

2022 Theme - Extraordinary God + Ordinary People = Transformed Lives

Sermon Series - Extraordinary Discipleship

Sermon Title - The Piercing Look of Jesus

Sermon Text - Luke 22:54-62

Sermon Presenter - Pastor Larry

Full Sermon Notes

“When castles crumble and breath is fleeting, upon this rock I will stand”

You can build your castles in this old world, and build them out of solid rock, but they will eventually crumble, although they will probably outlast you! But if you build your life upon the Solid Rock of Jesus, then you can rest assured that you will live out the days God has for you on this earth with purpose and you will live for an eternity in heaven because of the sacrifice He made for you on the old rugged cross! What peace of mind and what purpose in life that brings to my life! I decided to become a disciple of Jesus, a follower of Christ, many years ago and I can tell you it's a decision I've never regretted! Not for a moment! And that's why I live my life to help others become fully devoted followers of Jesus! Let's pray and we're going to look at the extraordinary discipleship of Jesus in the life of His disciple Simon Peter! Let's pray.

Before we look at Simon Peter and the way Jesus disciplined him, I want to share with you why discipleship is so important. Jesus knew that His job on earth was to seek and to save that which was lost! He came to live a perfect life so He could become the perfect sacrifice on the Cross and pay for our sins so that we could be saved from the bondage and the penalty of sin! The Bible states it this way in Romans...

Romans 6:20 When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness.

Romans 6:21 What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death!

Romans 6:22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

That is a life transforming message, an eternity transforming message and Jesus wanted that message to continue going out long after He had ascended back to heaven! That's why He intentionally trained His disciples to continue His ministry and His mission by using His methods!! And His discipleship methods were amazingly effective. Avery T. Willis said this in his book Biblical Basis of Missions:

“Jesus painstakingly disciplined his followers for three years because he knew that the implementation of God's plan was to be in their hands. Yet by the end of his earthly ministry, all who remained were eleven original disciples, one hundred twenty other followers who attended the prayer vigil in the upper room, and five hundred who witnessed his ascension. How few they must have seemed when Jesus commanded them to make disciples of all nations! Plainly, they needed to multiply.” Pg 86.

And multiply they did! We read this verse last week...

Acts 6:7 So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

Out of 12 disciples, only one left the mission! Others stumbled and struggled along the way, but the teachings and actions of Jesus were ever on their hearts and minds! However, through the power of The Holy Spirit, the eleven, and a replacement for Judas, along with this relatively small number of followers of Jesus, overcame all obstacles and took the gospel to the known world at that time! How did they accomplish this great feat? They followed Jesus' example and command to make disciples. In other words, they didn't just tell people about Jesus and help them get saved, they taught them the importance of becoming like Jesus and sharing their faith with others and then teaching them to do the same! Why am I saying this? Here's some math that Avery Willis, Jr. did back in 1979 in his book Biblical Basis of Missions...

"Suppose we could win three thousand persons a day as the disciples did at Pentecost. How long do you suppose it would take to win the approximately six billion persons expected to be on the earth in the year 2000? Fifty-four hundred seventy-nine years! If Abraham had won three thousand converts each day, and his descendants had continued doing so, it would be approximately A.D. 3000 before we could evangelize just the people who will be living on the earth in the year 2000." Pg 87

Remember, he was writing in 1979. We now have 7.837 Billion people! But listen to this fact Avery stated:

"If each disciple could help another person to become a disciple every six months, it would take only 16 ½ years to have more than 8.5 billion persons." Pg 88.

But for some reason, followers of Christ have never been able to stay faithful to the disciple making process and so we keep falling behind in reaching the world with the Good News of Jesus! We need to change that! And in order to do that we need to know how Jesus disciplined His disciples. We're going to look at that over the next few weeks in this series and then we will spend all of next year in a very intensive study of Jesus' mission, message, method, motive, and might. Our theme for 2023 will be: Focus On What Matters! If you come back tonight for our Vision Meeting I will give you a glimpse of what's coming!

