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Apostles- Peter 01

Luke 6:12-16

Luke 6:12-16, *Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.¹³ And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:¹⁴ Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew;¹⁵ Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot;¹⁶ Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.*

General observations:

They were all common men.

All of them were from Galilee with the exception of Judas, who was from a town called Kerioth in the south.

They were rural people from the part of the nation of Israel that did not really have much prestige or nobility.

- None of them was a Pharisee.
- None of them was a Sadducee.
- None of them was a priest.
- None of them was a scribe.
- None of them was any prominent person.

They were all very common men.

Four of them were fishermen, one was a tax collector, one was a terrorist, and one was a traitor.

There are four lists of the apostles in the New Testament.
Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts.

Matthew 10, Mark 3, Luke 6 and Acts 1.

In these lists the names are always the same, so that we know exactly who these twelve were. But the names are not in identical order in the lists, with some exceptions.

The first name in all four lists is always Peter.

We have three groups of four.

- Group one,
- Group two, and
- Group three.

Group One:

1. Simon called Peter,
2. Andrew,
3. James,
4. John.

Peter, James and John's names get mixed around in the list, Peter's is always first, but they are always in group one.

Group Two:

1. Philip,
2. Bartholomew — or Nathanael,
3. Matthew,
4. Thomas.

Always group two in every list.

The names of Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas get mixed, but Philip is always the first name of group two.

Group Three:

1. James the son of Alphaeus,
2. Simon the Zealot,
3. Judas son of James,
4. Judas Iscariot.

Always the same in every list.

The names may be mixed a little bit, the two middle names, the names of Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James get mixed.

James the son of Alphaeus is always the first name in group four and Judas is always the last name of the twelve.

What do we learn by that?

The Twelve were divided into four.
group one, group two, group three.

These groups had leaders.

The leader of group one, obviously Peter.

The leader of group two: Philip.

The leader of group three: James the son of Alphaeus.

The name at the top of the list is always Peter, who was the leader of everybody.

These groups of four are in decreasing intimacy from Christ.

Group one always around Christ; Peter, James, John and Andrew, the most intimate group.

They were the first disciples that Jesus called.

John 1:35-42,

The first group He called to be disciples, here he identifies as apostles.

They have been with Him the longest and they are the most intimate with Christ.

Throughout the ministry and life of Christ, Peter, James, and John in particular are very intimate with Christ, and Andrew is close.

Group two is a little bit more distant, but we do know quite a bit about Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, and Thomas.

Group three seems at a distance.

We do not know much about them at all. The only thing we know is about Judas because he betrayed Jesus.

So, Jesus had twelve, but He could only have very intimately three and sometimes four and they kind of move away in terms of intimacy.

Jesus had very close to Him three. Next came Andrew and then the next and the next. So, we learn that there have to be some decisions made about who one spends intimate time with because you can't be everything to everybody.

We also learn that there are leaders within the group.

- leader of group one, Peter.
- leader of group two, Philip.
- leader of group three, James the son of Alphaeus.

There are leaders among leaders and a leader over all of them, namely Peter.

Simon Peter.

Simon is a very common name.

Another Simon down at the end of verse 15 who was the Zealot.

Very common Jewish name at that time; Simon, whom He, Jesus, also named Peter.

Now this is always the first name at the head of every list.

Not only because we assume, he was the leader but because Jesus said he is the leader.

Matthew 10:2, *Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;*

Simon Peter was the first, the **prtos**. It does not mean the first in a list. It means the chief, the leader.

So, the Scripture in Matthew 10:2 says he was the leader. There is no question about it.

He was a fisherman by trade.

He lived with his brother Andrew, also a fisherman. They had a family fishing business. They caught fish on the Sea of Galilee.

A certain kind of fish that exists only in the Sea of Galilee which you might know today is called St. Peter's fish. If you ever go to the Sea of Galilee, you can have it for lunch.

That is what Simon and Andrew did.

They were fishermen and they were originally from a small village called Bethsaida, but later moved to Capernaum. Capernaum was the major town on the north tip of the Sea of Galilee.

The Lord said it would be destroyed and never rebuilt, and that is exactly the case. They have found ruins of a synagogue there. They have found digging down ruins of a church. They go down further they find the sign of the fish carved in foundation stones way down.

