

September 3 | Sunday
Peter: A Rock or a Reed?
Read [Matthew 16:13-28](#)



04 | Mon – Becoming great | Read [Mark 10:41-45](#)

Labor Day is meant to honor workers (those without prestige or corner offices) whose faithful work has helped shaped our country. Many of Jesus' disciples would have fit into that category. Yet Peter's closest friends, James and John, had ambitions for the two highest positions in Jesus' kingdom. What was Jesus' response? How is his definition different than than the way greatness is defined in our culture?

05 | Tue – Jesus who? | Read [Matthew 16:13-20](#)

Caesarea Philippi, the capital city of Herod's son Philip, where springs from a cave at the base of Mt. Hermon are the beginning of the Jordan River. It is interesting that Jesus chose this area, dedicated to the worship of Pan, to ask his disciples who people thought he was. His disciples repeated the things they had heard but it was Peter who put himself on the line, declaring that Jesus was "the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Today people are still debating who Jesus was - a good man, a great teacher, a prophet - but what do you believe about him? And what difference does it make?

06 | Wed – Just when you think you've got it together... | Read [Matthew 16:21-23](#)

Peter's bold statement that you read yesterday had earned him the title of "Rock" but today you see how quickly his human flaws came front and center when he disagreed with - no, actually rebuked - Jesus regarding the near future. What about you? Have you ever heard something Jesus said and, because it didn't make sense, decided it doesn't apply to you?

07 | Thu – No luxury cruise | Read [Matthew 16:24-28](#)

Jesus makes it pretty clear in these verses that being his disciple is not about holding high positions in his Kingdom, or trying to figure out Jesus' plans and then 'help' him out. Following Jesus means doing the hard things, putting to death the selfish, sinful nature that keeps rearing its ugly head. It is about losing some things to gain others more valuable. But in the end, Jesus is asking the challenging questions: what would you trade for your soul?

08 | Fri – Failure | Read [Luke 22:31-34](#)

Peter declared his loyalty but Jesus knew his weakness. Jesus knew Peter would fail in his words and actions but he prayed that Peter's faith would not fail. When it was all said and done, Jesus knew Peter would come out the other side a different person. What difficulty might you be going through? Will you let it break you or will you let it drive you to Jesus for strength and help?

09 | Sat – Peter's before-and-after picture | Read [Acts 2:12-41](#)

The gospels give us a picture of Peter 'before' and in Acts we see Peter 'after'. No, he didn't lose weight but he was stripped of the superficial and refined in his character. The man who could not even admit that he knew Jesus for fear of his life is now preaching in broad daylight, uncaring that he could be arrested. His bold sermon changed the lives of 3,000 people that day. His leadership helped form the early church and he did become the Rock that Jesus predicted. If you are feeling weak and flawed, maybe Peter's story can give you hope. Is there some area of your life you can bring to Jesus today that needs to change?