But as we begin this new series on Extraordinary Discipleship we are going to examine the disciple process Jesus took with the Apostle Peter! I've titled this message "The Piercing Look of Jesus!" The Pastor that was preaching the night I got saved, once preached a message by the same title and while I don't have a copy of that message, I've never forgotten the main theme. Let me ask you this question: Ever get the look? From your mom or dad, from your wife or husband? From your kids? How you interpret that look and how you respond to that look does have consequences. Am I right? Have you ever thought about the look you would get

from Jesus if He were looking at your life? What is Jesus seeing when He looks at your life? Are there things you wish He just couldn't see? If the answer to that is yes, then you must ask the question: "Why am I involved in things, behaviors, attitudes, and actions, that go against what Jesus taught and what Jesus stands for?" And this question: "Do I really believe good can come from living outside the principles that Jesus lived and died for?" And you need to remember this: Many of the leaders and even founders of other religions, while they do not accept the divinity of Jesus, have admitted that the life and teachings of Jesus were amazing, noble, righteous, pure, and worthy of imitation, embrace and emulation! But back to the look of Jesus. So many people think that if Jesus were looking at them, the look would be one of condemnation, or even anger. But today we will see the truth of what the look of Jesus really looks like! Let's examine the extraordinary discipleship of Jesus in the life of Peter through the lens of...

The Piercing Look of Jesus

It was nearing the end of Jesus' ministry and earthly life. The events leading up to His crucifixion were now happening at lightning speed! We read these words in Luke's Gospel...

Luke 22:54 Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance.

Luke 22:55 And when some there had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them.

Luke 22:56 A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, "This man was with him."

Luke 22:57 But he denied it. "Woman, I don't know him," he said.

Luke 22:58 A little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." "Man, I am not!" Peter replied.

Luke 22:59 About an hour later another asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean."

Luke 22:60 Peter replied, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed.

Luke 22:61 The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times."

Luke 22:62 And he went outside and wept bitterly.

Peter remembered! It's as if the events of the past three years of his life as a follower of Jesus suddenly came flooding through his heart and mind and he went outside and wept bitterly! And depending on how far he went outside, he may have been able to hear the mocking and insulting things the men guarding Jesus said as they began beating Him. What was it about the look of Jesus that caused Peter to weep bitterly? What had Peter seen in the piercing look of Jesus' eyes? While I don't believe Peter saw a look of condemnation, I believe he did see...

A Piercing Look of Disappointment!

Jesus wasn't mad at Peter, He was just extremely disappointed! Jesus wanted so much more for Peter and Jesus knew the hurt and the pain that Peter was going to go through because of his denial. That broke Jesus' heart! And even though Jesus had predicted that Peter would deny Him, it still hurt Jesus when it happened!

Mark 14:27 "You will all fall away," Jesus told them, "for it is written: " 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.'

Mark 14:28 But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

Mark 14:29 Peter declared, "Even if all fall away, I will not."

Mark 14:30 "Truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "today—yes, tonight—before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times."

Mark 14:31 But Peter insisted emphatically, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the others said the same.

Peter had been so confident and bold, and I'm sure his statement, "Even if all fall away, I will not" was now ringing in his head! And I'm quite sure that Peter also remembered Jesus' face just a short while ago...

Mark 14:32 They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray."

Mark 14:33 He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled.

Mark 14:34 "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch."

Mark 14:35 Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him.

Mark 14:36 "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

Jesus' soul was troubled and overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death! He simply asked them to keep watch with Him for one hour! All He wanted from His closest friends was their loving support and encouragement. He wasn't asking them to be on the lookout for the enemy, He knew what was coming and He wasn't going to run or hide from His task. But while He was fully God, He was also fully human and self-preservation is a natural part of being human, so there was a collision in His soul. Going about a stone's throw away He showed His selfless heart by submitting to the will of the Father, allowing Himself to become the sacrifice to save not only His disciples, but you and me! When selfish and selfless collide in your life, which one wins? When Jesus returned to His disciples, which of these two had won with them?

Mark 14:37 Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Simon," he said to Peter, "are you asleep? Couldn't you keep watch for one hour?"

Mark 14:38 Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

And with that statement, “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” we know that the piercing look of Jesus was...

A Piercing Look of Compassion!

I believe Jesus looked on Peter with compassion. Peter at least had the courage to go to the place where they were interrogating Jesus. Where were the others? And I don't believe Jesus was angry with the others for not being there. In fact, Jesus had not gotten angry with Peter or the other disciples for falling asleep in the garden of Gethsemane, even though He was disappointed. He knew they were weak, tired, confused, and that they did not fully comprehend the events that were about to happen! In fact Jesus had known all about their weaknesses, their problems and their struggles when He called them to become His disciples. But regardless, Jesus still wanted for them to get to know Him and His will for their lives. He wanted to be their friend as well as their Savior and Lord! The piercing look of Jesus may have caused Peter to flashback to the day he made the decision to follow Jesus...

Matthew 4:18 As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.

