choose worthy men, but by choosing them makes them worthy."
- **Calling Requires Leaving** Peter left nets, boats, and security behind. Following Jesus always involves surrender.
- **Jesus Calls Us Into Mission** "Fishers of men" means participating in God's rescue mission for people.
- **John Stott** wrote: "The call to discipleship is a call to mission."

Questions

- What "nets" can keep people from fully following Jesus today?
- How has Jesus interrupted your ordinary life?
- What fears or concerns might stop someone from responding to God's call?

4. A Word to the Church

For BRBC

- Are we helping people discover God's calling?
- Do we value ordinary people whom God may use powerfully?
- Are we willing to leave comfort behind for mission?

Challenge

- A church that follows Jesus must be willing to move when He calls.

Questions

- What might Jesus be asking BRBC to leave behind?
- Are we more committed to comfort or mission?
- How can we become better "fishers of people" in Horsham and beyond?

5. Practical Action

- Spend time this week asking God where He is calling you to serve.
- Share your testimony with one person.
- Pray for courage to obey Jesus promptly.
- Encourage someone else in their calling.

Areas for Prayer

- Personal obedience to Christ.
- New disciples and conversions in Horsham.
- Courage and clarity for BRBC leaders.
- Young people discovering God's calling.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Luke 5:10 *"Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men."*

Final Prayer

"Lord Jesus, thank You for calling Peter and for still calling people today. Give us willing hearts, open hands, and obedient spirits. Make BRBC a church that gladly follows wherever You lead. Amen."

BRBC Bible Study Series - The Apostle Peter

Bible Study #2: Peter's Confession

Main Passages:

Matthew 16:13–20; Mark 8:27–30; Luke 9:18–21

Purpose of the Study

This study explores Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. We will examine what this confession means, why it is central to Christianity, and how believers today must answer Jesus' question personally.

Opening Prayer

"Lord Jesus, reveal Yourself to us afresh. Help us not merely to know facts about You, but truly confess You as Lord and Christ with our lips and lives. Amen."

1. Read the Passages

- Read Matthew 16:13–20, Mark 8:27–30, and Luke 9:18–21 together.
- Notice both the similarities and the unique details in each account.

Questions

- Why does Jesus ask, "Who do people say that I am?"
- Why is Peter's answer so important?
- What does Peter understand about Jesus?

2. Context and Summary

- Jesus asks the disciples this question in Caesarea Philippi, an area associated with pagan worship and political power.
- Against this backdrop, Peter boldly declares: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16)
- Jesus explains this truth was revealed by the Father, not human wisdom.

OT Connections

- Psalm 2:7 - God's anointed Son.
- Isaiah 9:6–7 - The promised divine King.
- Daniel 7:13–14 - The Son of Man receiving everlasting dominion.

NT Connections

- John 20:31 - John writes so people may believe Jesus is the Christ.
- Romans 10:9 - Confessing Jesus as Lord brings salvation.
- Colossians 1:15–20 - Christ supreme over all creation.

Questions

- Why is recognizing Jesus' identity essential?
- Who do you say Jesus Christ of Nazareth is?
- Why can't Jesus simply be viewed as a good teacher or an example to follow?
- How does culture today misunderstand Jesus?

3. Key Themes and Reflections

- **Jesus Is the Christ** "Christ" means Messiah - God's promised King and Deliverer.
- **True Faith Is Revealed by God** Spiritual truth requires divine revelation.
- **John Chrysostom** wrote: "Peter spoke not from himself but moved by the Father."
- **The Church Is Built on Christ** The church stands upon the truth of Jesus' identity.
- **Dietrich Bonhoeffer** wrote: "The church is the church only when it exists for Christ."

Questions

- How firm is your own confession of Christ?
- How can believers grow in confidence about who Jesus is?
- What pressures tempt Christians to soften this confession?

4. A Word to the Church

For BRBC

- Is Jesus truly central in all we do?
- Are we proclaiming Christ clearly to Horsham?
- How does our BRBC building point to Jesus?
- Are we building on personalities, traditions, or Christ Himself?

Challenge

The church loses its foundation when Christ is no longer central.

Questions

- What competes with Jesus for first place in church life?
- How can BRBC more boldly proclaim Christ publicly?
- How are we helping people encounter the real Jesus?

