

Unqualified - Peter

***Video Intro called The March of the Unqualified.

***New Series called Unqualified.

Each week we will be picking a significant person in the scriptures and examining their life. We're doing this for 2 reasons:

1. We'll find out that, like you and I, each of the major people in scripture (with the exception of Jesus) had flaws. Sometimes REALLY BIG flaws. We have a tendency to give almost super hero status to a lot of the people found in scripture.
2. We'll also find out that, in each instance, God didn't give up on them and despite their problems, God didn't consider them unqualified to serve Him.

***Here's something to make you go huh?

Here's some actual quotes from some employee Performance Reviews:
Performance Reviews

"Since my last report, this employee has reached rock bottom.....and has started to dig."

"His men would follow him anywhere...but only out of morbid curiosity."

"This employee is really not so much of a 'has-been', but more of a definite 'won't be'."

"Works well when under constant supervision and cornered like a rat in a trap."

"He would be out of his depth in a parking lot puddle."

***Hmmm...

I saw this posted in a cubicle of a worker at an insurance company.
We the unwilling, led by the unqualified, are doing the impossible for the ungrateful.

***The story of my employment at a NASA contractor.

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***Finishes with the quote “you’re not worth the money we’re paying you.”

That phrase became a significant definer in my life for the next 10 or so years. Every job I held after that time was influenced by those words. I have since been delivered of that particular stronghold in my life, but the enemy has in recent memory used it against me during particularly trying moments of my life.

And I know, like me, each of you in here has at some time in your life struggled with what someone said about you. Usually someone you respected, or loved, or were close to. And most often, these words have some truth to them.

You see each of us has within us qualities like Peter that threaten to derail our walk with God. Qualities that, if not corrected and brought under the disciplinary hand of God, will throw us off course and cause us to doubt our usefulness for the Kingdom.

For me, it was such a lack of self worth that, even though I was really good at what I did, I couldn’t shake the words that reverberated in my ears year after year. Unqualified.

Since we’ve started Real World, I’ve had people say to my face that I’m not qualified to Pastor.

But thank God He doesn’t call the qualified! Rather, He qualifies the called, if we’ll let Him.

Now today we will take a look at Peter we will observe some things about how God deals with our unqualified-ness by examining how God dealt with the faults of Peter.

Peter is a study on contrasting and sometimes conflicting character traits. He was bold and brash, yet sometimes riddled with self-doubt. He was out-spoken and a natural leader, but often spoke out of his mis-understanding and lack of complete truth.

***So let’s take a look at how God deals with our inadequacies.

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Peter was born Simon and was the son of Jonas and the brother of Andrew, a disciple of John the Baptist.

***In John 1:35-42

35 Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples,

36 and he looked at Jesus as He walked, and said *, “Behold, the Lamb of God!”

37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said * to them, “What do you seek?” They said to Him, “Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?”

39 He said * to them, “Come, and you will see.” So they came and saw where He was staying; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

40 One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother.

41 He found * first his own brother Simon and said * to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which translated means Christ).

42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter).

***1. God does not see us in our weakness, but rather in our potential.

Jesus, when he looked on Simon, saw that it would be through him the Holy Spirit would give the revelation that Jesus was the Son of the living God.

And immediately he changed his name.

In spite of your failure, in spite of your weakness, and in spite of your character flaws, Simon, I’m going to use you.

Let that be a word of encouragement to you hear that struggle with something in your past that you have felt disqualifies you for the work of God. Today God wants to give YOU a new name.

You see up until that point in his life, Simon was JUST Simon.

In Luke 5:1-11, we see this in Simon’s response to the blessing of Jesus of an immense catch of fish. His response? “Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man.”

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Jesus knew that about Simon and called him a new name because of it.

I want you to also notice that Jesus didn't wait for change to occur in Simon's life to call him. He called him in his sin. He drew him in the midst of his failure.

***2. God is not content to leave us in our sin.

We see this in the famous confession of who Jesus is!

***Matt 16

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."

15 He said * to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17 And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

18 "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

19 "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."

And as awesome a revelation as that was and as high on top of the mountain Peter felt, there was still lurking in him a misunderstanding of not who Jesus was, but why He was here.

And Jesus confronts Peter immediately after his revelation as He tells the disciples of His coming death

***22 Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You."

23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

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You see despite the revelatory knowledge of WHO Jesus was, Peter had still not yet gotten over himself.

Sure he left everything he had to follow Jesus. Sure he had this revelation. But he still had NOT gotten past the fact that all that was happening was not about Peter!

And Jesus rebukes him for it! Calls him a stumbling block to the Lord.

Question: have you become a stumbling block to God? Are you so wrapped up in YOU that you've completely missed the point of why Jesus came? Have you turned your faith into something that is only beneficial to you, or have you allowed God to change you for the benefit of the kingdom?

***3. Failing the Lord is not an end, but rather an opportunity for change.

Mark 14

66 As Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came *,

67 and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said *, "You also were with Jesus the Nazarene."

68 But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you are talking about." And he went out onto the porch, and a rooster crowed.

69 The servant-girl saw him, and began once more to say to the bystanders, "This is one of them!"

70 But again he denied it. And after a little while the bystanders were again saying to Peter, "Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean too."

71 But he began to curse and swear, "I do not know this man you are talking about!"

72 Immediately a rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had made the remark to him, "Before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And he began to weep.

Why did Peter weep?

This is an important question for us, because it relates to our own times that we've come face to face with our failure.

Did he weep because he failed? Possibly.

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Did he weep because everyone that knew him and counted on him saw or would find out about his failure? Probably.

Or did he weep because of a deeper revelation about himself? I think we might be on to something...

You see I think Peter wept so bitterly because he was finally able to see in himself his own self-centeredness. He had finally come face to face with the reality of who he really is and that was a man that was, when it was all said and done, would do ANYTHING to preserve him.

You see he thought he's sold out. He thought he'd sacrificed. He thought he'd given his all.

But when everything was stripped away, he realized that he was really only doing all of this for him...

And when God finally got down to the root of the issue for Peter, things changed.

After all, comparatively look at everyone else around me! I give more. I pray more. I serve more.

But in the end, when all the layers are stripped away and it's just you alone. Who are you really?