

Peter, A Transformation Completed

August 9, 2026

INTRODUCTION: TWO DIFFERENT PETERS

- Last week we looked at how Jesus was transforming Peter

A transformation in Acts 10:30 (NIV84)

³⁰ Cornelius answered: "Four days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me

- ✓ process
- ✓ From the time he first met Jesus
- ✓ Until the time of Jesus' resurrection
- The lessons he was learning while walking with Jesus
- Though these lessons hadn't firmly taken root
 - ✓ They became the foundation of the person he was to become
- This morning, we will see the actual transformation of Peter

1. PETER DISCOVERED THAT GOD'S POWER IS GREATER THAN HIS FEAR

When Peter was afraid:

- Last week we **learned** how Peter failed miserably
 - when Jesus was on trial
- Today we will see that: **FAILURE IS NOT THE END**
- And that **JESUS RESTORES BROKEN PEOPLE**

Luke 22:54–60

"Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance. But when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, 'This man was with him.' But he denied it. 'Woman, I don't know him,' he said. A little later someone else saw him and said, 'You also are one of them.' 'Man, I am not!' Peter replied. About an hour later another asserted, 'Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean.' Peter replied, 'Man, I don't know what you're talking about!' Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. challenged by the servant girl and the guards, he said, 'I don't know the man.'"

- a. When Peter had the opportunity to **stand up** for Jesus
 - i. He was **familiar** with Jesus' teaching
 - 1) about standing up for him

Luke 9:26

“If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.”

b. It’s **no wonder why** - after he said this - and the rooster crowed

- 1) He went out and wept bitterly
- 2) He was ashamed
- 3) He failed miserably

c. His fear was far greater than his **faith**

- 1) God will put us in challenging situations
 - i. That is how we can measure how **strong is our faith**
 - ii. Our true faith is given opportunity to shine
- 2) God **ALLOWS** these challenging situations **from time-to-time**
- 3) Peter is “*oh so familiar*” with this concept
- 4) So, he writes later in his life:

1 Peter 1:6–7

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

- 5) Fortunately, this is **not the end of the story**
 - i. Shortly afterwards he was given another opportunity
 - ii. To confidently take a public stand for Jesus
 - iii. 50 days later - the opportunity arose

Acts 2:1-15

“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed, they asked: “Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?” Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.”

- a. At Pentecost, Peter stood before **thousands**.
- b. The frightened disciple was now a bold preacher.
- c. He preached Jesus Christ.
 - i. About 3,000 people responded.
- d. **God didn't remove Peter's personality.**
 - i. He transformed Peter's purpose.
 - ii. God took Peter's natural boldness (which he had)

Luke 22:31–33

“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” But he replied, “Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death.”

- iii. and **redirected** it.

ILLUSTRATION

The Broken Pencil — God Can Still Use What's Broken

A young boy was working on his homework when his pencil broke. Frustrated, he threw it on the table and said, “It's no good anymore.”

His father picked it up and said, “Why don't you sharpen it?”

The boy replied, “But it's broken.”

His father smiled and said, “The pencil may be shorter than it was, but it can still write.”

The father put the pencil in the sharpener. A few seconds later, he handed it back to his son.

The pencil was shorter. It had been damaged. But it still worked.

The boy went back to his homework.

CONNECTION TO PETER

- a. Peter had a moment when he felt like that broken pencil.
- b. He had promised Jesus, he would **never** deny Him.
 - i. Then he denied Him three times.
- c. Peter must have **wondered whether**
 - i. he was still useful to Jesus.
- d. **BUT JESUS DIDN'T THROW PETER AWAY.**
- e. **JESUS RESTORED HIM.**
- f. The broken Peter
 - i. is now standing

- ii. before thousands
- iii. preaching Jesus Christ.

APPLICATION

- Sometimes we look at our failures and think:
 - “**God can't use me anymore.**”
- But God **doesn't** require a **perfect instrument**.
- He can use a person
 - who has been broken,
 - humbled,
 - restored,
 - and surrendered.
- **Great line:**

*“Your brokenness may have changed you,
but it doesn't have to disqualify you
from being used by God.”*

2. PETER LEARNED TRUE FAITH IS TO GIVE JESUS THE CREDIT

Acts 3:11–16

“While the beggar held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon’s Colonnade. When Peter saw this, he said to them: “Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.”

- a. After the healing of the lame man,
 - i. Peter refused to **accept the glory**.
- b. He pointed the crowd toward Jesus.
- c. **Peter understood:**
 - i. “*This isn't about me.*”
 - ii. “*Why are you looking at us?*”
 - iii. The power **wasn't** Peter.

- iv. The power was Jesus.

PAUL ALSO RECOGNIZED THIS

Acts 14:8–15

“In Lystra there sat a man crippled in his feet, who was lame from birth and had never walked. He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed and called out, “Stand up on your feet!” At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.

When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, “The gods have come down to us in human form!” Barnabas, they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker. The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to them. But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting: “Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them.”

ILLUSTRATION

The Flashlight — Peter Wasn't the Power Source

Imagine taking a flashlight and turning it on.

The light comes on, but nobody would say:

“That flashlight created electricity.”

The flashlight didn't create the power.

It simply received power from its batteries and allowed that power to produce light.

Take the batteries out, and the flashlight can be the most expensive flashlight in the world—but it won't produce any light.

PETER WAS LIKE THAT FLASHLIGHT.

- a. Peter wasn't the source of the power.
- b. **In Acts 2**, the Holy Spirit came upon Peter.
- c. **In Acts 3**, Peter healed a lame man in the name of Jesus.
- d. And **when people started** looking at Peter
 - i. as though he had performed the miracle himself,
 - ii. Peter immediately pointed them toward Jesus.