5. Practical Action

- Spend time reflecting on who Jesus truly is.
- Memorize Matthew 16:16.
- Share your faith in Christ with someone this week.
- Pray for spiritual revelation among unbelievers.

Areas for Prayer

- Bold witness for Christ.
- Spiritual awakening in Horsham.
- Unity around Jesus within BRBC.
- Deeper love for Christ personally.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Matthew 16:16 -

"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Final Prayer

"Lord Jesus, strengthen our confession of who You are. Keep us faithful to Your truth and help BRBC stand firmly upon You alone. Amen."

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Bible Study #3: Peter's Denial

Main Passages:

Matthew 26:69–75; Mark 14:66–72; Luke 22:54–62

Purpose of the Study

This study examines Peter's denial of Jesus, exploring human weakness, fear, repentance, and the grace of Christ toward failing disciples.

Opening Prayer

"Merciful Lord, we confess our weakness before You. Help us face our failures honestly and receive Your restoring grace. Amen."

1. Read the Passages

- Read the denial accounts carefully: Matthew 26:69–75; Mark 14:66–72; Luke 22:54–62
- Note especially Luke 22:61: "And the Lord turned and looked at Peter."

Questions

- Why did Peter deny Jesus despite earlier boldness?
- What emotions might Peter have felt?
- Why is this story included so openly in Scripture?
- What do you think this says about Peter's character to have shared with the Gospel writers the details that only he was likely to know.

2. Context and Summary

- Peter had promised unwavering loyalty, yet fear overcame him.
- Under pressure, he denied even knowing Jesus three times before the rooster crowed.
- Luke uniquely records Jesus looking at Peter after the denial, leading Peter to weep bitterly.

OT Connections

- Proverbs 29:25 - Fear of man brings a snare.
- Psalm 51 - David's repentance after failure.
- Zechariah 13:7 - The shepherd struck and sheep scattered.

NT Connections

- Romans 3:23 - All have sinned.
- 1 Corinthians 10:12 - Let anyone who thinks he stands take heed.
- 1 John 1:9 - God forgives confessed sin.

Questions

- Why does fear often weaken faith?
- How can Christians prepare for moments of testing?
- What can we learn from Peter's repentance?
- Reflect on the comparison between Peter's and Judas' responses when realising the impact and inference of their actions.

3. Key Themes and Reflections

- **Even Strong Believers Can Fall** Peter's failure warns against spiritual pride.
- **Jesus Knows Our Weakness** Jesus predicted Peter's denial yet still loved him.
- **Origen** wrote: "Peter learned not to trust in himself but in the mercy of Christ."
- **Failure Is Not the End** Peter's tears point toward repentance and restoration.
- **Charles Spurgeon** wrote: "The greatest saints are still sinners needing grace."

Questions

- How should Christians respond after failure?
- How should church respond when faced with an individual member's failure?
- What is the difference between Judas' despair and Peter's repentance?
- How can churches become safer places for honest repentance?
- How might worldly 'blame culture', hypocrisy and 'justice' impact church in unhelpful and unscriptural ways?

4. A Word to the Church

For BRBC

- Are we honest about weakness and temptation?
- Do we restore fallen believers gently?
- Are we relying on Christ or ourselves?

Challenge

A proud church is vulnerable to collapse.

Questions

- What fears silence Christian witness today?
- How can BRBC encourage perseverance under pressure?
- How are we cultivating humility and dependence on God along with mercy and forgiveness towards one another?

5. Practical Action

- Confess areas of compromise honestly to God.
- Pray for courage under pressure.
- Encourage someone struggling spiritually.
- Reflect on God's grace toward you personally.

Areas for Prayer

- Christians facing persecution.
- Strength under temptation.
- Honest repentance within the church.
- Restoration for fallen believers.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Luke 22:61–62 *"And the Lord turned and looked at Peter... and he went out and wept bitterly."*

Final Prayer

"Lord Jesus, thank You that our failures do not have the final word. Restore us when we fall and strengthen us to stand faithfully for You. Amen."

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Bible Study #4: Peter's Restoration

Main Passage:

John 21:15–25

Purpose of the Study

This study explores Jesus restoring Peter after his denial, showing Christ's grace, forgiveness, and recommissioning of broken disciples.

