

Peter's Growth in The Lord

2 Peter 3:18

Introduction:

- A. The last recorded words of the great Apostle Peter — “grow ...”
 - 1. No one knew the value and potential for growth more than he.
 - a. From a young rough-shod fisherman in whom Christ saw great potential (John 1:42).
 - b. To an old veteran calmly speaking of his death as a new beginning. (2 Pet. 1:14; 3:13).
 - c. In between was a life time of building on his failures and successes in the Lord.
 - 2. No one reaches his potential over night not by accident — it takes effort and time.
- B. The growth of Peter involved some valuable lessons learned along the way.

Discussion:

I. The Meaning of Life (Mark 1:16-18).

- A. Up to now life, plans and ambitions centered around fishing.
- B. Jesus gives him a new vision: “come follow me.”
 - 1. His life changed forever — life now more than fish, nets, boats.
 - 2. He begins a life of growth toward God and heaven.
- C. This is the first lesson that all must learn to grow in the Lord.
 - 1. See life as a divine vocation (Eph. 4:1)
 - 2. See life does not consist of possessions. (Lk. 12:15).

II. The Nature of Jesus (Matt. 16:13-19).

- A. More than just a man, even a prophet — God's Son.
- B. More than just a historical figure — savior of the world.
- C. We need this truth in life and death. (John 8:21-24; 14:1-4).

III. The Greatness of Love (John 21:15-19).

- A. Here he learned the forgiveness of love.
 - 1. How could Jesus love him so soon after what he had done! (John 18:25-27).
 - 2. How could Jesus now let him tend His sheep?
- B. Here is learned that love equips one for service — “Do you love me?”

IV. The Blessedness of Giving (Acts 3:6).

- A. He had no money, but gave something far greater.
 - 1. He could give him health by a miracle.
 - 2. We can give things greater than money that requires no miracle.
 - a. Love, sympathy, and understanding.
 - b. The gospel, correction, friendship, (cf. David & Jonathan)
- B. He knew it is more blessed to give than receive (cf. Acts 20:35).
 - 1. If one gives himself first, then any goods he may have. (2 Cor. 8:5, 12).
 - 2. If one gives from the heart (1 Cor. 13:3).
 - 3. If one gives unselfishly (Matt. 6:1-4).

V. The Universality of the Gospel (Acts 10:34, 35).

- A. He is finally rising above his nationalism and prejudice.
 - 1. He now sees that the grace of God has appeared to all (cf. Tit. 2:11-12).
 - 2. His Lord's commission has begun to take hold of him (cf. Mk. 16:15-16; Acts 28:18-20).
 - 3. He may have thought “enough Jews to preach to” without going to the Gentiles.
- B. He still has some growing to do here — hard to overcome prejudice (cf. Gal. 2:11, 12).

Conclusion:

- A. We see him grow out of his ignorance, weakness and prejudice.
- B. We see him grow to the point of viewing his death with anticipation rather than trepidation.

