



Simon to Peter: Growing Forward - Week 3 DISCUSSION GUIDE

OVERVIEW

In this message of the series, **REnamed**, we learned how Jesus views our potential, and we're reminded to rely on the Holy Spirit in every area of life.

DISCUSSION

Peter, known for his emotional nature, teaches us about the impact of unchecked emotions. Reflecting on personal experiences, we recognize how emotions can lead to poor decisions and regrets. Emotions, though powerful, are unreliable guides. They can inspire greatness or lead to impulsive actions and sin. The more we let emotions control us, the more unstable and regretful we become, affecting our identity and self-perception. The enemy deceives us into believing we can't change. But God sees our potential and future, just as He did with Simon Peter.

- How have your emotions influenced your decisions in the past, both positively and negatively? Can you share a specific instance where relying on your emotions led to a regrettable action?

Simon, also known as Peter, was one of the original 12 disciples of Jesus. A fisherman with a fiery temperament, Peter often acted impulsively and emotionally, leading to both great acts of faith and moments of failure. Despite his inconsistencies, Peter became a pivotal leader in the early Church. His life exemplifies the journey of spiritual growth, learning to be guided by the Spirit rather than emotions. Peter's transformation from an unreliable, emotional individual to a foundational figure in Christianity illustrates the power of God's grace and the potential for personal growth in every believer.

- Do you relate to Peter? If so, share some examples.

Three Ways Jesus Views Your Potential:

1. Jesus sees your potential.

Jesus saw Simon Peter's potential from the very beginning, renaming him to signify his future stability and strength. **John 1:40-42: *One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ). 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).*** This encounter emphasizes Jesus' ability to see beyond our current state to what we can become. Jesus recognizes our potential and guides us toward it.

- Reflect on a time when someone saw potential in you that you didn't initially see in yourself. How did that encouragement influence your growth?
- In what ways can you help others see and reach their potential, much like Andrew did for Simon Peter?

2. Jesus affirms your potential.

In a moment of testing, Jesus asks His disciples who they believe He is, and Peter correctly identifies Him as the Messiah (Matthew 16:13-18). Jesus affirms Peter's potential by calling him a rock, signifying strength and stability, despite Peter's human flaws and emotional nature. We all need affirmation from Jesus because we forget. We also need affirmation because the enemy lies to us and tells us what we're not. This affirmation reminds us that Jesus sees our true potential and reinforces our need for His encouragement amidst the lies and doubts we face.

- How do you respond to moments of self-doubt or comparison with others, and how can Jesus' affirmation of your potential help in these times?
- List some ways you can hear from God so that you can receive affirmation from Jesus.

3. Jesus calls you back to your potential.

After Peter denied Jesus three times, he felt deep shame and returned to his old life as a fisherman. However, after the resurrection, Jesus called Peter back to his potential, reaffirming his purpose and restoring his faith: ***So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep." (John 21:15-17).***

Jesus was calling Peter back to his potential—even after he failed, and He does the same for us. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter transformed from an emotional, unstable person into a bold leader of the early Church. In order to walk more in the Spirit instead of the flesh, we need to be filled daily with the Holy Spirit.

- Can you relate to a time when you felt like a failure and how did you find restoration or a sense of purpose again?
- In what ways can you rely more on the Holy Spirit to guide you instead of your emotions and past failures?

LIFE CHALLENGE

Every day, spend time with God and ask Him to fill you with His Spirit and affirm you. Speak the Scripture below over your life.

My Confession

I am growing in the grace of God. | 2 Peter 3:18

God calls me by a new name. | Isaiah 43:1

I am loved by Jesus. | John 15:9

God has a plan for my life. | Ephesians 2:10

God is bringing me into a bright future. | Philippians 3:13-14

My eyes are fixed on Jesus and His plans for me are good. | Hebrews 12:1-2

God will complete the work He started in me. | Philippians 1:6