Opening Prayer

"Lord Jesus, thank You for restoring fallen people. Speak healing and purpose into our lives and teach us to love You deeply. Amen."

1. Read the Passage

- Read John 21:15–25 slowly, noticing Jesus' repeated questions to Peter.

Questions

- Why does Jesus ask Peter three times, "Do you love me?"
- What is the significance of "Feed my sheep"?
- What does this reveal about Jesus' grace?

2. Context and Summary

- After His resurrection, Jesus meets the disciples beside the Sea of Galilee.
- Around another charcoal fire - echoing Peter's denial - Jesus publicly restores Peter.

OT Connections

- Psalm 23 - God shepherding His people.
- Ezekiel 34 - God condemning false shepherds.
- Jeremiah 3:15 - Shepherds after God's own heart.

NT Connections

- 1 Peter 5:2–4 - Shepherd God's flock willingly.
- Galatians 6:1 - Restore gently those caught in sin.
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 - New creation in Christ.

Questions

- Why does Jesus restore Peter publicly?
- How does love for Christ connect to serving others?
- How can failure deepen future ministry?

3. Key Themes and Reflections

- **Jesus Restores Broken People** Christ does not discard repentant disciples.
- **Love Comes Before Service** Peter's ministry flows from relationship with Jesus.

- **Augustine** wrote: "Love, and then do what you will."
- **Restored People Can Strengthen Others** Peter later becomes a courageous shepherd and leader.
- **Tim Keller** wrote: "The gospel is this: we are more sinful than we imagined and more loved than we dared hope."

Questions

- How have you experienced God's restoration?
- Why is love for Christ essential in ministry?
- How can restored believers encourage others?

4. A Word to the Church

For BRBC

- Are we a restoring church?
- Do we value grace alongside truth?
- Are we caring well for God's people?

Challenge

Churches that fail to restore wounded people fail to reflect Jesus.

Questions

- How can BRBC better restore hurting believers?
- Are we more judgmental or compassionate?
- What does healthy spiritual shepherding look like?
- How do we best find the balance between acknowledging failure, and forgiving and restoration from failure?

5. Practical Action

- Spend time reflecting on God's grace in your life.
- Reach out to someone spiritually discouraged.
- Pray for BRBC leaders and pastoral care.
- Serve someone practically this week.

Areas for Prayer

- Healing for wounded believers.
- Wisdom for church leaders.
- Deeper love for Christ.
- Unity and care within BRBC.

Closing Scripture Meditation

John 21:17 *"Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you."*

Final Prayer

"Restoring Lord, thank You for Your mercy toward us. Help us love You deeply and serve Your people faithfully. Make BRBC a place of grace and restoration. Amen."

BRBC Bible Study Series - The Apostle Peter

Bible Study #5: Peter's Preaching

Main Passage:

Acts 2:14–41

Purpose of the Study

This study examines Peter's sermon at Pentecost, exploring the coming of the Holy Spirit, bold gospel proclamation, repentance, and the birth of the church.

Opening Prayer

"Holy Spirit, fill us afresh and give us boldness to proclaim Jesus Christ clearly and faithfully. Amen."

1. Read the Passage

- Read Acts 2:14–41, paying attention to Peter's boldness and focus on Jesus.

Questions

- What changed Peter from fearful disciple to bold preacher?
- What is the main message of Peter's sermon?
- Why were people "cut to the heart"?

2. Context and Summary

- At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit fills the believers.
- Peter stands publicly proclaiming Jesus as crucified, risen, and exalted Lord.
- Three thousand people respond in repentance and faith.

OT Connections

- Joel 2:28–32 - God pouring out His Spirit.
- Psalm 16:8–11 - Prophecy of resurrection.
- Psalm 110:1 - The exalted Messiah.

NT Connections

- Romans 10:14–17 - Faith comes through hearing.
- 1 Corinthians 2:1–5 - Gospel power through the Spirit.
- Ephesians 2:19–22 - The church built together in Christ.

Questions

- Why is the Holy Spirit essential for witness?
- What makes preaching truly Christ-centered?
- How should people respond to the gospel today?

3. Key Themes and Reflections

- **The Spirit Empowers Witness** Peter's courage comes from the Holy Spirit.
- **The Gospel Centers on Jesus** Peter focuses on Christ's death, resurrection, and lordship.

