

CLOUD OF WITNESSES

Big Idea

Pastor Brett – Part 4

Do you remember when you were perhaps in elementary school playing some kind of game? Usually two captains took turns picking members for their team and if you weren't the captain, chances are that you were hoping to be on a certain team with a chance to be with the winners. When Jesus selection of disciples for His team included fishermen, a tax collector, a religious zealot, and even a betrayer. Often, they did not understand what Jesus was talking about. Peter is a prime example of Jesus picking a man who was most likely to have the biggest cringe factor, to fail, to disappoint, to be impulsive, and immature. That was Peter early in his time with Jesus. That same Peter is the one who preached the first message on Pentecost and 3000 decided to follow Jesus and be baptized. That same Peter became the leader of God's church on earth. Our current series **Cloud of Witnesses** focuses on **Peter, an example that a great leader must first be a great follower.**

Pastor Brett Rush shares that to follow implies a **choice** and a **calling**, and he explains the difference between **logic** (understanding) and **faith**. **He then gives three life lessons from Peter: Be mindful of influences, jump out of the boat (and what that means), and put Jesus first. To be a good leader, we first have to be a good follower.** We have to decide to put Jesus first and take action. It takes effort. It takes meeting individually with Jesus often and learning from Him. It takes meeting with Jesus and other followers and learning from them. It's an exciting life! Whether you are a brand-new follower of Jesus or a long-time follower of Jesus this message will encourage you.

Discussion Questions

- What do we know about Peter as a disciple? Discuss both the negative and positive.
- Read 1 Peter 1:5-8. Peter wrote these some 30 years after Jesus returned to heaven. While Peter didn't always have those qualities. What changed Peter? Does this give you hope?
- How have your choices made you into something different than who you were before?
- Who were your best influencers? Why? Who are you influencing now? Proverbs 13:20 say?
- Have you recently asked God to increase your comfort zone? Has He? Why or why not?
- Read John 21:15-19. What is common in all three questions that Jesus asked? After Peter's third response what did Jesus tell him to do in verse 19?
- What is your NEXT STEP to follow Jesus and become the leader He is calling you to be?

Prayer Focus

Lord, please strengthen and stretch my faith and give me spiritual and practical wisdom as I walk through this season. Help me to follow You, knowing You will carry me through this uncertain time.

Next Steps

Peter began his letter to suffering people praise. As you wake each morning this next week, begin with praising God before thinking of the day's agenda. Praise Him for His mercy and power, for giving you a living hope of a future with Him, and for being held by a faith that is guarded by Him – then Follow Him well!

Leader Tip

Share a story of when you had to "Get out of the Boat" Point your group to scriptures that have helped your faith to increase as you followed God.