

STATE OF THE

CHURCH

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WORLD

Part 2: Picking the Right Rock

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Jesus picks a rock:

And I tell you that you are Peter, and on **this rock** I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. – Matthew 16:18

Assumption: If I were going to pick a “rock” to be the foundation of a church, I would select a spiritually healthy and mature one.

The rock is a mess before and after the selection:

Peter rebukes God

Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!” Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.” – Matthew 16:22-23

Peter misses the point

Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” – Matthew 17:3-4

Peter denies Jesus

Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. “You also were with Jesus of Galilee,” she said.

But he denied it before them all. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said.

Then he went out to the gateway, where another servant girl saw him and said to the people there, “This fellow

was with Jesus of Nazareth.”

He denied it again, with an oath: “I don’t know the man!”

After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, “Surely you are one of them; your accent gives you away.”

Then he began to call down curses, and he swore to them, “I don’t know the man!” – Matthew 26:69-74

Peter fails... or does he?

Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear.

But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”

“Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.”

“Come,” he said.

(Continues on back)

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little

faith," he said, "why did you doubt?" And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.

Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

- Matthew 14:25-33

Spiritual maturity knows there is more security walking on water than sitting in a boat.

Spiritual health knows that in order to get where I want to go, I have to leave where I presently am.

Spiritual awareness recognizes that I must know who I am in Jesus before I will risk and step out in faith.

Spiritual growth occurs when I let go of the boat.

Spiritual wisdom knows that God loves to use rocks with the rough edges knocked off.

Jesus builds his church on Peter's heart , not Peter's resume.

Peter's prayer for all those seeking to be mature and healthy:

Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family

of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

- 1 Peter 5:6-11

Next Steps

Self-assessment (paper and online version); share your results anonymously with us so we can take the pulse of our congregation.

Take a Class - get a CTK Life flyer, register online or at the Connection Point.

Small Group Questions

- 1) What criterion do you use to determine if something is healthy? Does the same criterion work for spiritual health?
- 2) What does it mean to be spiritually healthy? After reading the above scriptures, would you consider Peter spiritually healthy?
- 3) Put yourself in Peter's place, with one leg over the side of the boat. What keeps you from letting go and pursuing Jesus with your whole heart?
- 4) Reread the story of Peter walking on water from Matthew 14. Who actually failed? Why?
- 5) What is your next step on your faith journey with Jesus?
- 6) How can we pray for you right now and this week?