



# **Peter**

## **The Shaping of a Saint**

**With Canon David Hughes**  
**Cefn Lea, 10<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

Dear Friends,

**Welcome to Cefn Lea! On behalf of the planning team, thanks so much for coming. We're so glad you're here, and our prayer is that we'll have a great weekend away together.**

A particular welcome to David Hughes, who will be speaking at the main adult sessions. And a big thank you to all those who have made this weekend possible. In particular do look out for the youth, children and crèche teams, and encourage them in all the really great work they are doing.

Our aim for this weekend is simple. We want to be encouraged and equipped as disciples, that we would hear the call of Christ as we seek to be part of seeing his kingdom come in Shrewsbury and beyond. Through time together, teaching and worship sessions, and some other great activities, I trust we can make the most of the next two days, being refreshed, renewed and equipped as the people of God together.

In the meantime if you've got a question or concern – practical, prayerful or other – then please do ask one of the staff team and we'll see how we can help. Grace and peace

Phil  
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*Phil Cansdale*  
*On behalf of all of the host team.*

# A few reminders and encouragements...

## People...

One of the greatest gifts of these weekends can be opportunities to get to know each other better, and to make new friends from other congregations. So please do be looking out for each other, particularly those who are new to Church Weekends away or new to life at Trinity Churches. To help each other do please remember to wear your name badges!

## Prayer....

Over the weekend there will be different opportunities to pray and be prayed for, both within main teaching sessions as well as in the morning and night prayer sessions. Do please also make use of the prayer room, which has different creative activities and “stations” with the help of which you can pray and reflect.

## Children and Youth...

We've got a bumper number of children and young people with us in 2016. "The Big Start" on Saturday and Sunday mornings reminds us of the joy of worshipping together. We want to do all that we can to enjoy the safety and security of Cefn Lea, but a reminder to parents that they are responsible for their children outside the times of the main sessions.

## Our Speaker – David Hughes

David is currently chaplain at St Mellitus College North-West in Liverpool. He served in four Dioceses over a period of 41 years of ordained ministry, beginning with a curacy at St John's Tunbridge Wells, then joining Robert Warren at St Thomas' Crookes, Vicar of Normanton from 81-90 and Rector of St James and Emmanuel, Didsbury from 1990 to 2009. Now retired (and enjoying it!) he is also an Hon Curate at All Saints, Marple and regularly visits Africa on Ministry Trips. He enjoys sport, reading, theatre, gardening and fun things.



David is married to Claire who is a Practice Nurse in Manchester. They have two children Naomi now married to Jonathan Butterfield, and Jonathan Hughes married to Amy who have four children Gracie and Joseph and identical twin girls Eden and Anna.

# Session One. *Friday 8.15pm—9pm.*

## Jesus calls Peter. John 1.40-42, Luke 5:1-11

Who is a saint? See 1 Corinthians 1 v 2.

An essential element in our faith journey is God's work in shaping our character.

John Herkus writes, *"The great task of any man or woman is not the job on earth we are doing for God, but the job in heaven He is doing in us."*

John Wooden the basketball coach of UCLA said to his team, *"Be more concerned with your character than your reputation. Your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are."*

Story of Loggers in Canada.

Christ uses the process of struggle and adversity to shape our character and equip us to fulfil God's purpose for our lives.

Jesus speaks a prophetic word over Peter on meeting him which gives us a clue as to his character, **"Your name is Simon son of John but you will be called Cephas, Peter - a rock."** John 1 v 42.

Peter will find his true identity and fulfil his destiny as he discovered the meaning of his life in relation to the story of Jesus.

Luke 5 v 1-11 records Peter's primary encounter with Jesus which gave him a template for the rest of his life and also for ours. The encounter includes three elements: -

### **1 Seeing = Revelation.**

Christianity begins with an act of seeing or revelation. Peter grows in his awareness of who Jesus is as Jesus enters his ordinary world of work. He first tests their friendship, *"lend me your boat,"* before testing their faith, *"launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."*

In what way does “the deep” indicate the heart of discipleship to you?

