



FOR GROUPS MEETING: April 13-18

SERIES: Growth

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

Imagine if you can when the first time that you ever swam in a pool. Did you have floaties on? Was your parent accompanying you? Was it a part of a swim lesson? Most of us would say yes to one of these scenarios. The point being that when you first decided to swim, you didn't do it alone without any instruction or help. Imagine how disastrous it could have been to be thrown into the deep in without any idea what to do. Unfortunately this is sometimes what happens with those who decide to follow Jesus, they commit and are thrown into the rigors of life (the deep end) without any help or instruction.

On a special Sunday like Easter many people make decisions to either start following Jesus or recommitting their lives to follow Jesus. We as a church are setting aside the next two weeks to discuss how we as believers can continue in growing in our faith. This week we will look into the life of the apostle Peter. We will see that one of the biggest catalysts for Spiritual growth is understanding and operating in grace.

TO COMPLETE THIS WEEK'S STUDY

- You will need:
 - A Bible
 - A quiet place for prayer, reading, and reflection
 - A pencil or a pen
- Read the **Introduction to Study**.
- Move through the daily studies consecutively.
- Open and close each day in prayer.
- Meditate on each question as you feel led.
- Record your answers in the space to the right of each day's questions.
- If you miss a day, don't worry. Simply pick up where you left off.

Dig Deeper

Some people would like to go deeper in their study. If you would like to do so and have the time, please take advantage of the Dig Deeper sections of this Group Life lesson.



(day 1)

Prayer: Lord help me to continue to grow just as Peter grew. Help me not to settle into complacency or apathy when it comes to my heart for you.

Intro: *This week we will be looking at two stories in the life of Peter. We will compare and contrast them. In the first day we will seek to make some observations about the two stories.*

Read: Luke 22:54-62 & John 21: 15-19

1.) When did each of these stories take place in respect to the life of Jesus? What role if any do you think this has on the respective stories?

2.) What are some similarities and differences in terms of the settings? Do you think the authors intentionally included these details?

DIGGING DEEPER:

A concept that will be vital to understanding this week's lesson is the concept of redemption.

What do you think redemption means?

Now look up the word in a theological dictionary found online.

How did your definition compare? Were there aspects that you didn't know about before, if so what were they?



(day 2)

Prayer: Lord today may the desires of my heart be shown to be truthful and worshipful in your sight. May you reign as King over all.

Read: Luke 22:54-62

Intro: *The first real contrast we will look at is truth vs lies. If our hearts are filled with lies instead of the truth we will not grow.*

1.) What does Peter tell those who question him at the first fire? Is this the truth or a lie?

2.) Sometimes we also deny Jesus whether it be with our mouth or our actions. We will delve further into why Peter did this later this week, but why do we do this?

DIGGING DEEPER:

Peter lies here are in someways reminiscent of Abraham's lies in regards to Sarah being his sister rather than his wife. (Gen 20)

Why do you think these men told these lies at this time? Do you think they were for similar reasons or different?



(day 3)

Prayer: Lord may I please know that giving my life to you is more worthy than trying to preserve my life.

Intro: *Another way we see a stark contrast to these two is Peter's regard to his own life. To better understand what we mean by this you need to think of what was going on around Peter when He denied knowing Jesus. His master was about to die and the crowd was in a frenzy.*

Read: Luke 22: 33; 54-62 & John 21:15-19

1.) How does Peter's response in v. 33 compare to what He says in vv. 54-62? Why do you think this is?

2.) In John 21 when Jesus states that Peter "will stretch out his arms" He is telling Peter that he will be crucified. In regards to his life how has Peter changed from the first fire to second?

DIGGING DEEPER:

In Matthew 16 Jesus utters the phrase that those who seek to save their life will lose it, but those who give up their life and follow Him will find it.

How does this apply to Peter?



(day 4)

Pray: Lord help me to see the two simple reasons why Peter was able to be transformed between the fires. May you do these things in me as well so that I too may be transformed.

Intro: *In Hebrew tradition numbers carried significance. One of the most important numbers is 3. The number three is viewed as perfection or the maximum. Thus when the angels sing "Holy, Holy, Holy" they are stating that God is the perfection of Holiness, or is the most Holy one. Remember this significance as you read this passage.*

Read: John 21: 15-19

1.) After reading our intro why do you think God could have asked Peter three times if he loved Him?

2.) In asking three times God pulls out the question "Peter do you love me the most; or do you love me more than anything else?" One of the quickest ways to grow is to honestly ask yourself this question, do you love God more than anything else?

DIGGING DEEPER:

How does this question that God asks Peter compare to the greatest commandment given in Matthew 22: 36-40?



(day 5)

Prayer: Lord help me to understand that you do not condemn me once I have placed my trust in Jesus' work for me. May I operate in the Grace that has rescued me and defined me.

Read: John 21: 19-22

Intro: *We explored yesterday one of the most transforming ways to grow spiritually is to get our hearts to a place where we love God more than anything else. Today we will look at the second, which is to know and operate in God's grace.*

1.) In this scenario Peter has done something wrong and we would expect Jesus to ridicule Him but instead He restores Him. We expect Jesus to say get away traitor but after this conversation what does Jesus say to Peter?

2.) Do you currently believe that God is wanting to ridicule you over a mistake or has turned His back on you? If so how does Peter's story and the gospel speak hope into this situation? You will not grow under fear of condemnation as a child of God, but you will thrive as Peter did once you understand the sufficiency of His grace for you.

DIGGING DEEPER:

Read John 8:1-11

How does Jesus' response to this woman compare to His response to Peter?

