

I. Synopsis

The Peter Principle suggests that, corporate America promotes employees based on their performance in their current role, rather than evaluating their abilities for the advanced position. As a consequence, people are often promoted to levels beyond their capacity to the point of incompetence. Corporate America may place limitations on our advancement, but Jesus views us differently. He uses us in unimaginable ways. Over the course of the next three weeks, we see how God used Peter beyond his wildest dreams to extend His kingdom. Jesus restored Peter even though he denied Him during His darkest hour.

II. Ice Breaker Question

What were the consequences of a time in your childhood that you did not heed a warning that your parents gave you?

III. Scripture: Matthew 26:69-75 & John 21:15-25 (ESV)

IV. Discussion Questions

Peter is one of Jesus' closest friends. As one of Jesus' inner circle, he was given opportunities to witness miracles other disciples did not witness. When Jesus presented Himself to the disciples walking on water, Peter got out of the boat and walked to Jesus. But, he was also the disciple who was corrected by Jesus for stating incorrect theological truths. Peter was an extrovert who lacked a filter. Some might say he had the "foot in mouth disease."

1. The night before Jesus died, He predicted that Peter would deny Him three times (Matthew 26:31-35). Why do you think Peter boasted that he would not abandon Jesus? Why do you think Peter denied Jesus three times? What does this tell you about Peter's character?
2. Prior to Peter encountering Jesus on the beach (John 21: 15), what do you think Peter's emotional state was like following his denial of Jesus? What do you think of the statement, "God can do nothing with a [person] until they are broken" (Owen, 217). How do you think Peter's character changed given his experience?
3. The Greek word for love that Jesus uses in the first two questions is "agape." "Agape" love is the highest form of love. Peter responds with the Greek word, "philo" love. This is brotherly love. What do you think of this exchange? Why do you suppose that Jesus asks Peter three times if he loved Him (John 21:15-19)?
4. Out of agape love, Jesus pursues Peter in order to restore him. Peter did the hard work of self-examination. Jesus pursues each of us in the same way. Can you do the hard work of self-examination? Will you receive Jesus' agape love and restoration for yourself?

Digging Deeper –

John writes about God's love for us in his first letter. Read I John chapters 3 and 4. What do you learn about God's love for you? What do you learn about how you are called to love one another? Reflect on God's love for you in the coming week.

Owen, Glyn J., From Simon to Peter, Evangelical Press, 1985.