## **2 Knowing = Conversion.**

Knowing Jesus or another person involves risk. We fear that on close inspection God or others might reject us. Something big is happening in this miraculous catch of fish – Peter is confronted by the transcendence or otherness of Jesus. His response is fear, “**Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man.**”

Verse 8. Jesus’ response to Peter’s request to leave him is, “**Don’t be afraid: from now on you will catch men.**” A Saviour and a sinner belong together.

## **3. Mission = Going.**

Here is a surprise - at the point at which Peter faces his need of Christ, he discovers Christ’s need of him. “**From now on you will be catching men.**” Here is a personal invitation to become a partner in the big story of the Kingdom.

“Carpenter of Nazareth seeks joiners.”

Jesus invites you to find the meaning of your life in his big story.

Paul’s favourite description of the believer is ‘en Christo’ ‘in Christ.’

We often speak of ‘*inviting Christ into our lives*’ but really it is the other way round, ‘*Christ invites us to share in his life.*’ We aren’t alone on this journey - we are baptised into a new community - the church. 1 Peter 2 v 4-5.

## **Reflection**

1 Corinthians 1 v 30 what does God give to you?

Romans 12 v 1 - 2 what can you give to God in return?

# Session Two. Saturday 9.15am – 10.45am

## Peter's Journey to a Growing Faith. Matthew 14:13-33

Alan Scott who leads the Causeway Coast Vineyard Church in Coleraine says, "*If you know who you are and what you carry, nothing shall be impossible for you.*"

Jesus was secure in his identity and confident in the resources available to him to do the Father's will, so nothing was impossible. Peter was unsure of both and as a result he wobbled.

Jesus appointed twelve to be with him and share in his work. Mark 3 v 14-15. Note the importance of 'belonging.' We can do more together than we can do on our own.

Peter's faith grew in the company of Jesus and his fellows. He heard his Masters words and witnessed his works: -

- his mother in law is healed instantly of a fever. Mark 1 v 29-30;
- a paralytic is healed and forgiven. Mark 2 v 1-12;
- a man with a withered hand is restored on the sabbath. Mark 3 v1-6;
- a demoniac is restored to his right mind and becomes an evangelist to his community. Mark 5 v 1-20;
- a girl is restored to life and a woman is healed. Mark 5 v 21-34;
- 5,000 are miraculously fed. Mark 6 v 30-44;
- Jesus stills a storm. Mark 6 v 47-52.

After watching Jesus do the works of the Kingdom he gives Peter and his fellows instructions and sends them out with power and authority to do what they had seen him do. Luke 9 & 10. They had watched Jesus do it, he had watched them do it, and now they did it. With Peter and with us Christ uses the process of struggle to shape us and equip us to fulfil God's purpose for our lives.

*American definition of a Saint*

**"A Saint is some-one who lived long ago and has not been adequately researched."** That is not a saint, it is a hero! In our age with its cult of celebrity we put heroes on pedestals and then try to pull them down.

*Bishop Michael Marshall's definition -*

*"A saint is someone who has been hollowed out by suffering to allow God to work at least three miracles right through them:-*

- i) a breaking of their natural strength so that they can experience God's strength in their weakness,*
- ii) the contradiction of the resurrection, being cast down God raises them up,*
- iii) and an emptying so that they may be filled full of the Holy Spirit.*

These 3 stages are observable in Peter's life: -

i) **A breaking of his natural strength** - this always falls short... Peter sees who Jesus is but then begins to rebuke him when he speaks about dying on the Cross. Mark 8 v 27-30.

Later we see the same stubborn streak in the foot washing. John 13 v 1-10.

He also resists the warning of Jesus that he will deny him 3 times. Instead of praying he sleeps. Mark 14 v 26-31.

ii) **The contradiction of the resurrection.**

Peter is held in this time of failure through the intercession of Christ. Luke 22 v 31-34.

What can you draw from Christ's intercession for you? Hebrew 7 v 24.

The Spirit intercedes through us and for us. Romans 8 v 26.

iii) **Peter is emptied out so that he might be filled full.** John 20 & 21.





