

**The 5th Sunday of Easter ~ Sunday, May 21, 2017**

**“Beyond the Tomb: Restoring What Was Broken”**

**John 21:15-19**

“The great Easter truth is not that we are to live newly after death, but that we are to be new here and now by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Phillips Brooks)

Mainline Christianity talks a lot about the \_\_\_\_\_ of the gospel; however, it can sometimes miss is the \_\_\_\_\_ nature of the Gospel.

“...until Christ is formed in you.” (Galatians 4:19)

“...conformed to the image of God’s Son.” (Romans 8:29)

“...be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 12:2)

For Paul, spiritual growth was a \_\_\_\_\_ process, through which we’re \_\_\_\_\_ changed and transformed into the likeness of \_\_\_\_\_. This is the what the gospel is all about \_\_\_\_\_ people doing \_\_\_\_\_ things, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

“If Jesus has not changed your life, the Jesus you met was another Jesus.” (Dr. Steven Lawson)

The primary \_\_\_\_\_ of Christianity is transformation.

The kind of change that God wants for us doesn’t begin with \_\_\_\_\_, but with \_\_\_\_\_—with our heart. And the only way we can change what’s in our heart, is through an \_\_\_\_\_ with the risen Jesus

Peter’s life at the beginning of this encounter seems like a \_\_\_\_\_ cause; hopeless and beyond \_\_\_\_\_. Yet the message of Easter tells us that things are not always as the \_\_\_\_\_.

Peter—he has to be one of the most \_\_\_\_\_ people we find in Scripture—he’s impetuous and \_\_\_\_\_—he always seems to \_\_\_\_\_ first and think later. Even in this story we see that same \_\_\_\_\_—Peter unwilling to wait the few extra moments for the boat, loaded with fish, to reach the shore, quickly jumps into the water and races to Jesus.

As we established in last week’s sermon—we can’t go \_\_\_\_\_. When a person who really knows the Lord turns back to the old way of life, they can’t \_\_\_\_\_ it the same way they did before because once we’ve experienced life with Jesus, nothing can ever take it’s place—nothing can fully \_\_\_\_\_. Going fishing didn’t make them feel any better—in made them feel \_\_\_\_\_.

“No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:62)

“But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:13-14)

**Do you have your hand on the plow—are you pressing on?**

**Are you looking back—focussed on the past?**

If you think about everything that Peter had experienced over the past few days, I think it’s fair to suspect that Peter may have had serious \_\_\_\_\_ about where he \_\_\_\_\_ with Jesus.

**THE ROAD PETER HAD TAKEN**

Sitting in the Upper Room on the night He was arrested, Jesus tells the disciples that one of them will \_\_\_\_\_ Him. Quickly and with \_\_\_\_\_, Peter responds; “I will never \_\_\_\_\_ you—I will lay down my life for you.”

“Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest’s house. But Peter was following at a distance.” (Luke 22:54)

It’s at the very moment that Peter \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus the third time that the cock crows, and across the courtyard, Peter and Jesus’ eyes meet. It’s at that very moment, that Peter is hit head-on with the reality of his own \_\_\_\_\_.

Faced with this reality, we’re told that Peter “went out and \_\_\_\_\_ bitterly.”

**Have you ever wept bitterly at the reality of your own brokenness?**

Imagine the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ that Peter must have felt—especially after making such a bold and confident statement of \_\_\_\_\_. Each morning after—with the rooster’s crow, Peter must have been awakened with the reminder of his \_\_\_\_\_.

And as Jesus was crucified on the Cross, Peter underwent his own \_\_\_\_\_ crucifixion. In his heart, he knew he absolutely \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus. But in his moment of trial, he \_\_\_\_\_.

“The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.” (Matthew 26:41)

\_\_\_\_\_ got the upper hand—the \_\_\_\_\_ that Peter had for Jesus was crucified—and Peter was left \_\_\_\_\_ and broken.

Peter must have believed that it was all over—that he was a \_\_\_\_\_.

