

The Transformation of Simon Peter (part 1)

John 1: 40-42; Matthew 16: 13-23

All twelve disciples failed Jesus

Then Jesus told them, “This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’” (Matt. 26: 31)

Peter , Judas

Both were Jesus' disciples

Both made mistakes

Both were fore-warned

Both had a serious "fall"

Both "regretted" deeply
what they had done

Peter	Judas
Impetuous Galilean	Careful & calculating Judean
Jesus prayed for Peter, that his faith may not fail (Lk. 22: 31-32)	No mention of this in the 4 Gospels
Forgiven & restored	Killed himself

Simon's journey of transformation

- part 1 (4 Gospels)
- part 2 (Acts; 1 & 2 Peter; references to Peter in Paul's letters)

- What we must do when we sin (fail the Lord)
- Why God allows His children to fall

What we must do “when” we sin

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1: 8-9)

Simon's first encounter with Jesus

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. ⁴¹ The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). ⁴² And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter [g]). (John 1: 40-42)

[g] *Cephas* (Aramaic) and *Peter* (Greek) both mean *rock*.

What's in a name?

- connects you to your family (and even your clan)
- aspirations of the parents
- in the Bible: reveals a person's identity

- God gives names
- God changes names
- Name change - something “new” happened to that person
- new relationship; new character quality; new phase of life

2 observations

1. Peter: “prophetic” name; a role Simon will grow into

- Jesus usually calls him Simon
- Peter’s transformation: a journey; a life-long process
- So is ours

2 observations

2. Whenever someone is given a new name, Bible only provides the meaning of new one

This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! (2 Cor. 5: 17, NLT)

■ “Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.” – Soren Kierkegaard

Simon's background

- after Jesus, a central character in Gospels
- originally from Bethsaida in Galilee
- married; settled in Capernaum in Galilee
- fishing business with Andrew (his brother), John and James (Lk. 5: 10)

What's Simon like?

- OUTWARDLY
- strong-willed
- quick to speak and act
- brash & bragging

- INWARDLY
- proud?
- insecure?

What's Simon like?

- look at a few “episodes” in his life

Episode #1 (Mark 1: 21-34)

21 They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. ... 29 As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. 30 Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they immediately told Jesus about her. 31 So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them. 32 That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. 33 The whole town gathered at the door, 34 and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, ...

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Anything unusual about this living arrangement?

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What's Simon like?

- caring and generous person
- hospitality - hallmark of his home

Episode #2: (Luke 5: 1-11)

One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God.² He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. ³ He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.”

5 Simon answered, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.”

6 When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. 7 So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

Why was Simon afraid?

What was he afraid of?

8 When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" 9 For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, 10 and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." 11 So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him. (Luke 5: 1-11)

~ 1 year since Simon first met Jesus

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Episode #3 (Matthew 16: 13-20, NLT)

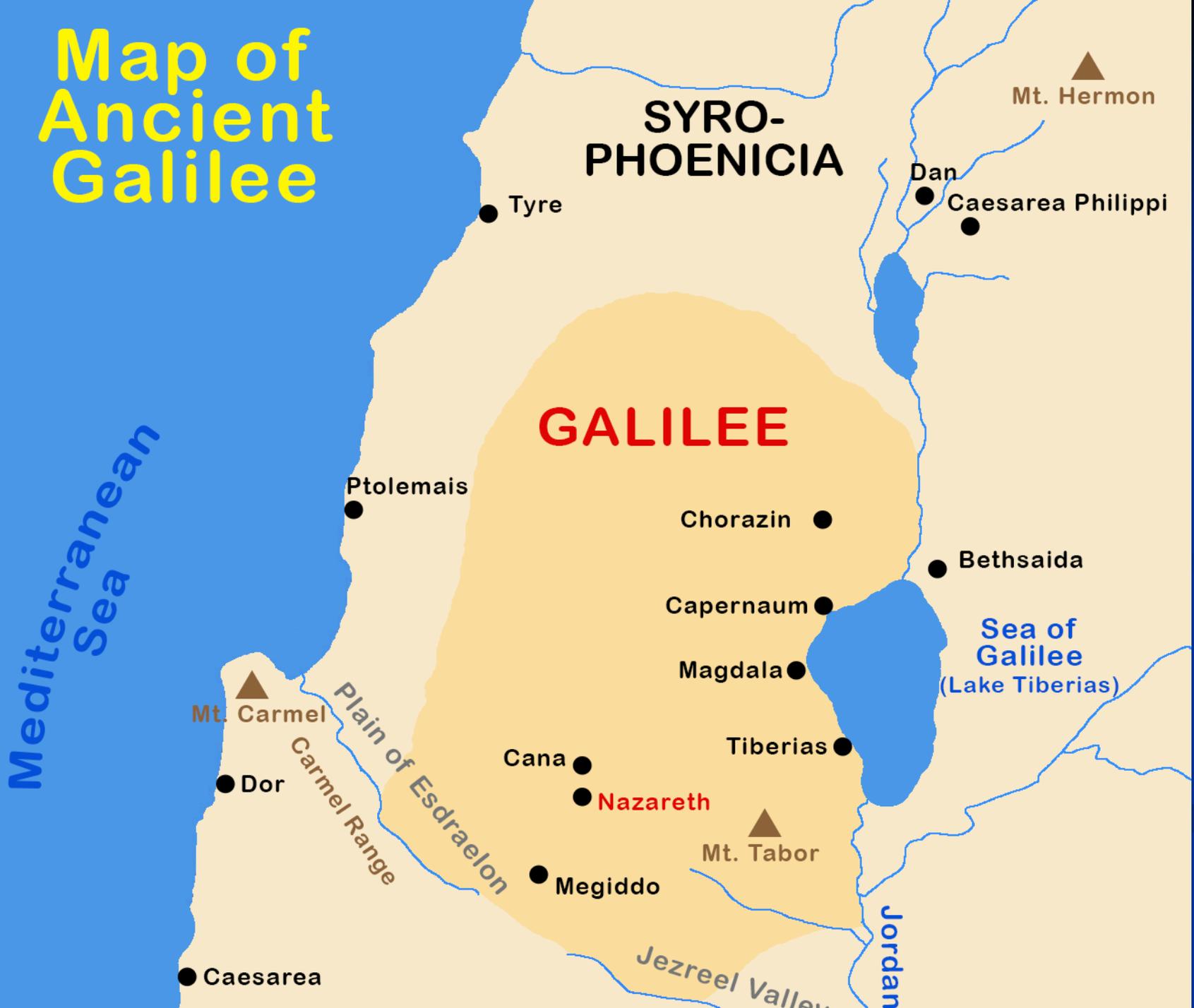
13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

