

=LIFE OF PETER=

Lesson 4

Peter Receives Miracle Power from Jesus

AIM: to teach my pupils that the only way to serve God acceptably is to have His power and to give freely of oneself to keeping His command to go and teach the Gospel.

POINT OF CONTACT: A flashlight could be used as an object lesson which would lead into teaching how a Christian might have power to do Jesus' bidding—that of going to teach the Gospel to unsaved people. The bulb should be loose at first. With the class the teacher could discuss for a moment what parts are necessary in a flashlight before it will give off light. After determining that all the parts are there, the teacher can show the class that he or she is turning on the flashlight. No light shines out from the flashlight. Upon examination, the bulb is found to be loose—it has no contact with the vital parts that generate the light. The teacher tightens the bulb with the switch turned off. The class reviews the fact that everything is in order now—all parts are there and the bulb has been tightened—but why is there no light? The teacher can tell the class that he or she does not believe that by turning on the switch he will get light. The teacher can let the class reassure him that this is the way to get light now. The teacher can turn on the flashlight and then tell the class that the only way to get what God wants him to have for true service is to be in constant contact with Him and to trust Him for this ability. No person can perform true service for God—be a soul winner—without having power and using this power from God.

INTRODUCTION: Peter, along with the other disciples, followed Jesus. Peter observed Jesus' power over sickness, over demons, and over the minds of men; he learned that Jesus knew the motives and the teachings of those leaders who would cause men to fall away from the truth of the Scriptures.

Peter had been a fisherman, operating a large fishing business in partnership with his brother, Andrew, and with James and John in the Sea of Galilee of Capernaum. The disciples, Peter and the other eleven, were considered to be illiterate men—having elementary education only. Read Acts 4:13. Even Jesus considered them as not possessing the education of this world. See Luke 10:21.

Peter came to Jesus, and Jesus urged him to follow Him and to learn to be a fisher of men. Peter was therefore first a disciple. He followed Jesus, hearing His teachings and His preaching and observing His miracle-working power. Peter also had the opportunity of some special training. Perhaps it was a year after Peter had become a leader and a spokesman for the group of twelve disciples. His name is almost always mentioned first in the lists of disciples; the Scriptures quote Peter giving opinions for the group.

In our lesson for this Sunday we see Peter being made an apostle—a man who saw Jesus and who was sent out by Him to tell others about Him. (I Corinthians 9:1 gives us the definition of the word, “apostle.”) Peter is being sent out to work actively in the Lord's business. Even though he had learned about the Gospel message and had seen how the Lord worked, he needed something in addition to this. Peter needed power, and Peter received power. Matthew 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-19; 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6.

- I. THE INCIDENT OF JESUS GIVING POWER TO HIS DISCIPLES. The time came when Jesus wanted His disciples to preach what they had been learning. He knew that in order to convince people of the truth of what they were saying about the Son of God, the disciples had to have His power. He called them to Himself. He gave them power to cast unclean spirits out of the people. He gave them skill over every kind of disease and sickness. He gave them special protection to go about His work unharmed by natural dangers, such as serpents and scorpions. Luke 10:17-20.

Peter had seen Jesus cure people of specific diseases; he had seen Him restore good health to those who were in general poor health. Now this wonderful power of healing was being given to him. Peter had seen people who had been driven out of their minds by the presence of demons made rational and at peace by the power of Jesus. Peter had been privileged to be one of the party whom Jesus chose to accompany Him into the room of the twelve-year-old girl whom He raised from the dead. Peter heard Jesus say, “Now take this power which I have given you. Go to the Jewish people and tell them that the

kingdom of God is soon to be revealed.” Peter was to go out with a partner, for we read in Mark 6:7 that Jesus “...began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits.” They were not to take any money, no more clothing than they normally wore, and no food.