Matthew 4:19 “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”

Matthew 4:20 At once they left their nets and followed him.

So Jesus saw these guys for who they were and still loved them, and when they saw Jesus for who He was, something happened! What caused these guys to follow Jesus? Did He offer them big money? Did he make false promises to them? Did He cast some kind of spell on them? Were they acting impulsively, rashly, and on a whim? Were they bored, idle men with nothing better to do? No. They were hard working men with good jobs as fishermen. Were they simply ambitious men looking for fame and fortune? No. Jesus was relatively unknown and had just begun His ministry. There were no obvious worldly benefits to following Jesus at this time. They followed because they genuinely believed Jesus was the promised messiah. Several of the disciples had been disciples of John the Baptist. They heard John's teachings on the one who would come after him. The Apostle John's Gospel records...

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

John 1:30 This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’

John 1:31 I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”

John 1:40 Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus.

They were deeply religious men who were already seeking a deeper relationship with God.

They knew the prophecies written in the Word of God. They were not perfect men, as we see in the gospels, but they had a level of honesty and Jesus knew their hearts. A.B. Bruce in his epic work *The Training of The Twelve*, wrote...

“They were men who hungered and thirsted after real righteousness, being sick of the righteousness then in vogue; they said Amen in their hearts to the... exposure of the hollowness of current religious profession and of the worthlessness of fashionable good works. They prayed fervently for the reviving of true religion, for the coming of the divine kingdom, for the advent of the Messianic King with fan in His hand to separate chaff from wheat, and to put right all things which were wrong.” A.B. Bruce

Peter remembers these things and realizes he had just denied the one religious person he had ever known that was pure, righteous, truthful and not hypocritical in His teachings or practices! That’s a part of why he wept bitterly! But when Jesus looked at Peter it was also...

A Piercing Look of Understanding

Jesus knew that Peter was impulsive, outspoken, and sometimes overconfident. Jesus understood Peter and Jesus understands you. Remember that Jesus totally gets you, and knows your weaknesses when He calls you to follow Him and to be His disciple. He wants to disciple you and help you become all He created you to be! He wanted the same for Peter. Jesus can take your weaknesses and make them your strengths by helping you overcome them and then use them for a greater purpose! Jesus remembered how Peter was the only one to get out of the boat during the storm!

Matthew 14:22 Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd.

Matthew 14:23 After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone,

Matthew 14:24 and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

Matthew 14:25 Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake.

Matthew 14:26 When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear.

Matthew 14:27 But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”

Matthew 14:28 “Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.”

Matthew 14:29 “Come,” he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

Matthew 14:30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!”

Matthew 14:31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”

Matthew 14:32 And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.

Matthew 14:33 Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Jesus used Peter's weaknesses to teach so many lessons to the disciples! In the storm on the sea He taught them about faith and trust in the midst of the storms of life. He taught them about keeping their eyes on Him so He could guide them and give them confidence and peace in the midst of the storm. Jesus used every situation to disciple and teach lessons for life! Do you remember what happened in the Garden of Gethsemane, after the prayer and sleeping incident? The mob sent to arrest Jesus came with Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus. And once again, good ole Peter was as impulsive as ever and decided he would take on the whole mob who had come to arrest Jesus, single handedly! Jesus once again taught lessons...

Matthew 26:47 While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people.

Matthew 26:48 Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him."

Matthew 26:49 Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him.

Matthew 26:50 Jesus replied, "Do what you came for, friend." Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him.

Matthew 26:51 With that, one of Jesus' companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

Matthew 26:52 "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword."

And we know from John's Gospel that it was Peter who had drawn the sword and in Luke's Gospel we read...

Luke 22:51 But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him.

So Jesus uses Peter's actions to teach about peace and even caring about one's own enemies! There's so much to learn from the look of Jesus. Jesus not only knew the disciples' issues and problems, He also saw their potential, their promise, and their hearts. He remembered Peter's quick response to a question He once asked the disciples...

John 6:66 From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

John 6:67 "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve.

John 6:68 Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

John 6:69 We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God."

And in Mathew's Gospel...

Matthew 16:13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

Matthew 16:14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

Matthew 16:15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Matthew 16:16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

Matthew 16:17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.

Matthew 16:18 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 16:19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

What rock was Jesus talking about? Not Peter, but Peter's confession! Peter's name meant rock, and God was going to use him to help establish the New Testament Church, but it was the One whom Peter knew to be the Rock of Ages, and the Chief Cornerstone, and the Rock the builders rejected, Jesus Christ, who would be the foundation and the chief cornerstone of the church! And Jesus used extraordinary discipleship to get the disciples ready to build His church on that solid foundation! And Jesus used one of His most extraordinary discipleship methods when He looked at Peter with...

