



Last week, we began our study in 1 Peter called “Simon Says.” Let’s review what Simon said last week with another round of “Simon Says”. Ready? Here we go.

- “God knew you and chose you long ago.”
 - (Simon says)
- “The reward for trusting Him will be the salvation of your souls.”
 - (Simon says)
- “If you can avoid suffering, you should.”
 - (Simon didn’t say)
- “These trials will show that your faith is genuine.”
 - (Simon says)
- “When you’re suffering, it’s important to take care of yourself.”
 - (Simon didn’t say)
- “Prepare your minds for action and practice self-control”
 - (Simon says)
- “Put ALL your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world.”
 - (Simon says)
- “Try to be holy because God is holy.”
 - (Simon didn’t say)
- “You must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy.”
 - (Simon says)
- “Love each other deeply with all your hearts.”
 - (Simon says)

Remember, this was Simon Peter’s letter to the churches scattered throughout modern-day Turkey. These churches were suffering at the hands of the Romans and the Jews. They were being persecuted because of their faith so that their businesses were suffering, their social lives were limited, and their futures here on Earth were up in the air.

So, Peter reminded them that they had been chosen by God long ago, their eternal future was 100% secure, and they had a mission to live holy lives on Earth. But he didn’t stop there. Today, we’re going to see what else Simon Says over the next few weeks.

But first, let’s have a little fun. I’m going to give you a description of several famous people. Based on that description, raise your hand, and tell me who you think it is.

[**Teacher Note:** I tried to pick a variety of famous people from pop culture and history. Then I added a few people from church and youth group who they all know. Choose 6-8 different people.]

Famous Person 1: This person was a 1980’s recording artist who was known as “the king of pop.” – Michael Jackson

Famous person 2: This person is a famous actress best known for playing the role of “Black Widow” in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. – Scarlett Johansson

Famous person 3: This person is, without a doubt, the greatest basketball player of all time. – Michael Jordan

Famous person 4: This person was the queen of England for over 70 years. – Queen Elizabeth II

Famous person 5: $E=MC^2$ – Albert Einstein

Famous person 6: This person refused to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama. – Rosa Parks

Local person 2: This person is lucky enough to be the youth minister of the greatest youth group in the world. – JD

On a scale of 1-10, how hard was that game? Not that difficult. Because all those people are well-known for who they were and what they did.

When I say, “Michael Jackson” you instantly think, “King of Pop.” When I say, “Rosa Parks” you instantly think, “Bus boycott.”

Their identities were built around those things. I’m sure there was much more to those people. If you were to ask their families who they were, they might tell you much more.

Has anyone heard of Steve Bartman? Does anyone know what he is most famous for?

Steve Bartman was a life-long Chicago Cubs fan. Years ago, he had an opportunity to go to game six of the National League Championship Series when the Chicago Cubs were playing the Florida Marlins. The Cubs were up 3-0 in the top of the 8th inning, and they were up 3-2 in the series. They had dominated the Marlins the entire game.

For those of you who don't know baseball, that means that the Cubs were winning by quite a lot near the end of the game. And if they won that game, they would go on to the World Series.

Then something crazy happened. Marlins batter, Luis Castillo, hit a fly ball into foul territory in left field. Cubs outfielder, Moises Alou, tried to make a leaping catch right at the wall. It would have been a tough catch, but he was in position, and it looked like he was going to make it easily.

However, just before the ball landed in Alou's glove, Steve Bartman reached out and caught the ball with his bare hands, making it a foul ball and preventing Alou from getting the out.

It was a really bad decision on Bartman's part. And it was just the start of the Cubs falling apart. They ended up making mistake after mistake the rest of the game. The Marlins scored 8 runs in that inning and they won the game. The Marlins went on to win game seven and go to the World Series.

Bartman, on the other hand, received death threats from Chicagoans and became the face of what the Chicago Cubs fans considered to be a curse that prevented them from winning a World Series for over 100 years.

I don't know anything else about Steve Bartman. He could be a great guy. But Steve Bartman joined Michael Jackson, Scarlett Johansson, Michael Jordan, Queen Elizabeth, Benjamin Franklin, and Rosa Parks in that they are all known for something. Their entire identities were wrapped up in one thing.

This leads to the question, “Who are you?” What do you want to be known for? How does that compare to what you are known for?

Today, we’re going to look at parts of 1 Peter 2-3. I want you to see that who you are matters. And your actions determine who people say you are.

1 Peter 2:9 (NLT)

But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God’s very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

Peter wrote that we are God’s royal priests and we are part of a holy nation that belongs to God. We are royal. This means we are very important people, and we have a big responsibility. We are priests. This means we represent God to people, and we represent people to God. We do God’s work on Earth.

We are a holy nation. This reminds us that we are united. Together, we have an identity that is greater than ourselves. What you do is a big deal to me because you and I are connected. And what I do is a big deal to you for the same reason.

And we are God’s very own possession. We belong to Him. We are people who do what He says and He takes care of us. That is the relationship we have with God. If He says, “Jump” we jump.

THIS is the main identity, as Christians. No other identity should matter nearly as much as this. We are royal priests, part of a holy nation that belongs to God. The short version of this is to say, “We are Christians.” And this should identify us above any other marker.

[Edit this to fit who you are.] I am a husband. I am a father. I am a youth minister. I am a football fan. I am a Jeep owner. But none of those things matter to me nearly as much as the fact that I am a royal priest, part of God’s holy nation.

Who you are matters. Who you are determines what you do. And so, once Peter identified who we are, as Christians, he then went on to explain what that means for us. What actions are we supposed to take, as a royal priests?

1 Peter 2:11-12 (NLT)



1 Peter 5:8-9 (NLT)

Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are.

What are some ways you've recognized Satan attacking in your life or the lives of those around you?

What are some ways you've been able to stand firm against Satan's attacks?

1 Peter 5:6 (NLT)

So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor.

How hard is it to wait for “the right time” for God to get you through difficult things?

Can you think of a time from your life where God's timing was perfect?

1 Peter 5:7 (NLT)

Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.

What worries and cares do you have a hard time surrendering to God?

How do we give them to God? What does that look like?

Have you ever successfully surrendered a worry or care to God? Share.

What are some lessons you will take away from this series, Simon Says?

What can we do right now to help you live the life Peter tells us to live for God?

Close in prayer.

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