**DO YOU  
LOVE  
MINE?**

# Session Three. Saturday 11.15am – 12.45pm

## Peter's Fall – Driven or Called. Mark 14:27-42, 66-72

Every Christian is flawed but that doesn't disqualify us from being used by God. Our mistakes can be our greatest teachers and our weaknesses can become a place of encounter with God and hence transformation.

Richard Rohr says, *"There are at least two major tasks of life – the first is to build a strong 'container' and the second is to find the 'contents' the container is made to hold."*

Thomas Merton, the American monk warned *"that we may spend our whole life climbing the ladder of success, only to find that when we get to the top that our ladder is leaning against the wrong wall."* The container we build for our lives exists for the sake of reaching our deepest and fullest human life.

Death and resurrection or 'down and up' is the direction of a Yo-Yo and also the shape the life of Christ and every follower of Jesus. One of the best kept secrets of life is that ***'the way up is down.'*** Jesus often spoke of this, *"lose your life and you will find it,"* Matthew 10 v 39, or *"unless a seed falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone but if it dies it bears more fruit."* John 12 v 34. The hymn to Christ's Glory in Philippians 2 v 5-11; serves to illustrate this down and up movement in the life of Jesus.

Sooner or later we will encounter an event or a crisis that is bigger than us and launches us on to the second or deeper journey. Lady Julian of Norwich said, *"First there is the fall, and then we recover from the fall and both are the mercy of God."*

Let's trace these two journeys in Peter's life:

### **i) Peter's Journey of Ascent**

We have already observed Peter on his journey of ascent.

He hears Christ's teaching and witnesses his works and sees similar things occurring through his own hands. It

is all heady stuff and Jesus warns them not to rejoice in the power given to them but in their relationship with him. Peter is the first to confess Christ's true identity as the Son of God. You could rightly list a number of Peter's significant achievements but along with these he makes some real blunders.

## **ii) Peter's Journey of Descent.**

*"The world breaks everyone and afterwards some are strong at the broken places." Ernest Hemingway*

We glimpse Peter's pride and independence when he pooh-poohs the idea of a crucified Messiah Mark 8 v 33.

In John 13 he initially refuses to let Jesus wash his feet and then insists that he wash him all over.

On the Mount of Transfiguration where he saw Jesus talking with Moses and Elijah about his death God tells him to *"be quiet and listen to Jesus."* Mark 9 v 2-8.

The same streak of stubborn independence, bravado and pride lies at the heart of his biggest failure. His boastful assertion that when Jesus foretold his denial he would stand by Jesus though everyone fell away. Peter is held through his fall by the intercession of Christ. Luke 22 v 31. Jesus prays that his faith will not fail and speaks of his *'turning again and strengthening his brethren.'*

The 'you' this time is singular. He prays specifically for Simon because he is the key target. His failure would prove a great teacher for Peter but it would not remain a triumph for Satan.

God has a different perspective on weakness - in fact the Spirit's activity is found in the place of imperfection and vulnerability. 2 Corinthians 12 v 8-10.

*"Here is the paradox of Christianity, God's strength and human strength are not only not the same thing, often the one has to be knocked out of the way, for the other to shine through as God intends."*

Living with weakness is part of being human but it can open you up to the Grace of God. 2 Corinthian 4 v 7.

# Session Four. Sunday 9.15am – 10.45am

## Peter's Rising – Restoration & Recommissioning. John 21:1-17

Picture of the devil playing a believer for his soul in a game of Chess who when he thinks he has won he cries out 'Check Mate.' **THE KING STILL HAS ONE MORE MOVE !!!!!**

Peter must have felt the devil had won when he denied Christ but "The King still has one more move!!!" - the Resurrection. Defeat became a growth point for Peter.

This morning we come to the second of the three miracles that God works in Peter - "*the contradiction of resurrection, being cast down God raises him up.*" Peter's failure launched him on to a journey of descent but Jesus' prophetic warning contained a note of hope. See Luke 22:31.

