**Father, Reveal Jesus to us!**

**Introduction:**

As we are in our final week of 40 Days of Preparation, our focus is “Direction for my Calling”. What I’m about to share with you may not be the message that would typically go along with this topic, but I believe it is indeed an absolutely necessary key to growing and fulfilling the call of God on our lives.

It is evident that Peter and Paul became the most fruitful and influential Apostles of their time. They were bold, courageous, focused and they were clear and relentless about their assignments. They didn’t let anything or anyone stop them from making disciples... even to their death; both died as martyrs around the same time. (Though the Bible doesn’t tell us how these men died, tradition holds that Paul was beheaded and that Peter was crucified upside down because he felt unworthy to die in the same manner as Jesus.)

**WHY** did Peter, a fisherman, and Paul, a devoted Pharisee who persecuted The Church, walk away from their “normal” lives and live with such devotion and selflessness? **WHY** were they willing to pay any price to obey the Great Commission and fulfill their God-given calling? Could their **WHY** be what is missing in believers today?

**Overview of Paul’s Impact:**

* Besides Jesus, Paul is often considered to be the most important person in establishing Christianity
* Out of 27 books in the New Testament, 13 are attributed to Paul
* Paul opened the door wide for Gentiles (non-Jews) to receive the gospel and become disciples
* God worked unusual miracles through Paul
* Paul trained men and women as church leaders and sent them out
* Paul was a church-planting missionary to Europe and Asia Minor

**Overview of Peter’s Impact:**

\*Peter is often known for his weaknesses: correcting Jesus, denying Jesus, being reactive… But:

* Peter walked on water
* Peter stood up and preached on the day Pentecost and 3000 were added to the Church
* Peter was the one who showed the world that non-Jews could become disciples of Christ (Christians)
* Peter’s shadow healed people
* Peter healed the sick and raised the dead
* Peter wrote 2 books of the Bible
* Peter’s name is mentioned in the gospel over 120 times (runner up is John, mentioned about 20 times)
* Peter is the leading figure among the 12 disciples during the first half of the book of Acts

**Shaping Moments:**

**Paul’s Life:**

**Acts 9:1-5 (ESV): “*But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him.4And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?”  5And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting”.***

* Paul had a powerful encounter with Jesus that began his transformation. On that road, Paul knew that Jesus was the Son of God.

**Galatians 1:15-16 (NJKV): *15 “But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, 16to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood,”***

* Paul explains that when God **revealed** His Son to him, he did not immediately consult with people. He spent three years in Damascus growing in **revelation** of Jesus (from Father God)

**I Cor. 2:1-2 (NKJV): “*And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. 2For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified”***

* + Determined: I examined various things and concluded; made a conscious decision.
	+ Paul had revelation of who Jesus was – as the Son of God, the Anointed One, and the Savior of humanity.

**Shaping Moment in Peter’s Life:**

**Matthew 16:13-19 (NKJV) *13When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” 14So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 17Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.18And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earthwill be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”***

* Jesus asks His disciples first who do people say He is
* Then Jesus asks, “but who do YOU say that I am.”
* Peter responded by saying “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
* Jesus calls Simon “blessed” because that answer did not come from human/natural knowledge or reasoning (like what the crowds following Jesus were saying). That knowledge came because God showed Peter who Jesus was

I want to bring you back to my original **WHY** questions.

**WHY** did Peter and Paul walk away from their “normal” lives and live with such devotion and selflessness? **WHY** were they willing to pay any price to obey the Great Commission and fulfill their God-given calling? The simplicity of the **WHY** may surprise you…

Both Peter and Paul had **revelation of JESUS, of who He was.**

* Paul encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus and Jesus made Himself known to him. He said it plainly – I am Jesus, who you are persecuting
* Paul did not consult with “flesh and blood” but spent time alone with the Father, receiving revelation of Jesus
* Peter answered Jesus, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” Jesus said, “flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in Heaven”.

Peter and Paul had **revelation of Jesus. Revelation** – **not** knowledge based on the 5 senses; not head knowledge of who Jesus was based on observation, logic, tradition, opinions, studying or even teachings. **Revelation by Father God,** who opened the eyes of their spirit to see **JESUS** for who He truly was. They experienced the “deep” (in your spirit) knowing that Jesus was the Son of the Living God, the fulfillment of Messiah, the One that had been prophesied about through centuries….

The more revelation of Jesus, the more they **loved Him**, the more they yielded themselves to Him, the more they obeyed Him, the more the things of this world grew insignificant, the more they were willing to sacrifice, the greater joy they experienced, the more dependent on Him they became, the more authority they walked in, the more eternal-minded they were, the more relentless and unwaivering they were in completing their God-given assignment. They lost their own lives for Christ’s sake and found true life BECAUSE they had revelation of **JESUS!**

Could it be that this is what The Church is missing today? **Revelation of JESUS!** Has The Church – have we - developed our knowledge of Jesus through hearsay, tradition, studying, experiences, teachings, opinions, services… but lack Father God opening the eyes of our spirit so that we can see and know Jesus for who He truly is? Perhaps we have been focused on discovering and knowing our God-given purpose and gifts, more than discovering and knowing **JESUS.**

Could it be that the more revelation of **JESUS** we receive, the more we will **love Him**, the more we will trust Him, the more we will yield ourselves to Him, the more we will obey Him, the more the things of this world will grow insignificant, the more we will be willing to sacrifice, the greater joy we will experience, the more dependent on **JESUS** we will become, the more authority we will walk in, the more eternal-minded we will be, the more relentless and unwaivering we will become in completing our God-given assignment, the more disciples we will make…

Could it be that revelation of **JESUS** is powerful enough to transform individuals/us into the unstoppable church that Jesus said He would build and that the gates of Hell would not be able to keep from the territory that we are commissioned to possess?

Oh!!! How we need the Father to reveal Jesus to us!!!

**Prayer:**

Father, by the Holy Spirit, reveal **JESUS** to us. We don’t want information and knowledge about Him. We want to know **JESUS**. As you revealed Jesus to Paul and to Peter, we are crying out to you, reveal **JESUS** to us (to me)…

**God is speaking to us individually** so that our hearts increase in yearning for **JESUS,** for revelation of **JESUS.** Lets cry out often to the Father for the Holy Spirit to reveal **JESUS** to us… When we open our Bibles, lets cry out for revelation of **JESUS**. When we pray, lets cry out… Lets gather our families and cry out to know **JESUS**… God wants to reveal Jesus and He will respond to our cry! We will see **JESUS** more and more clearly for who He is and fulfilling God’s call to go make disciples everywhere will simply be the by-product of rivers of living water flowing out of our heart. (John 7:37-38)

**God is preparing us as a Church Body** for the greatest days of Kingdom impact through EVERY believer who wants to be a part…. Jerry mentioned that starting the week of May 8 (any day that week) we are asking that everyone start or join a group for a powerful Bible study focusing on The Church Jesus desires. As we look at the scriptures together and welcome the ministry of the Holy Spirit, we believe we will see more clearly The Church as Jesus sees it! (Do I give explanation of cards?)