

STUDENT SERMON STUDY GUIDE — April 26, 2026

Powerful, Not Pitiful — Cast Your Care and Walk by Faith

Based on the message by Blake Bradley

OVERVIEW

In this message, Blake Bradley confronts a reality most people live in but rarely recognize: many believers are carrying things God never asked them to carry.

Anxiety, pressure, fear, distraction, and the need to control outcomes can quietly shape how you think, respond, and live. Instead of walking in faith, it's easy to slip into self-reliance, overthinking, and spiritual passivity.

1 Peter 5 doesn't suggest a better coping strategy—it gives a command: **cast your care, stay sober-minded, and resist the enemy.**

Through Peter's life, we see the full picture:

- He stepped out in faith
- He lost focus and sank
- He denied Jesus under pressure
- He was restored and empowered

The same person who failed publicly was later filled with the Spirit and boldly proclaimed the gospel.

This isn't just about Peter.
It's about you.

You are not called to live reactive, anxious, or defeated.
You are called to live aware, grounded, and powerful in Christ.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read → Respond → Reflect

- Open your Bible
- Let Scripture answer the questions
- Be honest—don't default to "right answers"

This is not about knowing more.
This is about confronting how you're actually living.

SECTION 1 — YOU'RE NOT MEANT TO CARRY IT

Focus

Anxiety often reveals where you're relying on yourself instead of God.

READ

1 Peter 5:6–7

RESPOND

1. What does it actually mean to “cast” your anxiety, not just manage it?
2. Why is humility connected to releasing anxiety in verse 6?
3. How does trying to control everything expose pride or self-reliance?
4. What are you practically doing when you sit in worry and overthinking?
5. If God truly cares for you, why is it hard to trust Him with real situations?

REFLECT

- What am I currently holding onto that I know I should release?
 - Do I pray about things—or do I replay them in my mind?
 - What would it look like to actually trust God instead of controlling outcomes?
-

SECTION 2 — YOU'RE IN A REAL FIGHT

Focus

If you're not alert spiritually, you will be influenced without realizing it.

READ

1 Peter 5:8–9, John 10:10

RESPOND

1. What does being “sober-minded” look like in your actual daily life?
2. Why does Scripture say the enemy “prowls”—what does that imply?
3. Where do you see the enemy stealing, killing, or destroying in subtle ways?
4. What does it practically look like to resist instead of entertain wrong thoughts?
5. How do distraction and comfort make you more vulnerable spiritually?

REFLECT

- Where am I most distracted right now?
 - What do I turn to instead of dealing with what's actually going on?
 - Am I resisting the enemy—or making room for him?
-

SECTION 3 — WHERE YOU LOOK DETERMINES HOW YOU LIVE

Focus

Your focus will either build your faith or feed your fear.

READ

Matthew 14:22–33

RESPOND

1. Why did Peter step out of the boat—and what made that risky?
2. What changed the moment he noticed the wind and waves?
3. How does this connect to how you handle pressure or stress?
4. What does it mean that “we become what we behold”?
5. Where is Jesus calling you to step out, even if it's uncomfortable?

REFLECT

- What am I focusing on more—Jesus or my circumstances?
 - Where have I stepped out... and then started second-guessing?
 - What would it look like to stay locked in on Jesus this week?
-

SECTION 4 — FAILURE DOESN'T DISQUALIFY YOU

Focus

Your worst moment doesn't define you—your response to it does.

READ

Luke 22:54–62, John 21:15–17

RESPOND

1. Why did Peter deny Jesus even after boldly following Him?

2. What does that reveal about pressure, fear, and identity?
3. Why does Jesus restore Peter in such a personal, repeated way?
4. What does this show about how God handles your failure?
5. Why do people stay stuck in shame even after God offers restoration?

REFLECT

- Where have I compromised or stayed silent when it mattered?
 - Do I live more aware of my failure—or God’s grace?
 - What would it look like to actually move forward instead of staying stuck?
-

SECTION 5 — YOU WERE MADE TO BE POWERFUL

Focus

You don’t become powerful by trying harder—you live powerful by walking in truth.

READ

Acts 2:1–4, 2 Corinthians 10:4–5

RESPOND

1. What do you notice about Peter before and after the Holy Spirit?
2. What changed in his boldness—and why does that matter?
3. What does it mean to take your thoughts captive?
4. What are “imagination” or lies that need to be torn down?
5. How does your identity in Christ change how you respond to fear and pressure?

REFLECT

- Am I living more reactive or intentional?
 - What lies have I believed long enough that they feel normal?
 - What truth do I need to start agreeing with this week?
-

FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT

Most people don’t realize how much their life is being shaped by what they carry, what they focus on, and what they tolerate. God never called you to carry anxiety, live distracted, or be controlled by fear. He called you to cast your care, stay alert, and walk in truth. Peter’s life proves something important: you can fail, lose focus, and even fall under pressure, and still be restored, strengthened, and used by God. The question isn’t what you say you believe, it’s what your life actually reflects. You are not meant to be pitiful, you are made to be powerful. So cast your care, fix your focus, resist what’s trying to pull you down, and walk by faith.