

From Nets to Nations August 16, 2026

The Three Chapters of Peter's Life

As an older man (nearing the end of his life), Peter writes his two epistles. In them, he passes on the lessons and wisdom he learned from his first encounter with Jesus until the writing of these epistles. When Jesus left to return to the glory he had before coming in the flesh, the Holy Spirit continued to mold and shape him.

Peter states the purpose of writing his two epistles in

2 Peter 1:12–15

“So, I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.”

- a) Peter knows his life is almost over.
- b) These two epistles are the last recorded words of this great Apostle
- c) Instead of talking about himself, he reminds believers of truth.
- d) He wants them to remember God's Word after he is gone.
- e) God used Peter to pass on His message.
 - i. The gospel of Mark is historically attributed to Peter's account of the life of Jesus.
 - ii. His two epistles include specific instructions for the church.
 - iii. But they also mirror wisdom he gained
from his walk with the Lord
for so many years.
- f) Peter's life is a marvelous account
of what Jesus can do with
an ordinary,
unschooled man
who is willing to keep following Him
despite his failures.

Central Truth: Peter's life proves that God is not looking for perfect people—
He is looking for teachable people.

Introduction (Slide)

Peter's life can be divided into three remarkable **chapters**.

A. Chapter One – The Fisherman

Called by Jesus beside the Sea of Galilee.

B. Chapter Two – The Disciple

A man of great faith but also great failure.

C. Chapter Three – The Apostle

An experienced shepherd writing his final words to the church.

- When we read 1 and 2 Peter,
 - we are reading the reflections of a man
 - who has lived all three chapters.

I. Chapter One:

THE FISHERMAN

Luke 5:4–10

“When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.” Simon answered, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.” When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So, they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!” For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon’s partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid; from now on you will catch men.””

- a) Jesus took an ordinary fisherman
 - i. Someone who was anything but spiritual
 - ii. Who knew that his life was **sinful**
- b) And saw what he would become:

John 1:40–42

“Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah” (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas” (which, when translated, is Peter).

Matthew 16:15–20

“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind

on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

a) The Rock

- i. Peter was anything **but** a rock
- ii. He was what we would call today, “*A Loose Canon*”

b) Peter remembered:

- i. His denial of Jesus.
- ii. Petty arguments about who was “*the Greatest of the Apostles*”
- iii. His bitter tears.

c) But Jesus wasn’t looking at who he was,

- i. but rather who he could become

Lesson

- Failure is never the final chapter when Jesus is the Author of your story.

Application

- Your greatest mistake does not have to become your permanent identity.

a) In the hands of the Master,

- i. God can transform us into
- ii. What we could never see in ourselves –
- iii. Or for that matter, what others can see in us

PETER IS GIVEN A NEW PURPOSE

Matthew 28:18–20

“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

a) Peter, who once caught fish as his purpose in life

b) Peter, Was now “*A Fisher of Men!*”

- i. A man who would change the world!
- ii. A man who would **spearhead** a movement that turned the world upside down.

c) Peter is telling us that the charge he was given

- a. Is the same for us

1 Peter 2:9-10

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his

wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”

d) Now he understands that God calls people out of darkness into His marvelous light.

a. **Just as he was called** out of darkness into the light

e) **Peter learned:**

- God chooses ordinary people.
- Calling is more important than career.
- Our identity comes from Christ.

Key Lesson

- God doesn't simply change what we do.
- He changes who we are.

Application

Your past occupation

does not determine

your future usefulness.

II. Chapter Two: The Disciple

JESUS SHAPES HIS CHARACTER

1 Peter 1:6-7

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

a) Peter remembers years of testing.

- Sinking while trying to walk on water
- Rebuking Jesus and receiving a strong rebuke in return
- Sleeping in Gethsemane while Jesus was agonizing in prayer
- Running away when Jesus was arrested
- Denying Christ 3 times
- Even after all this, he continued to blow - it

Galatians 2:11–14

“When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of

them all, “You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?”

b) **Where do all these trials of suffering come from?**

1 Peter 5:8–11

“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.”

c) Peter now recognizes where all this comes from

- i. As an older man, He is more aware of Satan’s influence than ever before
- ii. He never gives up

2 Peter 3:14–16

“So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.”

- iii. We see here his humility
 - a. as he had to own up publicly to mess-up
 - b. He **didn’t** get resentful
 - c. He recognized his pride from **years of experience**

1 Peter 5:5–7

“All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”

- d. The Lord continued to teach Peter ‘Humility’
- e. The Devil has no answer for “Humility”
 - i. It’s like defusing a bomb
 - ii. **Pride** will destroy your life
- f. He Acknowledging Paul’s authority
- g. As an apostle and an equal
- h. Even leaders fall prey to the Devil
- iv. The Devil will put you in situations

- that will scar you
- v. Leave you
 - a. destitute
 - b. Hurting
 - c. Hopeless
 - d) Whatever suffering He can muster up - **to tear at your faith**

HOW WILL GOD MAKE YOU STRONG, FIRM AND STEADFAST?

