

# JESUS AND PETER



Christ to the World Ministries

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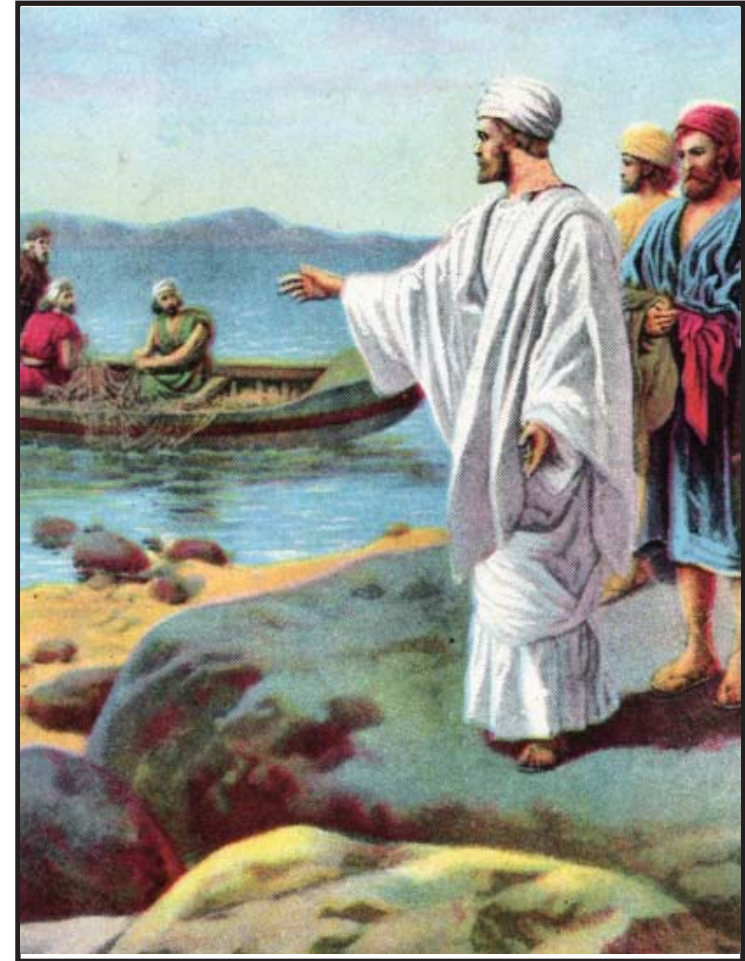
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**CHRIST TO THE WORLD MINISTRIES**

# Jesus and Peter

**Read Mark 1:16-20, 29-34 and Mark 4:35-41 in your Bible.**

In the early church Peter was one of the leading figures. God chose him to be the first to bring the message of salvation to the Gentiles. He said something very interesting about Jesus. He told them *“how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power; and how he went around doing good”* (Acts 10:38). He did not talk to them first about the message of Jesus but about what Jesus did. Peter knew that his hearers would accept Jesus’ message much better when it was backed up by Jesus’ deeds. In fact, his Master had taught him this truth.

## **Jesus Called Peter**

It began with Peter’s call to follow Jesus. Peter and his brother Andrew, along with their partners, James and John, were in business as fishermen. Jesus met them at the shore of the Lake of Galilee, where they were working, and called them to follow him. He gave them a challenge: *“Come, follow me and I will make you fishers of men”* (Mark 1:17).

Peter didn’t know what Jesus meant, but it sounded like something that he would like to do. It would be much more fulfilling than fishing for fish, that was sure!

Plus, he suspected that he would learn from Jesus what it meant to *“fish for people.”* Jesus called Peter and his friends to be his constant companions. Peter knew that those who followed a teacher learned a lot about how to live by just observing their teacher. So Peter, Andrew, James, and John left the fishing business in the hands of Zebedee, the father of James and John, so that they could follow Jesus without distraction or hindrance.

## **Jesus Taught By Meeting Human Needs**

Jesus took his disciples to the synagogue on the Sabbath, as was the custom among all God-fearing Jews. Afterward they went to Peter’s home. There they found Peter’s mother-in-law, who lived with Peter’s family. She was ill with a fever. Jesus went to her and gently took her hand. He raised her from the bed. Jewish rabbis usually did not touch women to whom they were not related. But Jesus did not seem to feel compelled to stay apart from someone in need.

At Jesus’ touch the fever left her. She no longer felt weak and ill. In fact, she was restored to good health . . . so much so, in fact, that *“she began to wait on them”* (Mark 1:31). Peter’s wife and children rejoiced along with Peter and the other disciples at this sign of Jesus’ power and tenderness.

When something unusual happens in a small town, word gets around fast. Word of the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law went around the village of Capernaum like wildfire. It was still the Sabbath, so people kept at home. But at evening, when the Sabbath ended, people from Capernaum began to come together at Peter’s house. They brought Jesus *“all the sick and demon-possessed”* (Mark 1:32). The whole population gathered around Peter’s door!

They watched in delighted awe as Jesus healed the sick and restored many possessed by demons to calmness. Peter watched with amazement, too. He was beginning to see what Jesus meant by *“fishing for people.”* The Teacher drew persons to him, not by his message or by calling them to fight for him, but by caring for their sorrows and healing their ailments.

## **Jesus Taught By Calming the Storm**

Jesus’ disciples were afraid of the Lake of Galilee in which they fished, and with good reason. It was a beautiful blue lake, peaceful and brimming with good fish most of the time. But it was subject to fierce storms. The lake lay more than 600 feet below sea level, surrounded by hills. A storm of wind and rain could blow up without warning, and many a man had been drowned in an unexpected storm.

So, when such a storm arose while Jesus and his disciples were in the middle of the lake, the men were terrified. Jesus was sleeping in the stern of the boat, undisturbed by the turbulence. His disciples called to him, *“Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”* (Mark 4:38).

Jesus awoke and called to the wind, *“Quiet! Be still!”* (Mark 4:39). There was at once a dead calm. His disciples were now even more frightened. They huddled together, staring wide-eyed at their teacher. But Jesus said to them, *“Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”* (Mark 4:40).

The disciples still did not understand what Jesus had done. But they were filled with awe. They recognized that here was a power bigger than they could imagine. Jesus was beginning to teach them that he had power over the forces of nature. He would not always use that power. But his followers need never be afraid. Jesus would always be with them, to guard and protect them, even in times of great distress. Peter and his fellow disciples learned that lesson over and over as they followed Jesus.

## **Conclusion**

Jesus still calls persons to follow him day by day and learn from him. Jesus usually does not do extraordinary things that we can see, but he changes people’s lives. He makes it possible for people to live beyond illness and to overcome when disaster strikes.

Do you want to live above the circumstances in which you find yourself? Jesus calls you to follow him and to learn from him. A superb teacher, he will help you to find a new life and to grow as a person. This comes as you have faith in him and trust his leading. Jesus is the compassionate Savior who loves you with an everlasting love.

**Pray this prayer:** *“Dear God, I know that I’m a sinner. I believe that Jesus died for my sins and rose from the dead and is alive today. I now turn from my sins. I am placing my faith and trust in Jesus alone to be my Savior and to forgive me. I receive Jesus into my life as my Savior and Lord. From this day forward, I will follow Jesus. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for loving me and for coming into my life. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.”*

**Welcome into God’s family!** Share with others that you have received Christ as your Savior and Lord. Ask for baptism in a local church as a public expression of your faith. If there is no church near you, start a church by gathering a group of persons in your home and worship together on a regular basis. Read your Bible and pray each day. Tell others what Christ has done for you and what he can do for them.