

The 5th Sunday of Easter ~ Sunday, May 10, 2020

“More Than Conquerors: Victory Over Failure”

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)

Our victory in Christ isn't limited to what happens after we _____—we're invited to share in His victory now, in this life, today.

God loves us just as we are. However, He loves us too much to leave us this way—He wants to _____ us—He wants to make us new! In fact, change and transformation lie at the _____ of the gospel, and can be seen throughout the New Testament.

In fact, this is what the gospel is all about—ordinary people doing extraordinary things, through the _____ 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, and we can't encounter the _____ Jesus without being changed.

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 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 its 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 consider 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 _____. Every 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! 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 _____!