

## **Food for Thought**

For the week of August 17, 2014

*(Questions and Scriptures for further personal study)*

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1. Chris talked about making decisions based on eternity more than finances. The Apostle Paul was consistently able to make decisions based on eternity despite facing many challenges and difficulties. What do you see in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 that helps explain how he was able to consistently choose an eternal perspective in the face of those difficulties?

What is most challenging to you about developing the long-term perspective found in this passage?

2. We heard this weekend how James returns to the subject of how we treat one another and especially how we talk to one another. The Apostle Peter is a great case study on the use and abuse of words. Through his words he benefited many and, at other times, did some serious damage to himself and others. Read the following passages and make a note of any lessons you can learn from Peter's successes, failures and his teachings about our speech.

Matthew 16:13-23

Matthew 26:69-75

Acts 2:36-41

1 Peter 3:8-18

How did Peter's awareness of the impact of his words change over time?

What hope does Peter's awareness give you?

What do you think it takes to become truly aware of the impact of our words?

Jesus exposed Peter's rough edges, restored him when he blew it and worked through him in many ways. When it comes to your speech and communication, are you aware of any rough edges or areas where you need to make some changes?

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### **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**

<sup>16</sup> Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. <sup>17</sup> For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. <sup>18</sup> So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. [NIV]

What is most challenging to you about developing the long-term perspective found in this passage?

2. We heard this weekend how James returns to the subject of how we treat one another and especially how we talk to one another. The Apostle Peter is a great case study on the use and abuse of words. Through his words he benefited many and, at other times, did some serious damage to himself and others. Read the following passages and make a note of any lessons you can learn from Peter's successes, failures and his teachings about our speech.

### **Matthew 16:13-23**

Peter Declares That Jesus Is the Messiah

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

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

17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 20 Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Jesus Predicts His Death

21 From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"

23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns." [NIV]

### **Matthew 26:69-75**

Peter Disowns Jesus

69 Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. "You also were with Jesus of Galilee," she said.

70 But he denied it before them all. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said.  
71 Then he went out to the gateway, where another servant girl saw him and said to the people there, "This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth."  
72 He denied it again, with an oath: "I don't know the man!"  
73 After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, "Surely you are one of them; your accent gives you away."  
74 Then he began to call down curses, and he swore to them, "I don't know the man!"  
Immediately a rooster crowed.  
75 Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly. [NIV]

#### **Acts 2:36-41**

36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."  
37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"  
38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."  
40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." 41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. [NIV]

#### **1 Peter 3:8-18**

Suffering for Doing Good

8 Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. 9 Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. 10 For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep their tongue from evil and their lips from deceitful speech. 11 They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it. 12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."  
13 Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? 14 But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened." 15 But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. 17 For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. 18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. [NIV]

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