

EASTER 2017: TRANSFORMED!

Scripture used: Luke 22:54-62 NLT

OVERVIEW

This week, NBCC held Easter gatherings at the Flint Center where thousands of men, women, and children came to worship God and celebrate our risen Lord, Jesus Christ! The message is part one in a five-part sermon series entitled, "Transformed," and begins in the middle of a heartbreak: Jesus being arrested and taken to trial. This passage introduces us to a fearful Peter as he follows Jesus from a distance. While always professing his love and loyalty to Jesus, Peter finds himself disowning Jesus when some people asked him if he knew Him. Peter lied about knowing Jesus out of fear, but the question remains: what was Peter afraid of?

The big idea for this sermon series is a living relationship with Jesus can transform our lives in amazing ways; this includes Peter. Although he disowned Jesus, Jesus never disowned him. Jesus' love and grace took a broken Peter and transformed him into the great Apostle Peter who went on to preach the gospel fearlessly, planting and establishing churches all the way from Jerusalem to Rome. Like Peter, we are never too far removed to be transformed by Christ and can lead powerful, world changing lives if we do not let our fears hold us back!

KEY POINTS

1) My fear can:

- a. Destroy my dreams.
- b. Hold me back.
- c. Stop me from becoming.

2) My public titles and private labels may amplify my fear. Public titles are tied to roles, eg. mother, father, doctor, teacher, and even Christian, but do not make up our entire person. Who we are in public is connected to who we are and how we identify ourselves in private. Some of us are wasting our lives because of our private labels. Peter, because of his public title as "disciple" and "follower of Christ", was fearful of persecution. But Jesus, who appropriately named Simon as Peter - "the rock," identified Peter as such because He knew who Peter was on the inside and who he would be in his future. This Christ-revealed identity proved true after the crucifixion.

3) I can overcome my fear by:

- a. Naming it. (My fear is _____)
- b. Seeing it. (I believe God can _____)
- c. Facing it. (I will step towards _____) We can face our fears because Jesus has gone ahead of us and shown us how to overcome them." We never face our fears alone when we cling to Jesus.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** What are your public titles? Which one do you identify with the most? How does this interfere with who Christ knows us to be? How does this amplify our fear?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** The word "fear" comes from the Greek word "phobos," and is the root of the English word "phobia." What are some phobias you have? How are these fears holding your life back from becoming what God has envisioned for it?
- 3) **DO** Take some time this week to journal and start naming your fears one by one. Identify when each fear began and why? Identify one way God is challenging you to face it? How can facing them today affect your life tomorrow?

Easter Prayer

Jesus,
On this Resurrection
Sunday, I acknowledge
my belief that
You are the unique
Son of God.

It was for my sins and
mistakes that You died,
and it was for my
future that You rose
from the dead.

Help me push through my fears!

In this moment,
I yield to Your authority
and plan for my life.
Let Your work of
transformation begin
today!

Amen.