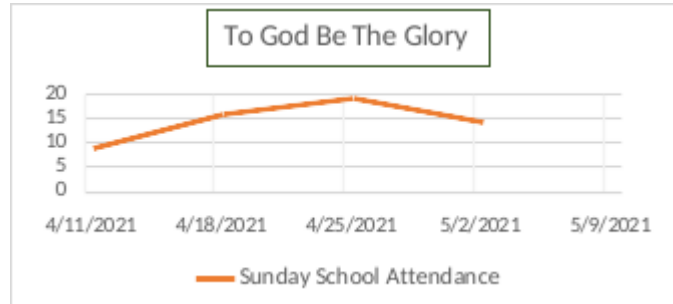


Welcome and Announcements

It's time to return to church and recommit ourselves to worshipping and serving God together. We are currently meeting in-person for 10:00 am Sunday School and 11:00 am Worship. Both services have safe-distance seating and masks are required. Pray that we will expand and grow. Last week's Sunday School attendance = 14



Introduction

This week's lesson centers on Peter's Denial of Jesus (Luke 22:54-62). Here we'll briefly consider a summary of Peter's life and accomplishments.

Peter

Jesus' first words to Peter were "come, ye after me" (Mark 1:17). His last words to him were "follow thou me (John 21:22). Although he stumbled at times in between these two, Peter followed Jesus. Here are but a few highlights of his life:

- Simon Bar Jonah – renamed Peter (petros = rock) by Jesus
- Along with his brother Andrew, fishermen by trade before being called as a disciple
- A leader among the disciples and the early church
- At times brash and impulsive in his enthusiasm
- Among Jesus' closest disciples (along with James and John)
- Stepped out on the water, walking to Jesus (Matthew 14:25-33)
- First to recognize Jesus as Messiah (Matthew 16:15-18)
- Rebuked by Jesus, "*Get thee behind me, Satan*", for his response to Jesus' telling of His suffering and death (Mark 8:31-33)
- Eyewitness to the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-9)
- Denied Jesus 3 times, less than 24 hours after stating "*I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death*" (Luke 22:33)
- Forgiven by Jesus and directed to "*Feed my sheep*" (John 21:15-22)
- Delivered a mighty sermon on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-41)
- First to proclaim salvation to Gentiles (in the home of Cornelius, Acts 10)

Denial and Forgiveness

³²*Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.* ³³*But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.* **Matthew 10:32-33**

³⁸*Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.* **Mark 8:38**

⁹*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* **1 John 1:9**

Denying Christ is a serious offense with eternal consequences, “*But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*” (1 Corinthians 15:57) there is forgiveness and “*eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*” (Romans 6:23). That is why Jesus went to the cross.

Conclusion

When Peter met Jesus, the rugged fisherman became a “*new creature*” (2 Corinthians 5:17) in Christ; not yet a perfect person but a forgiven Work-In-Progress through the grace of the Holy Spirit. Likewise, we like Peter are saved by faith in Jesus, “*not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior*” (Titus 3:5). God specializes in using ordinary people in His service; shaping us into the image of Christ “*filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God*” (Philippians 1:11). “*Changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*” (2 Corinthians 3:18). “*To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved*” (Ephesians 1:6).

¹³*Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.* **Acts 4:13**

May we each day be bold in our witness of the Gospel, that those around us take knowledge that we have been with Jesus.