The tradition was they built the first church there on the foundation of the home of Peter. So, when you see the ruins of that early church that may well be the very place Peter lived. It is a short walk from there to the edge of the lake. So, they grew up in that area, Bethsaida, moved to Capernaum to run their fishing business on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee.

We also know about Simon was married and he had a wife.

Luke 4:38, *Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her.*

Jesus healed his mother-in-law.

We also know it because the apostle Paul.

1 Corinthians 9:5, *Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?*

It may indicate that they did not have any children.

The Bible does not tell us how many children Peter had. We have absolutely no idea whether he had any children or whether he had some, whether they were grown by the time that he took his wife along.

Paul does say that Peter took his wife on an apostolic mission. So, he was married. That is really all we know about his domestic life.

We also know that his name was Simon Bar-Jona.

Matthew 16:17, *Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*

Jesus calls him Simon Bar-Jona and in John 21 Jesus calls him Simon, son of Jonah, or Jonas.

His father's name then was John, or Jonas, or Jonah. Any one of those would transliterate the original language. So, his original name was Simon.

As typically, bar, meaning "son of," when someone gets a Bar Mitzvah, they become a son of the law. Bar means "son of." So, his father's name was John or Jonas or Jonah.

His father probably starting in the fishing business when he was young and that is the way it was for life for him, he thought, till he met the Lord.

In Luke 5 Peter went for fishing and could not catch anything. Jesus asked him to launch his boat into the sea then after finished preaching he asked Peter to cast his nets.

Luke 5:10, *and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men."*

Jesus told Peter that he is going to come after Him to follow Him and to catch men for His Kingdom.

Luke 6:14, *Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew;*

The Lord gave him another name. This is important to note the language, "*whom He also named Peter.*"

Jesus did not say you have a new name to replace the old one. No.

He also called him Peter. He was Simon and he was also Peter.

Why sometimes he is called Simon and sometimes he is called Peter?

Why sometimes it refers to Simon in terms of his boat or his house or his fishing enterprise, and other times it refers to Peter?

When we do a careful study of that, we will find that there are some very specific things going on with regard to that.

When Jesus first met Peter in the Gospel of John.

John 1:42, *And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).*

That is Aramaic.

Used to be called Simon.

From now on you will be called Cephas.

That is the Aramaic word for Peter.

The Greek word is Petros.

Both words mean rock.

His new name was rock, Rock Bar-Jona.

That is exactly what Petros means. Cephas means.

Why does Jesus do this to Peter?

The Lord has a purpose in mind.

By nature, he was bold, he was wavering, he made great promises of what he would do and did not do it.

He was one of those kinds of guys that goes whole-hearted into something and then bails back out of it.

First one in, and first one out.

The Lord changed his name because He wanted to work on him in an immediate way. It was very easy to do once He gave him the name Rock, because by what Jesus called him, He sent him a message.

If He said to him, "Simon," then he was acting like his old self.

If He said to him, "Rock," he was acting the way the Lord wanted him to act.

Simon was Simon, wavering, impulsive, eager, but he needed to be Rock.

If he called him Simon, he got one message.

Matthew 16:18, *And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*

Just by the name He called him, immediately had access into his spiritual thinking.

Even after his name was changed you can see a consistency in how these names are used.

Whenever he is called Simon, it is in one of two contexts.

1. Secular context
2. Sinful context

Secular context.

Mark 1:29-30, *Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him about her at once.*

Luke 4:38, *Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her.*

Acts 10:17, *Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been*

sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate.

That is just a secular context, Simon's house, nothing to do with spirituality, the kingdom ministry.

Simon's mother-in-law
Simon's boat,
Simon's fishing partners,

So, when referring to Simon in purely the secular element, he is Simon.

Sinful context:

Whenever there was sin there, he was dubbed Simon.

Luke 5:5, *But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net."*

This is old Simon the fisherman. But finally, he starts to make some spiritual responses.

Luke 5:8, *When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"*

Peter who sees himself the way God wants him to see himself.

John 21 Jesus says, go to Galilee"

Jesus has risen from the dead and says, "You go to Galilee and I will appear to you there," post-resurrection.