## II. THE POWER WAS JESUS’ TO GIVE.

1. Jesus acknowledged that He had this power.
  - 1) He said that He had power over all flesh. John 17:2.
  - 2) He said that He possessed all power in Heaven and in earth. Matthew 28:18.
2. It is only through the power that Jesus gives that His work can be done.
  - 1) Jesus’ power enables a person to do His will. John 15:5.
  - 2) Jesus said that He will give power. Jesus’ Word is true and His promises are never broken. John 1:14; John 14:6.
  - 3) The power from Jesus is given—it is free. There was nothing that the disciples had to give in order to receive this power from Jesus. They had already trusted Him and obeyed His command to follow Him. They got ready to go out preaching and to do His work in response to His command to go. Now they were ready to go and preach in response to this command because their obedience guaranteed the gift of power.
  - 4) The power from Jesus was freely received. No gift can be possessed until it is taken. A great amount of power was given to Peter, who unquestioningly received it.
  - 5) Jesus commanded that the power be freely used by Peter and the other disciples. He said, “...freely ye have received, freely give,” Matthew 10:8b. There was never to be any price placed upon the service of the disciples; no disciple was ever to hold back from using this power.

III. THE POWER WAS STRONGER THAN SATAN’S POWER. The power which Jesus gave was over the devils. This power included authority over them. The disciples could command devils to come out of people.

## IV. THE POWER WAS OPERATIVE ONLY BY FAITH.

1. Peter was to learn complete dependence upon the Lord’s provision.
  - 1) The first time the Lord sent out the disciples He told them not to take money, extra clothing, or food. They were not even to carry a bag (scrip) in which they could put articles or money that they could acquire on the way.
  - 2) They were to accept hospitality in a home of each city where they were preaching. If a home was not “worthy,” that is, not willing to accept them, they were to shake the dust of the city from their sandals and to leave for another city where they would be received with their message of the Gospel.
  - 3) Jesus assured the disciples of the care and the knowledge concerning their whereabouts which our Heavenly Father has for His children. They were not to expect that this meant a lack of hardships and persecutions along the way. Matthew 10:16-42.
  - 4) Jesus told His disciples that they were not to worry about what they should say in times of questioning by authorities. The very words which they should speak in such times would be provided for them by God. Matthew 10:19.
2. Peter learned that the faith had to be on his part as well as the part of the person to whom he was ministering and witnessing.
  - 1) The disciples were not able to cast out a devil from a young boy. The father of the boy brought him to Jesus and told Him that the disciples had not been able to cast out the devil. When the disciples asked Jesus why they had not been able to cast out the devil, Jesus told them that it was because of their unbelief. He said that it would have taken only a small amount of faith, an amount comparable to the size of “a grain of mustard seed.” Matthew 17:14-21; Mark 9:14-29.

- 2) Peter demonstrated that he had learned well the lesson of using the power which Jesus had given him. Peter and John were soul-winning partners in Jerusalem after Jesus' ascension. In response to a lame man's faith, Peter was able to see him saved and also healed in body. Acts 3:1-11. Peter testified as to the source of his power.

V. PETER AND THE OTHER DISCIPLES WERE NOT TO GLORY IN THE POWER WHICH THEY HAD RECEIVED. Luke 10:17-20.

1. Peter learned Jesus' lesson which instructed the disciples not to rejoice in the power which they had received. They were to glory in the fact that they themselves were saved. In I Peter 1:8-12, Peter speaks of rejoicing greatly in Jesus, Who has given the gift of salvation.
2. Jesus said that there would be rejoicing in the future as a result of the power which He had given. He said that the person who would sow the seed of salvation and the person who would reap the harvest would some day rejoice together in the souls that would be saved. John 4:36.

CONCLUSION: Jesus desires to work in the lives of His saved ones—He desires to mold them into servants for His work. If each teacher could convince his pupils that the most important daily act of their lives is to turn themselves over to the leadership and guidance of the Lord, receiving His power in following His will, they will have done the best service they can, apart from first leading them to know Jesus as their Saviour. Soul winning is the Lord's work.