Jesus gives Peter space to face his failure and to turn again. The Risen Jesus has a special message for Peter in Mark 16 v 7, and has a personal encounter with him in Luke 24 v 34. What do you imagine happened in that encounter?

In John 21 there is a further step in Peter's rehabilitation but this time it occurs amongst his fellow disciples. After a fruitless night of fishing an unrecognised figure on the shore gives them instructions and they land a boat sinking haul. The intuitive John cries out - "*it's the Lord!*" and Peter jumps into the water and heads for Jesus.

They find Jesus has prepared a meal for them and yet uses some of their fish. They eat in an awed and perhaps uncomfortable silence because there is an elephant in the room for Peter and the rest. What was Peter's place amongst the twelve? Peter needed an assurance that he could be useful to Jesus again but Jesus also needed an assurance from Peter.

Jesus gives Peter an opportunity to cover each denial with a realistic confession of love. Jesus needs to know whether Peter will love him as He is, not as he wanted Him to be. Was he willing to love and follow a Jesus who walked the way of the Cross? Consistently thus far he had resisted the Cross.

Jesus asks Peter 3 questions on a descending scale.

i) **“Simon son of John, do you love me more than these others do?”** Verse 15. Jesus uses the Greek word ‘agape’ meaning a love involving sacrifice. That had been his boast but now the old arrogance has gone and he uses the word ‘phileo’ meaning the love of a friend. **“Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”**

ii) Jesus asks the same question again using the word agape, **“Simon son of John, do you love me?”** Peter gives the same answer using the word for friend.

iii) The third time Jesus uses Peter’s word describing the love of a friend, **“Peter am I your friend?”** Now Peter appeals to the all knowingness of Jesus. **“Lord, you know everything, you know I am your friend.”**

With each descending confession comes a new commission on an ascending scale. Peter is commissioned to be a Shepherd to the whole flock -

**“Feed and tend my lambs”- care for new Christians,**  
**“Take care of my flock” – guide the more mature,**  
**“Feed my sheep” – care for the needs of the whole flock.**

So in the presence of the other disciples Jesus renews Peter’s call to be a people catcher, a message which is symbolised in the unbroken net which Peter pulled ashore. At his call Peter was told he would be a fisher of men and here in the vast catch is a symbol of the vast number of all the converts who would come to faith under Peter’s stewardship. Peter has been destabilised by failure and yet fallen into the mercy of God.

Often in our lives we don't understand what God is doing and why he is handling us in a particular way. Gerald May explains the dark night of the soul, that is those times when we are perplexed and confused and don't understand what God is doing, in this way, *“The only way for the most part of your life that God can work in the soul is that God has to do it in secret. If God would give you any sense of what he is doing or achieving, changing you or loving you, you would try to stop it or to engineer or take control of it. We are all such control freaks that God has to operate in darkness where you just feel it is another stupid day.”*

# Session Five. Sunday 11.15pm – 12.00pm

## Peter – Filled Full: Equipped for Service. Jn 20:19-23. Acts 2:1-13

Rabbi Mendel of Kotzk asked his disciples a question “**Where is God?**” Bemused they replied: “**Is it not written that God fills the heavens and the earth? God is surely everywhere.**” “**No,**” replied the good Rabbi, “**God is where we let him in.**”

Today we touch the third miracle that Bishop Michael Marshall said needed to be worked through a Saint, “**being filled full.**” We are focusing on the contents for the container.

In John 20 v 21-23, Jesus breathed on them and gave them a template for their future ministry of declaring forgiveness, ministering the Spirit and engaging in mission.

### **i The Gift of Mission:**

‘as the Father has sent me I send you’

At Pentecost Peter preaches the Jesus story with clarity and power and with signs following and there is an amazing response by 3,000 people who were added to the church.