They go there. Peter says, "I am not waiting any longer. I do not know if I can do this. I am going to go back and take up my fishing business."

He goes down, gets in his boat, gets his nets, all his ropes, the whole paraphernalia and they all said, we are also going with you." They got on the boats and went back to fishing.

Jesus showed up and rerouted all the fish so they could not catch any. They came into shore and Jesus made breakfast. The disciples come to the shore, Jesus looks at Peter and He says this, "Simon, Simon, do you love Me?"

"Yes, I love You."

Second time, "Simon, Simon, do you love Me?"

"Yes, I love You."

"Simon, Simon, do you love Me? Then do what I told you."

That is Simon.

Luke 22:31, *"And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat."*

When we see "Simon," we are seeing elements of the sin, or elements of the secular. Simon means hearing or listen.

When we go through, look for Peter, those are the good times.

Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. He asked His disciples to pray with Him. He comes back and He found them sleeping and He says to him.

Mark 14:37, *Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour?"*

It must have gotten to the point where whenever the Lord said "Simon," Peter just cringed. "Please call me Rock." To which the Lord could have replied, "I will call you Rock when you act like a rock."

John knew him well. So, seventeen times in the gospel of John, John calls him Simon Peter. I love that.

John could not make up his mind because he saw both sides all the time. So, he just decided "Simon Peter." Sometimes Simon, Sometimes Rock.

Peter was like all of us!

- Carnal and spiritual,
- Functioning in the flesh sometimes, and functioning in the Spirit sometimes,
- Sinful sometimes, and righteous sometimes.

The Lord even gave him a name to try to reinforce what He wanted him to be. He wanted him to be a rock.

Nothing about Peter is self-righteous. This is the greatest and most prominent preacher of the twelve.

Peter more than any other apostle, laid the foundation of the church, followed up by that late coming apostle Paul. Peter is the hero in the first twelve chapters of the book of Acts.

Peter was the leader, no question.

- ✓ The Lord chose him to be the leader.
- ✓ The Lord equipped him to be the leader.
- ✓ The Lord shaped him to be the leader.
- ✓ The Lord trained him to be the leader.

When we look at Peter, we can see how God builds a leader. This is a biblical illustration of how God builds a leader.

The gospels literally are filled with his name. His name is mentioned in the gospels more than any name but Jesus.

- Nobody speaks as often as Peter and nobody is spoken to by the Lord as often as Peter.
- No disciple is so reproved by the Lord as Peter, and no disciple reproved the Lord but Peter.
- No disciple ever so boldly confessed and outspokenly acknowledged the lordship of Christ as Peter.
- No one denied it as boldly as Peter.
- No one is so praised and blessed as Peter.
- No one else is called Satan but Peter.

The Lord had harder things to say to Peter than He ever said to anybody else and that was part of making him the man He wanted him to be, the leader Christ desired.

God took a common man with an ambivalent, vacillating, impulsive, unsubmitive personality and shaped him into the leader of the twelve, the greatest preacher out of the apostles. The real power of the first twelve chapters of Acts, the birth of the church.

Are leaders born or made?

The Leaders are born and then they are shaped.

Peter had that God-given fabric woven into his personality to make him a leader. He was the right raw material.

Lord wove that in his mother's womb.

Psalms 139:13-14, *For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvellous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well.*

The Lord put together the right materials to make him the man that could be shaped into a leader. There are just sort of personal features of his personality that are critical to leaders. They cannot be developed, they are inborn.

Three elements for the Lord to make a leader.

1. Inquisitiveness
2. Initiative
3. Involvement

1. Inquisitiveness.

When you are looking for a leader, find somebody who asks a lot of questions. It is very important.

People who do not ask questions do not wind up as leaders.

Curiosity is critical to leadership. People who are content with what they do not know and content with what they do not understand and content with what they have not analysed and content with problems they have not solved cannot lead.

Leaders must have an almost insatiable curiosity to know what they do not know. To understand what they do not understand. They understand that knowledge is power.

Whoever has the information has the lead. If you want to find a leader, look for somebody who asks a lot of questions.