One of the greatest steps of **spiritual maturity**.

- When God answers your prayer:
 - **Give Him the glory.**
- When God uses your testimony:
 - **Give Him the glory.**

- When God gives you success:
 - **Give Him the glory.**

- **Great line:**
*“We are the instrument;
 God is the power.”*

JESUS IS THE SOURCE.

3. PETER: WHEN FAITH BECOMES STRONGER THAN FEAR

- a. **Peter’s life before the cross – was controlled by fear**
 - i. **Even though** Peter loved Jesus.
 - b. when Jesus was arrested - Peter became afraid.

Matthew 26:55–56

“At that time Jesus said to the crowd, “Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.”

- c. Peter ran off
 - i. Deserted Jesus
- d. **Afraid** of what would happen to him if arrested
- e. Same fate of Jesus –
 - i. who had **already told** the disciples
 - ii. that he would be beaten,
 - iii. abused
 - iv. and put to death

We can have good intentions and still be afraid.

- 1) Fear says:
 - i. **“What will people think?”**
- 2) Faith says:
 - i. **“What does God want?”**
- 3) Fear says:
 - i. **“I can’t.”**
- 4) Faith says:
 - i. **“God can.”**

PETER’S COURAGE BECOMES STRONGER THAN HIS FEARS

Acts 4:8–20

“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: “Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. He is “ ‘the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.’ Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say.

So, they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. “What are we going to do with these men?” they asked. “Everybody living in Jerusalem knows they have done an outstanding miracle, and we cannot deny it. But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn these men to speak no longer to anyone in this name.” Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, “Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

- a. Peter learned that **courage**
 - i. **doesn't** come from believing in yourself—
 - ii. it comes from believing in God.
- b. The authorities **commanded** Peter to stop preaching.
Peter answered:
“We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”
- c. Peter could have chosen safety.
 - i. Instead, he chose faithfulness.
- d. **Faith doesn't always make the situation easier.**
 - i. Sometimes faith makes us willing
 - ii. to face the difficult situation.

4. PETER LEARNED TO PUT GOD ABOVE PEOPLE

Acts 5:27-29

“Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,” he said. “Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man’s blood.” Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than men!”

- a. Peter declared:
“We must obey God rather than human beings!”
- b. Peter had finally learned something

- i. he **had struggled** with earlier in his life:
- c. **God's opinion matters more than people's opinions.**
 - i. There will always be people - who don't understand your faith.
 - ii. There will always be people - who disagree.
 - iii. There will always be pressure - to remain silent.
- d. But Peter was aware what Jesus said to his disciples:

Matthew 10:37

“Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.”

- i. Certainly, **if this applied to family**
- ii. It applies to anyone outside of the family
- iii. We are to obey God
 - 1. First
 - 2. Foremost

5. PETER LEARNED THAT GOD'S PURPOSE IS GREATER THAN HE COULD IMAGINE

Acts 10:25–36

“As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. But Peter made him get up. ‘Stand up,’ he said, ‘I am only a man myself.’ Talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. He said to them: ‘You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean. So, when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?’ Cornelius answered: ‘Three days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me and said, ‘Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor. Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.’ So, I sent for you immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us.’ Then Peter began to speak: ‘I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.’”

- a. Peter was sent to Cornelius.
 - i. Cornelius was a Gentile – non Jewish
- b. Up to that time, the church was only made of **Jewish Christians**.
- c. God was teaching Peter that the gospel was for **everyone**.
 - i. Peter came to realize:
 - ii. **“God does not show favoritism.”**
 - 1) Peter's **vision** expanded.

- 2) His **ministry** expanded.
- 3) His **understanding** expanded.
- d. **He knew** that this would create a big controversy
 - 1) with the Jewish Christians back in Jerusalem
 - 2) and it did!

Acts 11:1–3

“The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. So, when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him and said, “You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them.”

- a. When we trust God,
 - 1) He can take us places
 - 2) we never expected to go.
- b. **Risking** creating a **division** within the newly formed church
 - 1) Peter allowed God to “*show him the way*”
- c. He overcame his fear by trusting God

CONCLUSION: FAITH CAN OVERCOME FEAR

PETER'S TRANSFORMATION “as seen in the Book of Acts” can be summarized:

Fear → Faith

Failure → Restoration

Weakness → Strength

Silence → Witness

Self-reliance → Dependence upon God

- a. Peter didn't BECOME courageous
 - i. **because** he suddenly believed he was great.
- b. Peter BECAME courageous because
 - i. he **discovered** that God is great.

FINAL CHALLENGE

- 1) What are you afraid of?
- 2) Are you afraid of failing?
 - Trust God.**
- 3) Are you afraid of what people think?
 - Obey God.**

4) Are you afraid you're not good enough?

Remember that God uses ordinary people.

5) Are you afraid of what tomorrow holds?

Put tomorrow in God's hands.

6. Peter's life teaches us:

- a. You **don't** have to be stronger than your fear.
- b. You simply have to trust someone
 - i. who is stronger than your fear.
 - ii. And that someone is Jesus Christ.
- c. **Peter's story is not really about how great Peter became.**
 - i. It is about how great God is at changing a life.
- d. And if God could take Peter—
 - i. a fisherman, a failure, a fearful man—
 - ii. and turn him into a bold witness who helped change the world,
- e. **Imagine what God can do with you**
 - i. If you completely surrender to Him

- **Don't let your past**
 - keep you from your purpose.
- **Don't let your failures convince you**
 - that God is finished with you.
- **Give your life to Christ,**
 - trust His power,
 - obey His Word,
 - and let Him use you.

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- **You may be ordinary—**
 - but in the hands of God,
 - ordinary people
 - can accomplish extraordinary things.