

1 Youth Ministry

Grades 7-12

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Bible Verse

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

9 Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men[a] 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Bible Study

Come check it out our midweek youth/adult Bible study every Wednesday night at LWA starting at 7:00pm.

Living Word Ahwatukee 1 Youth Update for the week of 3/10/19



Greetings! For our March 10 lesson, we talked about what we can learn from Peter, the "rock".

Peter was one of the first Disciples that Jesus called to follow Him. He was a very passionate follower and a strong leader. Peter tended to set himself apart from the other Disciples and always strives to be the best. While sometimes a little misdirected, these qualities were exactly what Jesus needed him to be just as **WE** are exactly who Jesus needs us to be.

We talked about Peter's life with Jesus and we found many instances where we could learn about our own relationship with Jesus through Peter.

We said that Peter's faith was so strong that he was even able to walk on water with Jesus (**Matthew 14:28-31**) only to be distracted by the storm filling him with fear and causing him to sink.

We said that this teaches us about keeping our faith strong and our focus on Jesus, especially in troubled times.

In the same way, when we keep our focus on Jesus, we can do things that normally seem to be impossible. But, when we allow ourselves to be distracted by the troubles of the world, we get distracted and our faith is quickly replaced by fear.

We also saw that even when we do mess up or get distracted by the troubles of the world, Jesus is always right there to save us when we call out to Him.

We also discussed Peter's time to really shine in **Matthew 16:13-18** when he identified Jesus as "The Messiah, the Son of the living God". Peter's star status was short lived though as he went from being Jesus' #1 Disciple to Jesus calling him Satan and being a stumbling block instead of being a "rock"

Community Service

The LWA Youth, along with several adult volunteers provide an ongoing monthly community service project with the Department of Child Services (DCS).

On the 3rd Saturday of each month we meet at 10:00am at the DCS offices located at 3925 East Broadway, Phoenix, AZ.

We typically spend about an hour or so cleaning the family visitation rooms and the toys that the children play with while they are there.

Please join us and be a part of this blessing we bring to these children, to their families and to the tireless workers at DCS.

Foster Care Teens Personal Care Items

1 Youth is continuing to collect "Personal Care Items" for the teens in foster care throughout the year. Items for both male and female teens are being collected in the two bins just outside our youth room. These items will be sorted into personal bags and given to DCS to be distributed to teens who may not even have their own tooth brush or comb.

Whenever you're out shopping for your own personal care items such as soap, deodorant, tooth paste, feminine hygiene items or when you see the "travel size" shampoo, mouthwash, etc., pick up a few extra items

in **Matthew 16:21-23**.

We learned that while Peter had strong faith and good intentions, he still tended to put the world's ways and his own feelings of what is right ahead of God's way.

We often do the same thing. Rather than following our faith in God's way, we sometimes think that we know better. Jesus shows that even what seems to be the best Earthly intentions can sometimes still go against the will of God.

We also talked about one of Peter's biggest weaknesses (his need to compare himself to others and to be better than others) in **Matthew 26** when he pledged his undying loyalty to Jesus, promising to never abandon Him even when the others do.

We then looked at what happened when Peter's faith was again replaced by fear and he denied even knowing Jesus, just as Jesus said he would.

Peter's issue was that he had his identity in himself and in being better than others. This not only allowed fear of losing his own life replace his faith, but once he realized what he had done, it devastated him and he completely fell apart emotionally.

He felt that he had failed Jesus and was so distraught and depressed that he actually believed he was **"not worthy"**. He totally gave up on everything and went back to what he knew, back to his comfort zone, he went back to fishing.

We said that sometimes the very same thing can happen to us. We do our very best to follow Jesus and then something happens that causes us to **"abandon"** Jesus. We may feel that we've failed Jesus or feel that we're no longer worthy of God's love, and we just give up on God and go back to our comfort zone. We go back to the world's ways.

Fortunately, God loves us unconditionally no matter what we do. Even if we give up on Him, He never gives up on us and He is always there waiting to welcome us back to Him.

We saw something really important in **John 21:15-17** where Jesus not only welcomed Peter back with absolutely no condemnation, He told Peter to **"Feed my sheep"**. This showed us that Peter's actions did not change God's plan for him. Peter was still "the rock" and his faith the foundation of the Church.

Sometimes we find ourselves in Peter's situation and think that God can't possibly use us but no matter what we do, God always loves us and can always use us for His plan for us.

and drop them in the bins.

Help share God's love by letting these teens know that somebody really does care about them.

One more important thing we saw in **John 21:20-22** is that when we compare ourselves to others, it's easy to get distracted or give up. Peter never really failed Jesus, Peter actually failed himself because he was comparing himself to the others.

When Peter's focus started drifting again from what Jesus had called him to do by asking, "**what about him?**" (referring to John), Jesus' response was very plainly, "what is that to you? You must follow me."

We said that there will always be somebody better, faster, stronger, smarter, or even more faithful than ourselves, but it doesn't matter. Jesus doesn't compare us to others and we're not called to be better than everyone else. Jesus just needs for us to follow Him and do what **WE** are called to do according to God's plan for **US**.

Jesus is telling us to stop worrying about what the world is telling us, what everyone else is doing, how everyone else is following, what everyone else is called to do. Jesus tells us, "**What is it to you? You must follow me.**"

Peter messed up quite a bit, he had completely given up and even abandoned Jesus but Jesus never gave up on Peter. Jesus was able to restore Peter to go do the extraordinary things that God had planned for him from the beginning.

No matter what we do to lose our focus, God never gives up on us. No matter how "**unworthy**" we may feel, God never stops loving us. No matter how "**useless**" we may feel, God has an amazing plan for us to do extraordinary things.

Don't forget your chance to win a



If you missed the announcement, March is our

1 Youth Serving Others Spring Challenge.

As you already know, part of our continuing community service is collecting Personal Care items for the thousands of Teens in the Foster Care System.

This month, we're stepping it up by offering a challenge to all 1 Youth students. The student who brings in the most items during the month of March will receive a \$25 Amazon gift card!

The items must be checked in by a Youth leader and placed in a

special bin. A running tally for each student will be shown on the board near the bin so you can track your progress.

Acceptable items are listed in the sidebar of this email.

We will also provide note-cards in the Youth Room for those who would like to send a short uplifting note of encouragement with the items when they are delivered (no personal information allowed).

Help Share God's love and let our Foster Care Teens know that somebody really does care about them.

Bible verses referenced in this lesson: John 6:60-71, John 6:67-69, Matthew 17:1-13, Luke 8:49-56, Matthew 26:36-46, Matthew 14:28-31, Matthew 18:21-22, Matthew 16:13-18, Matthew 16:21-23, Matthew 26:34, John 18:15-18, John 18:25-27, John 21:15-17, John 21:20-22

Let us know if you have any questions.

Have a blessed Week,

Chris & Michelle Miller
1 Youth Ministry