

On The Rock: 6

Walking On The Word

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.”

Over the last few weeks we have been taking our theme Scripture, Matthew 6.18, and drawing several lessons from it.

1. The Rock is the revealed word of God – we have it in written form
2. Our salvation and walk with God is personal – we need a personal relationship with Jesus and we need to work at it through study, prayer and fellowship.
3. The Word of God is a solid foundation on which we can build our lives
4. The written word of God is more sure and stable than any other revealed word, either through preaching, the gifts of the Spirit or visions and dreams.
5. We need to have a Word led lifestyle – that is we allow the Word of God to be our guide in all the affairs of life.

As we continue to develop this theme of having a word led lifestyle we are going to answer the question: How do we allow the Word to lead us?

To answer this question we are going to look at another occasion in the life of Peter where he gave the Word a prominent place in his life.

Luke 5. 1-11

1. One of the first key points in allowing ourselves to be led by the Word of God is to be **serious** about it. We see in verse 1 that the people were pressing in to hear the word of God. This means they were crowding Him and pushing forward even to the point where He could have been crushed, so He climbed into one of the boats and taught them from a safe distance (v2-3). There was a sense of urgency and seriousness about hearing the Word. The people were hungry to hear all that they could – His teaching was different to the priests, He taught with power and authority.
 - i. The picture we have here is like that of a crowd of people around a bargain stall in a market or sale – if you want the good deals you need to get to the front and snap them up before someone else does.
 - ii. Being serious about the Word of God means spending time in it – we need to be constantly in the Word, reading, studying and meditating. Not just dipping into it every once in a while or only when we find ourselves in trouble. The faith we need to overcome situations and sicknesses cannot be developed over night, so we can't afford to wait until trouble strikes before we dig into the Word of God. Don't wait for trouble to come get serious about the Word now.
2. Being serious about the Word of God also means that we **believe** the things we read regardless of what we think or feel. We have to accept that it is God speaking to us. 2 Timothy 3.16 says “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God...*” other translations tell us it “*God-breathed (given by His inspiration)*” (Amp).

- i. All Scripture – that means what it says, ALL.
 - ii. God breathed or inspired – it has been spoken by God Himself. It is God speaking direct to you and me. They were written by the Spirit of God for our teaching, training and instruction. They are also useful for correcting us and rebuking us if we go astray.
 - iii. Does God lie? Does He exaggerate the truth? Does He speak just for the sake of saying something? No, no and no. Every word that God has spoken is truthful and valid. **He means what He says and says what He means.**
 - iv. Our minds, emotions, feelings and experiences can all deceive us; so regardless of what we think, feel or have previously experienced we accept and believe that what God says is the truth – that's being serious.
3. Our third point, which we will spend some time with, is not only hearing and believing the Word but being **obedient** to it.

i. First let's look at Peter -

- a) He had been hearing Jesus teach. He heard every word that was spoken. It was his boat that Jesus had 'hired'
- b) We learn from vs2 that Peter and the other fishermen were cleaning their nets. They had been out fishing during the night, a very stressful night for these experienced fishermen – they had worked hard, laboured and toiled yet caught absolutely nothing for all their trouble (v5)
- c) At the end of this 'wasted' night they had come back to shore, were cleaning the nets ready for the next evenings work, before heading off home to sleep. Jesus was using Peter's boat and he was probably waiting for Jesus to finish His message so he could get off home.
- d) When Jesus had finished speaking to the multitude He turned to Peter and told him to launch his boat out into the deep waters and let down his nets for a catch –
- e) Peter told Jesus all about the fruitless night they had just had – but listen to his words to Jesus:

“And Simon (Peter) answered, Master, we toiled all night [*exhaustingly*] and caught nothing [*in our nets*]. But on the ground of Your word, I will lower the nets [*again*].” (vs5, Amp)

- f) “On the ground of Your word” - what a great statement. I particularly prefer this translation because of the word *ground*. This is solid foundation, terra firma, this is rock. What Peter effectively states here is this: 'just because You say so I will do it' – that's obedience.

ii. There are many Scriptures which encourage us to be obedient to what God says, we have already read and studied some of them.

“So everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts upon them [*obeying them*] will be like a sensible (prudent, practical, wise) man who built his house upon the rock.” Matthew 7.24 (Amp)

“But be doers of the Word [*obey the message*], and not merely listeners to it, betraying yourselves [*into deception by reasoning contrary to the Truth*].” James 1.22 (Amp)

iii. When we walk on the ground of the Word of God we will not slip or fail – it is a solid foundation.

- a) The Psalmist could say: “He drew me up out of a horrible pit [*a pit of tumult and of destruction*], out of the miry clay (froth and slime), and set my feet upon a rock, steadying my steps and establishing my goings.” Psalm 40.2 (Amp)

With our feet on the rock our steps are steady (we won't slip) and our ways are established (the Hebrew word used here means to be firmly fixed, secure, enduring, steadfast and can also mean to be rightly directed).

iv. Obedience to the Word results in great blessing.

- a) Peter was obedient to Jesus and caught a great number of fish. Actually note the words of the Scripture – Jesus told him to let down the nets. Peter said he would let down the net – that net broke because of the weight of the fish.

1. Peter was partly obedient, he realised his disobedience and that's the reason he said “*Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord*” Luke 5.8

- b) God's Word always brings results – it does not fail
Isaiah 55.11; Joshua 1.8

v. Peter's obedience to the Word of Jesus enabled him to walk on the water (Matthew 14.28-29)

- a) Someone once said that Peter wasn't actually walking on the water – He was walking on the Word – the rock!

So to answer the question 'How do we allow the Word to lead us?' we have to

- be serious about it
- believe it
- obey it