A Piercing Look of Love and Forgiveness!

Once again, Jesus' look was not one of condemnation, it was one of love and we have proof of that when we see what happened after the crucifixion and resurrection. This is so powerful.

John 21:1 Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Galilee. It happened this way:

John 21:2 Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together.

John 21:3 "I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

John 21:4 Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.

John 21:5 He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No," they answered.

John 21:6 He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.

John 21:7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water.

Peter had a habit of just jumping out of boats and into the water!

John 21:8 The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards.

John 21:9 When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.

John 21:10 Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught."

John 21:11 So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn.

John 21:12 Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord.

John 21:13 Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish.

John 21:14 This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead.

John 21:15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

John 21:16 Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

John 21:17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."

Jesus had already forgiven Peter, but He knew Peter needed to confess and make amends for his three denials, so that's why He asked him three times, "Do you love me?" Jesus then says to him, "Follow me!" And boy did Peter follow Jesus! Let's look at...

The results of Jesus' extraordinary discipleship of Peter!

On the day of Pentecost, about 50 days after Jesus was crucified, Peter actually stands before a crowd of people made up of the very ones who had crucified Jesus. The very people he had once denied Jesus before. But something had changed. Something was very different. The piercing look of Jesus had reminded Peter of the extraordinary ways he had been personally disciplined by Jesus, with compassion, with understanding, and with love and forgiveness! And now, filled with the Holy Spirit, God uses Peter's outspoken and impulsive traits for His glory! No longer fearing for his life, Peter says...

Acts 2:22 "Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.

Acts 2:23 This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

Acts 2:24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him...

Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

Acts 2:37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

Acts 2:40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

Acts 2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Now I know what you may be thinking because I've thought the same thing. Pastor Larry, Peter was discipled by Jesus Himself, the greatest teacher of all time. I wasn't discipled by Jesus and I could never disciple someone like Jesus, because, well, Jesus was the best there ever was!" Here's what Robert Coleman said in his classic book called "The Master Plan of Evangelism."

People are looking for a demonstration, not an explanation. When it is all boiled down, those of us who seek to train men must be prepared to have them follow even as we follow Christ (I Cor. 11:1). We are the exhibit (Phil. 3: 1 7; I Thess. 2:7, 8; II Tim. 1:13). They will do those things which they hear and see in us (Phil. 4:9). Given time, it is possible through this kind of leadership to impart our way of living to those who are constantly with us. We must take this truth to our lives. There can be no shirking or evading of our personal responsibility to show the way to those we are training, and this revelation must include the practical outworking in life of the deeper realities of the Spirit. This is the Master's method, and nothing else will ever suffice to train others to do His work. It makes us vulnerable, of course. We are not perfect like our Lord, and those persons to whom we open our lives will come to see our many shortcomings. But let them also see a readiness to confess our sins when we understand the error of our ways. Let them hear us apologize to those we have wronged. Our weaknesses need not impair discipleship when shining through them is a transparent sincerity to follow Christ! Robert Coleman - The Master Plan of Evangelism. Pg 77-88.

I close with these words: Like Peter, we talk about our faith, our commitment, our resolve, our faithfulness to Jesus, but then comes the financial crisis, family crisis, the physical health crisis, the mental health crisis, the somebody at work, or school, or church, did me wrong crisis and our faith fades. If God doesn't miraculously fix it, heal it, get us out of it, and make everything comfortable, we get scared, just like Peter! We may even question our faith! But God never promised to always take us out of the storm but to teach us to be disciples who find calm in the midst of the storm! You're going to hear a testimony before you leave this morning from someone who would have never made it through the multiple difficulties they've endured, had God not been faithful to walk with them through every trial! He never said if we followed Him we would live a life of ease, but He does promise His disciples meaning and purpose and His continued presence. So maybe our prayer should be "Lord teach me to have faith that overcomes fear in any and every circumstance and if a hardship or a difficulty in my life would help me accomplish Your will and purpose for my life today, then give me Your strength to get

through the trial and celebrate Your victory! Because I know Your will is always best in the end!” It may seem counterintuitive to pray for God to disciple you in His ways, rather than spelling out for God exactly what you want, but I promise you, if you seek His ways and follow His will, in the end you will be a disciple who finds a new boldness, strength, joy and the ability to make a difference in the world by making a difference in someone’s life! Let’s pray!