### **ii The Gift of the Spirit.**

Here in a prophetic sign Jesus breathes on them the Spirit who will resource them for their Mission. The Hebrew ‘ruach’ and the Greek ‘pneuma’ both mean breath. When Jesus breathed on his disciples he said, ‘*Receive Holy Spirit.*’ This is an echo of Genesis 1 v 1; “*God breathed into man the breath of life.*”

Our first encounter with Jesus may be efficient in getting us started on the journey of discipleship but it is not sufficient for the whole journey. Ephesians 5 v 18; speaks of a continuum “*Go on being filled with the Holy Spirit.*”

### **iii Forgiveness**

Verse 23 “*If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven and if you do not forgive them they are not forgiven.*”

The Holy Spirit worked to break down prejudices that were a barrier to the Gospel. He prepares Peter through a dream to open the door of the Kingdom to the Gentile world. Acts

chapter 10. The Gentiles believe and receive the Spirit with the same manifestations the disciples had at Pentecost.

Peter's career led him from Galilee to Rome, from a regional beginning to the worldwide Mission commanded by Jesus. Simon the 'reed' becomes Peter the 'rock.' Later he would write letters to a group of aliens scattered throughout Asia Minor to prepare them for martyrdom. He was to die in the first wave of the Neronian persecution which was to continue for 250 years and yet the Church grew rapidly in that time.

Illustration of a glove. It is powerless on its own but if it surrenders to the hand it can do all that the hand can do. When we view the Holy Spirit as "He" rather than "it" our relationship with him changes. It changes from, *"I must get more of it (power) so that I can use it,"* to *"He must have more of me so that He can use me."*

The New Testament describes the relationship of the believer to Jesus and the Holy Spirit by two different verbs. The verb **believe** is related to Jesus while the verb **receive** describes our relationship to the Holy Spirit.

### **How can we be filled with the Holy Spirit?**

**1 Repent** - ask God to forgive anything in your life you know to be wrong and to be willing to turn from it with his help.

**2 Believe** the promise of Jesus. John 4 v 13.

**3 Receive** the Spirit. Ezekiel 47 speaks of the Spirit flowing from the altar - a place of sacrifice. The prophet follows the man with the rod i.e. Jesus and goes from ankle deep to waist deep so that he can swim. Fish swarm in the water and on the banks of the River.

Story of some marooned sailors off the coast of Brazil. When they were picked up after three days by a passing ship the Captain asked why they were so thirsty? They replied we have had no water. He replied, *"No water. You were surrounded by fresh water."*

*The River Amazon pushes its water out into the ocean for two hundred miles and you were in the middle of that limitless supply of fresh water."* You had only to reach over the side of your raft for fresh water.

# Timetable for the Weekend

## Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June

5.00pm	Guests begin to arrive
5.30pm	Family picnic tea
7.00-8.00pm	Buffet tea
8.15-9.00pm	<b>Session One</b> , incl groups for children & young people
9.00pm	Evening Tea / Coffee, and time to relax together
10.00pm	<b>Night Prayer</b> with a more creative feel (hosted by Charles Ruxton)

## Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June

7.30am	<b>Morning Prayer</b> with a more informal feel (hosted by Gordon Lamb)
8.00am	Breakfast
9.15-10.45am	<b>Session Two</b> , incl groups for children & young people
10.45am	Tea/ Coffee
11.15am	<b>Session Three</b> , incl groups for children & young people
1.00pm	Lunch
2.15-3.45pm	Choice of a led walk, various sports or indoor board games, or a chance to sit down and chat...
2.45pm	"Meet the Vicar"
3.45pm	Tea/Coffee
4.30-5.30pm	Optional <b>workshops</b> and seminars
6.00pm	Evening Meal
7.15pm	EuroTrin evening (hosted by the Willis family)
9.00pm	2 <sup>nd</sup> Half of England vs Russia Euro 2016 Game
10.00pm	<b>Night Prayer</b> with a more reflective feel (hosted by Mike & Judith Haddaway)

## Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June

7.30am	<b>Morning Prayer</b> with a more traditional feel (hosted by Valerie Pitt)
8.00am	Breakfast
9.15am	<b>Session Four</b> , incl groups for children & young people
10.45am	Tea/ Coffee
11.15am	<b>Session Five</b> , incl groups for children & young people
12.00pm	Concluding <b>All-age celebration</b> , communion and commissioning
1.00pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Clear up, and depart

*Please see sheets in the welcome area for any changes and amendments.*