**Have there been times in your life when something has seemed like a lost cause—when something has been broken and beyond repair?**

Thankfully, Peter’s story doesn’t \_\_\_\_\_ there, and nor does ours! Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, God wants to do a \_\_\_\_\_ thing in our lives. The same \_\_\_\_\_ that raised Jesus from the dead is available to us today and can raise, \_\_\_\_\_, and make our lives new.

Peter was still pretty \_\_\_\_\_—his shame and guilt front and centre in his mind.

After sharing a meal with them, Jesus turns to Peter and addresses the elephant in the room, as the saying goes; not to \_\_\_\_\_ or shame him, but to offer him \_\_\_\_\_ and new life. Just as Peter’s denial was three-fold in nature, so is his \_\_\_\_\_, as Jesus repeats the painful question to Peter three times; “Simon, son of John do you love me?” (John 21:15)

Jesus knew all about Peter’s guilt and shame, but instead of asking Peter if he was \_\_\_\_\_ for denying Him. Instead of asking Peter what he was going to do about their broken \_\_\_\_\_. Instead of saying “I told you so!” chastising Peter, making him feel bad, or \_\_\_\_\_ him in front of the other disciples—Jesus gives Peter exactly what he needed in that moment: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. He gives him a second \_\_\_\_\_ and in doing so, He brings restoration.

If the Cross teaches us anything, it’s that when everything else has been crucified, \_\_\_\_\_ remains. Instead of \_\_\_\_\_ Peter, Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ him. Instead of \_\_\_\_\_ him, He restores him. Instead of dismissing him, He calls and \_\_\_\_\_ him. Three times, Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him and three times Peter responds with what was truly in his heart; “Yes Lord, you know that I love You.” (John 21:16) No longer would Peter be fishing for men, now he would be \_\_\_\_\_ for God’s sheep.

Yes, Peter had \_\_\_\_\_, but his failure wasn’t the \_\_\_\_\_—it wasn’t the end of his \_\_\_\_\_ with Jesus, it wasn’t the end of his \_\_\_\_\_, it wasn’t the end of his \_\_\_\_\_ for the Lord.

With Jesus there’s always another \_\_\_\_\_—there’s always the hope of transformation, change, new life, and restoration. Nothing or no one is beyond the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ—nothing or no one is broken beyond \_\_\_\_\_ or a lost cause, if they’re willing to receive the \_\_\_\_\_ love of Jesus.

God doesn’t need our \_\_\_\_\_. God doesn’t expect us to get it \_\_\_\_\_ all the time—to be \_\_\_\_\_ in every way.

“Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:26-31)

It’s not about \_\_\_\_\_—it’s all about \_\_\_\_\_. He \_\_\_\_\_ us—just as we are. God is able to use anything for His \_\_\_\_\_ and glory—even our brokenness.

“But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest on me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Corinthians 12:9-11)

True strength comes from \_\_\_\_\_ our weaknesses and limitations; from \_\_\_\_\_ that we are unable to accomplish anything of eternal value without \_\_\_\_\_ help—that He is our \_\_\_\_\_, our Source, and our Provider and we are 100% \_\_\_\_\_ on Him.

Jesus isn’t interested in our \_\_\_\_\_ to always get it right or in our desire to be successful, but rather in our willingness to be \_\_\_\_\_ by His Spirit and \_\_\_\_\_ by Him.

Jesus isn’t \_\_\_\_\_ with us yet—the same \_\_\_\_\_ that raised Jesus from the dead wants to change and transform us.

“And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 1:6)

This transformation is a life-long \_\_\_\_\_—that’s not so much about what **we** do, but what the **Spirit** does within us. However, we do have a \_\_\_\_\_.

**Do you want to be transformed? Do you want to be the person that God created you to be, or have you settled for something less?**

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus has born the \_\_\_\_\_ of our mistakes and failures—and by His grace—that which once was broken is being made \_\_\_\_\_. With Jesus, we’re never broken beyond \_\_\_\_\_; we’re never a \_\_\_\_\_ cause! Restoration and new life is \_\_\_\_\_!