Some of you have kids like that. You have maybe one kid out of your little batch and this kid just asks question after question. We get weary answering these questions. That is the fabric of leadership. This tremendous internal drive to know what they do not know and understand what they do not understand is all about solving problems.

We have probably got another kid who sits in the corner quietly and never asks anything. He will probably grow up and be a computer guy who will work for your other son. Leaders have tremendous curiosity.

In the gospels, Peter asks more questions than all the other apostles combined.

We only probably have a part of it, it was probably all day every day for Jesus. "Peter, just a minute, I will answer you as soon as I am done with this person."

I love people that ask questions.

They are always trying to understand what is going on.

2. Initiative.

There are three kinds of people.

1. There are people who make things happen,
2. There are people who watch things happen,
3. There are people who say, "what's happening?"

If a man is to be wired for leadership, he has to have initiative. He has to be the kind of person that makes things happen.

Peter not only asked all the questions, but he was also always the first one to answer any question posed by Christ.

Peter would just dive in where angels fear to tread.

Matthew 16:13-16, *When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"* ¹⁴ *So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."* ¹⁵ *He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"* ¹⁶ *Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

The other guys are still processing the information. Peter was very fast. That is a part of leadership, fast on the trigger. Sometimes he had to reel back, undo, unsay, be rebuked; but it is part of leadership to grab initiative by the throat.

Garden of Gethsemane:

The Roman soldiers from Port Antonia, 500 of them, including the high priest and all the retinue from the temple. They have come to take Jesus.

Peter was there.

Peter immediately pulls out his sword, takes a swing at the head of Malchus, the servant of the high priest. The high priest was out in front because he was the dignitary of dignitaries, so he is in the front. Beside him is his servant. Peter tried to cut his head off. He ducked, lost his ear.

John 18:10-11, *Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. ¹¹ So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?"*

There was a whole Roman army there, what does he think he was going to do?

Go through the whole group?

One at a time?

Sometimes this initiative does not take the long view, or the broad view. It is just boom. But that is the stuff of leadership.

There are some people you just have to drag kicking and screaming in any forward direction. Not Peter. He always wanted to know what he did not know. He always wanted to understand what he did not understand. He was the first one to ask a question and he was the first one to answer the question, take the initiative, charge ahead and that is the stuff of leadership.

Peter must have some kind of courage to stand up in Jerusalem on Pentecost and preach the gospel in the face of the population that had just executed their Messiah.

That is going to take tremendous courage but that is the kind of guy He is. By the time the Lord has shaped that initiative, it has been transformed into boldness.

3. Involvement:

A true leader is in the middle of the action.

A true leader is not sitting in the background telling everybody what to do while he lives a life of comfort away from the fray. A true leader goes through life with a cloud of dust around him. That is why people follow him.

People do not follow somebody somewhere else. They follow somebody in the fray. Jesus comes one night. He is walking on the water.

Who out of all the disciples jumps out of the boat?

Peter.

Peter always wanted to be where the action is happening. He was walking on the water. Rest of the disciples are just looking over and trying to make sure they do not fall overboard in the storm.

This is serious involvement. Jesus was there, he was here, he had to close the gap.

People look at this incident, they criticize Peter's lack of faith. He got out there, he looked around.

What was Peter doing?

He started to sink.

Peter had weak faith.

Let us look at the faith of others.

Where were the other eleven?

They never got out of the boat.

Talk about weak faith. Before you criticize Peter, remember where he was when he began to sink. People look at Peter's life and they say he was around the fire, and he denies Jesus.

But before we condemn Peter too quickly, he was alone in a position where such a temptation could hit him because he was doing his best to stay as close to Christ as he could.

That is a leader.

Everybody else may bail out. He stays as close to the action as he can get.

That is the raw material that was in Peter, that kind of inquisitiveness, that kind of initiative, that kind of involvement.

Peter asked all the questions.

He was the first person to charge ahead for whatever responsibility needed to be done. He wanted to be in the middle of everything.

That is what the leaders are made of.

Lord knew that and He wove it all in the fabric of who he was in his mother's womb. Now when he reaches adulthood, it is time for the Lord to shape it.

If it is not shaped by the Lord, it could be disastrous. So, two other things must happen.

There is nothing in a man that is perfect. There is nothing that is all complete.