2 Peter 1:5–9

“For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.”

- a) He talks about specific areas the Holy Spirit can affect our character
 - Faith
 - Self-control
 - Perseverance
 - Godliness
 - Brotherly kindness
 - Love
- b) It all boils down to Maturity

James 1:2–4

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”

Key Lesson

- i. Not only will our growth in these areas protect us against Satan
- ii. But God develops our character to expand His ministry.
- iii. The trials **you are** experiencing today
may be preparing you for tomorrow's ministry.

III. Chapter Three: The Apostle

JESUS GIVES HIM A MESSAGE

A. PETER’S MESSAGE CALLED PEOPLE TO SALVATION

1. Calling people to REPENT

A step leading to conversion

2 Peter 3:8–9

“But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

2. Calling people to be BAPTIZED for the forgiveness of their sins

1 Peter 3:18–21

“For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water; and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

Acts 22:14–16

“Then he said: ‘The God of our fathers has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.’”

A. Baptism is the point in time when a person is saved

B. PETER ENSURED THAT THE CHURCH WAS SPIRITUALLY FED

John 21:15–17

“When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?’ ‘Yes, Lord,’ he said, ‘you know that I love you.’” Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.” Again, Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you truly love me?” He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.” The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” 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.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.”

1 Peter 5:1–3

“To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder; a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.”

a) **As a fellow elder**, Peter commissions the other elders

- i. with the same message
- ii. he received from Jesus
- iii. *“Feed My Sheep”*

b) Feeding the sheep includes:

- i. Stand firm in grace.
- ii. Endure suffering.
- iii. Beware of false teachers.
- iv. Live holy lives.
- v. Keep growing spiritually.

Key Lesson

- The greatest leaders are those tend the flock
- Making sure they are fed solid food

Ephesians 4:11–14

“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.”

Application

- Ask yourself:
 - *"What message am I passing on?"*
-

IV. Peter's Final Advice

- a) As an old man, Peter knew
"This World Is Not His Home"
- b) As he reflects, he reminds us that this world
 - i. is not our home
 - ii. Not our destiny

1 Peter 1:1–2

“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God’s elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood”

1 Peter 1:17

“Since you call on a Father who judges each man’s work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.”

1 Peter 2:11–12

“Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.”

2 Peter 1:12-15

“So, I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.”

Similarly, James – the brother of Jesus says the same thing

James 4:4

“You adulterous people, don’t you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.”

- c) As Peter closes his final letter,
 - i. he leaves only one command
 - ii. that summarizes his entire journey.

2 Peter 3:17–18

“Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.”

- d) Notice what he does **not** say.

He does **not** say:

- Grow in popularity.
- Grow in influence.
- Grow in success.

- e) He says:
 - i. Grow in grace.
 - ii. Grow in knowing Jesus.

THAT IS THE SECRET OF PETER'S TRANSFORMATION.

ILLUSTRATION -FINISH WITH

A poem written by Myra Brooks Welch in 1921 called “**The Touch of the Master’s Hand.**”

'Twas battered and scarred, And the auctioneer thought it hardly worth his while
 To waste his time on the old violin, but he held it up with a smile.
 "What am I bidden, good folks", he cried, "Who will start the bidding for me?"
 "A dollar, a dollar, Do I hear two?" "Two dollars, who'll make it three?"
 "Three dollars, once; three dollars, twice; going for three -" But, No,
 From the room, far back, a gray-haired man came forward and picked up the bow;
 Then wiping the dust from the old violin, And tightening up the strings,
 He played a melody, pure and sweet, As sweet as a caroling angel sings.
 The music ceased and the auctioneer, With a voice that was quiet and low,
 Said, "What am I bidden for this old violin?" And he held it up with the bow.
 "A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two? "Two thousand? And who'll make it three?"
 "Three thousand, once; three thousand, twice; And going, and gone!" said he.
 The people cheered, but some of them cried, "We do not quite understand,
 What changed its' worth? Swift came the reply. "The Touch of the Masters Hand."
 And many a man with life out of tune, And battered and scarred with sin,
 Is auctioned cheap to a thoughtless crowd, Much like the old violin.
 A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine; A game - and he travels on.
 He's going, once; he's going, twice; He's going, and "almost gone."
 But the Master comes, And the foolish crowd never can quite understand,
 The worth of a soul, and the change that is wrought,
 By the Touch of the Master's Hand.

CONCLUSION

1. Peter's life was **not** defined by one moment.
2. **Not** by his greatest sermon.
3. **Not** by his greatest miracle.
4. **Not** even by his greatest failure.
5. His life was defined by continual growth.

THE FISHERMAN WAS CALLED.

THE DISCIPLE WAS CHANGED.

THE APOSTLE WAS COMMISSIONED.