14 “Well,” they replied, “some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.”

15 Then he asked them, “But who do you say I am?”

16 Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

Map of Ancient Galilee



Cave with altar to Pan

Paneas → Caesarea Philippi



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Only Peter answered the 2nd question

- “Who do you say that the Son of Man is?”
- “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”
- Son of Man = Son of God

- compare with Andrew’s statement in John 1:40
- “We have found the Messiah” (that is, the Christ).

(Matthew 16: 13-20, NLT – cont'd)

17 Jesus replied, “You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. 18 Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means ‘rock’), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it. 19 And I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.”

20 Then he sternly warned the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Steward with key

I will give [Eliakim] the key to the house of David—the highest position in the royal court. When he opens doors, no one will be able to close them; when he closes doors, no one will be able to open them.

(Isaiah 22: 22, NLT)

“Peter, your name means a rock, and your destiny is to be a rock. You are the first man to recognize me for what I am, and therefore, you are the first stone in the edifice of the fellowship of those who are mine. Against that fellowship the embattled powers of evil will no more prevail than they will be able to hold me captive in death. And in the days to come, you must be the steward who will unlock the doors of the Kingdom that Jews and Gentiles may come in; and you must be the wise administrator and guide who will solve the problems and direct the work of the infant and growing fellowship.” - William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew* (vol. 2).

Peter unlocked the gate into God's kingdom

- Pentecost: 3,000 Jews believed his message and were baptized (Acts 2)
- In Samaria: Peter and John placed hands on believers, and they received the Holy Spirit (Acts 8)
- Cornelius at Caesarea: Peter preached and they all received the Holy Spirit (Acts 10)

From praise to rebuke (Matt. 16: 21-23, NLT)

²¹ From then on Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things at the hands of the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead.

From praise to rebuke (Matt. 16: 21-23, NLT)

22 But Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things. “Heaven forbid, Lord,” he said. “This will never happen to you!”

23 Jesus turned to Peter and said, “Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God’s.”

Episode #4 (Luke 22: 31-34)

31 “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”

33 But he replied, “Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death.”

34 Jesus answered, “I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me.”

What's Simon like?

- OUTWARDLY
 - strong-willed
 - quick to speak and act
 - brash & bragging

- INWARDLY
 - proud?
 - insecure?

In our journey of transformation ...

- Satan would like to destroy all of God's followers if he could

“Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.” (1 Peter 5: 8, NLT)

- Satan often attacks us at our point of strength, rather than the point of our weakness

“Even if everyone else deserts you, I never will.” (Mk. 14: 29, NLT)

Why did God allow Peter to fail/fall?

- To strip away his pride and excessive self-confidence
“Apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15: 5b)
- To let him see the real condition of his heart

After a little while, those standing near said to Peter,
“Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean.”
He began to call down curses, and he swore to them,
“I don’t know this man you’re talking about.”

Immediately the rooster crowed ... Then Peter
remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him ...

And he broke down and wept. (Mark 14: 71-72)

When we fall/fail, always remember and believe that ...

- God can redeem our mistakes if we will let Him
- Jesus never criticized Peter
- Jesus never gave up on Peter

“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. ³² But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” (Luke 22: 31-32)

- Jesus had more faith in Peter than Peter had in Jesus
- Peter had important work ahead of him ... but he wouldn't be effective without his fall and restoration

Sifted by Satan and preserved (forgiven and restored) by the Lord

- Before: pride, impulsiveness, self-confidence, unreliability
- After: humility, confidence in God, determination to serve the Lord, willingness to use his experience to help others

Peter still speaks to us today

- How did episode about Peter's fall and restoration get into the gospels?
- “If God can forgive and restore me, He will do the same for you too”
- There's hope for all of us in Christ Jesus!

