

Conversation Starters

- How do you start your day off each morning?
- What motivates you when you wake up?

Discuss

As we look at the life of Peter, we notice a big moment and win in his walk with Jesus was the declaration of who Jesus was – the long awaited Messiah promised by God in the Old Testament of the Bible. And this is the questions that we all must answer before we can even begin the journey toward a rock solid faith.

- ❖ *Then he [Jesus] asked them, “But who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:15-16 NLT)*

Jesus then went on to declare that it was on this rock, the foundation of having a faith in Christ, that he would build his church.

- Have you made your own decision about who Jesus is and what he could mean for your life?
- If you have, do you reflect on how it has changed you or should change you?

Peter later learned that following Jesus is not going to be easy. And it won’t be for any of us either. Peter had failed to understand fully what following Christ would look like, so Jesus went on to explain:

- ❖ *Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.” (Matthew 16:24-25 NLT)*

We make a daily decision to give up any selfish ambition or desires and, instead, choose to follow Christ and his ways. This is not meant to be legalistic, but a way to deeper relationship with God.

- Like Peter, have you had a false view of what following Christ would be like?
- What do you think led to that view, and how has it changed?
- Is there anything in particular that is a challenge to you now in your walk with Christ?
- What steps have you or can you take today to reflect a decision to follow Christ?

Next Steps

Let yourself be challenged and transformed by the living God. Here are some helpful ways to get started:

- **Remove & Replace.** Try to identify and replace any old habits with new habits.
- **Surrender Spontaneously.** Make a small unexpected decision to go out of your way to do something for someone else.
- **Sacrifice Strategically.** Put yourself into situations that provide opportunity for growth.
- **Iron Sharpening Iron.** Reach out to churchoffice@mecklenburg.org for other suggestions.

Pray

God, it is faith in Jesus that gives us the foundation of a relationship with you. Thank you him and for the ways that you challenge us to be more than we are and your help along the way. You are faithful and good to provide us with your Spirit as our guide. As we search our lives to remove any old habits that prevent us from growing in our relationship with you, give us wisdom to choose what is right and replace those old habits with new ones. And give us the strength to persevere when challenges seem more than we can bear.