- **John Calvin** wrote: "The sum of the gospel is to know Christ."
- **Repentance Leads to Life** Peter calls listeners to repent and believe.
- **Billy Graham** wrote: "The Holy Spirit's ministry is to glorify Christ."

Questions

- How can Christians become bolder witnesses?
- Why must churches keep Christ central?
- How can we depend more fully on the Holy Spirit?

4. A Word to the Church

For BRBC

- Are we proclaiming the gospel clearly?
- Are we depending on programs or the Spirit?
- Are we praying for genuine revival?

Challenge

The church grows spiritually through prayer, truth, and the Spirit's power.

Questions

- What might Spirit-filled witness look like in Horsham today?
- How can BRBC grow in prayerful dependence?
- Are we expecting God to save people?

5. Practical Action

- Pray daily for boldness in witness.
- Share the gospel with someone this week.
- Read Acts 2 prayerfully during the week.
- Pray regularly for revival.

Areas for Prayer

- Salvation in Horsham.
- Fresh filling of the Holy Spirit.
- Courage in evangelism.
- Unity and holiness within BRBC.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Acts 2:36 "God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Final Prayer

"Holy Spirit, make us bold witnesses for Jesus Christ. Help BRBC proclaim the gospel faithfully and joyfully until many come to know You. Amen."

BRBC Bible Study Series - The Apostle Peter

Bible Study #6: Peter's Vision

Main Passage:

Acts 10:9–23

Purpose of the Study

This study explores Peter's vision in Acts 10, examining how God challenged prejudice, expanded the mission of the church, and revealed that the gospel is for all people.

Opening Prayer

"Lord God, open our hearts to Your purposes. Break down prejudice and help us see people as You see them. Amen."

1. Read the Passage

- Read Acts 10:9–23 carefully, noting Peter's confusion and God's repeated instruction.

Questions

- Why was Peter shocked by the vision?
- What barriers was God breaking down?
- What does this reveal about the gospel?

2. Context and Summary

- Peter sees a vision of unclean animals and hears God say: "What God has made clean, do not call common."
- God prepares Peter to welcome Gentiles into the people of God through faith in Christ.

OT Connections

- Genesis 12:3 - Blessing for all nations through Abraham.
- Isaiah 49:6 - Salvation reaching the ends of the earth.
- Leviticus 11 - Jewish food laws and holiness distinctions.

NT Connections

- Galatians 3:28 - One in Christ Jesus.
- Ephesians 2:13–18 - Christ breaking dividing walls.
- Revelation 7:9 - Every tribe and nation worshipping Christ.

Questions

- What prejudices or assumptions can hinder the church today?
- Why is unity in Christ so powerful?
- How does this passage challenge comfort zones?

3. Key Themes and Reflections

- **God Shows No Partiality** The gospel is for every people and nation.
- **God Changes Our Thinking** Peter had to unlearn deeply rooted assumptions.
- **Irenaeus** wrote: "The glory of God is man fully alive."
- **The Church Must Cross Boundaries** God continually pushes His people outward in mission.
- **Lesslie Newbigin** wrote: "The church exists for the sake of those who are not yet its members."

Questions

- What barriers still divide people today?
- How can churches become more welcoming?
- What uncomfortable changes might God ask of us?

4. A Word to the Church

For BRBC

- Are we welcoming to outsiders and newcomers?
- Are there invisible barriers within church culture?
- Do we truly believe the gospel is for everyone?

Challenge

A church focused only inwardly forgets God's heart for the nations.

Questions

- How can BRBC reach more people in Horsham?
- Are there groups we unintentionally overlook?
- How can we better reflect Revelation 7:9?

5. Practical Action

- Pray for someone from a different background or culture.
- Welcome someone new intentionally at church.
- Support mission work locally and globally.
- Ask God to reveal hidden prejudice in your heart.

Areas for Prayer

- Unity within the church.
- Global mission and missionaries.
- Salvation across cultures and nations.
- Greater love and openness within BRBC.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Acts 10:15 *"What God has made clean, do not call common."*

Final Prayer

"Lord, enlarge our hearts for Your mission. Help BRBC welcome all whom You are calling and proclaim the gospel without barriers or prejudice. Amen."