

The Transformation of Simon Peter

(part 2)

Luke 22: 31-34; Acts 12: 1-11; 1 Peter 5: 1-4

Simon: actual name

Peter: “prophetic” title

- **Simon:** common Hebrew name
- **Peter:** a rock; “prophetic”; a role Simon will grow into
- Jesus usually calls him Simon
- Peter’s transformation: a process; a life-long journey
- So is ours

In our transformation journey,
we will fall, fail, and sin



What to do “when” we fall, fail & 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)

Confess (*homo* + *logeo*): to say the same thing (as God)

Simon Peter's transformation (by God)

- part 1 (4 Gospels)
- part 2 (Gospels; Acts; 1 & 2 Peter; references to Peter in Paul's letters)
- Transformation process: not always smooth growth
- God is absolutely committed to our transformation
- When we sin (fail the Lord), repent of it and confess our sin
- God will “redeem” and transform our failures (if we continue to love and trust Him)

Jesus: absolutely committed to Simon Peter's transformation



Jesus was praying for Simon

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.”
(Luke 22: 31-24)

Jesus is praying for us too

²⁴ But because Jesus lives forever, his priesthood lasts forever. ²⁵ Therefore he is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through him. He lives forever to intercede with God on their behalf.

(Hebrews 7:24-25; NLT)

■ Intercede:

- to act or interpose in behalf of someone in difficulty or trouble, as by pleading or petition

(dictionary.com)

- to use one's influence to persuade someone in authority to forgive another person, or save this person from punishment (dictionary.cambridge.org)

Simon thought he was ready for the sifting

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.” (Luke 22: 31-24)

In reality, Simon was not yet ready

- As predicted, he denied Jesus 3X a few hours later
- Recorded in 4 Gospels: Matt. 26:58, 69-75; Mark 14:54, 66-72; Luke 22:54-62; John 18:15-18, 25-27

■ The setting:

So they arrested [Jesus] and led him to the high priest's home. And Peter followed at a distance.

The guards lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat around it, and Peter joined them there.

(Luke 22: 54-55; NLT)

A most painful experience for Peter

And immediately the rooster crowed the second time. Suddenly, Jesus' words flashed through Peter's mind: "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny three times that you even know me." And he broke down and wept. (Mark 14: 72; NLT)

Luke's account of this painful moment

But Peter said, “Man, I don’t know what you are talking about.” And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed.

At that moment the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Suddenly, the Lord’s words flashed through Peter’s mind: “Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me.” And Peter left the courtyard, weeping bitterly. (Luke 22: 60-62; NLT)

At that moment, their eyes met ...

But Peter said, “Man, I don’t know what you are talking about.” And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed.

At that moment the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Suddenly, the Lord’s words flashed through Peter’s mind: “Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me.” And Peter left the courtyard, weeping bitterly. (Luke 22: 60-62; NLT)

Peter's Denial

by Carl Bloch
(1834-1890)



What kind of a “look”?

- disdain or condemnation?
- love and forgiveness?

This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most. (Hebrews 4: 15-16; NLT)



Mercy & grace evidenced in the resurrection announcement

... the angel said, “Don’t be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He isn’t here! He is risen from the dead! Look, this is where they laid his body. Now go and tell his disciples, including Peter, that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you before he died.” (Mark 16: 6-7; NLT)

Mercy & grace evidenced in Jesus' private appearance to Simon Peter

33 And within the hour they were on their way back to Jerusalem. There they found the eleven disciples and the others who had gathered with them, 34 who said, **“The Lord has really risen! He appeared to Peter.”**

35 Then the two from Emmaus told their story of how Jesus had appeared to them as they were walking along the road, and how they had recognized him as he was breaking the bread. 36 And just as they were telling about it, Jesus himself was suddenly standing there among them. “Peace be with you,” he said.

(Lk 24: 33-36; NLT)

The apostle Paul also mentioned this special appearance to Peter

I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. 6 After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. (1 Cor. 15: 1-6; NLT)

7 Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him. 9 For I am the least of all the apostles. In fact, I'm not even worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted God's church.

(1 Cor. 15: 7-9; NLT)

What took place?

Where is the account of this meeting?

- Paul refers to his pre-Christian failures a few times
- In contrast, Peter never mentions his failure
- Why?
- Jesus dealt with this subject matter during the private appearance to Peter
- Peter commanded not to mention his denial of the Lord ever again?

Jesus prepares breakfast for his disciples by the Sea (John 21)

- Peter & Co fished all night ... but caught nothing!
- Déjà vu for Peter, James and John (cf. Luke 5)
- “Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.” (John 21: 6)
- 153 large fish! (John 21: 11)

Jesus prepares breakfast for his disciples (John 21)

7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, “It is the Lord,” he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. 8 The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. 9 When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread.

(John 21: 7-9)

2nd déjà vu for Simon Peter

- Jesus & disciples sat around “a fire of burning coals”
- In such a setting, Jesus asked Simon:
 - “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”
 - “Simon son of John, do you love me?”
 - “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Jesus re-opened the “wound” in Peter’s soul

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.” (John 21: 17b)

- Wound re-opened so it could be cleaned up for proper healing

“I tell you, her sins—and they are many—have been forgiven, so she has shown me much love. But a person who is forgiven little shows only little love.”
(Luke 7: 47; NLT)

- Peter’s position of leadership is based on his love for Jesus, much more than his faith
- Peter’s faith has failed numerous times; his love for Jesus has remained constant, though often misguided

Forgiven, restored, and a new call

Jesus said, “Feed my sheep. Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!” (John 21: 17d-19)

- Peter will now “shepherd” the flock of believers
- Now he’s more ready for prison, and even following Jesus to death

He is ready

- And ... he still will make mistakes (fail, fall and sin)

~15 to 17 years later, at church in Antioch ...

¹¹ When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. ¹² For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. ¹³ The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray.

~15 to 17 years later, at church in Antioch ...

¹⁴ When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all, “You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?” (Galatians 2: 11-14)

■ This incident most likely took place between the end of Acts 11 and Acts 12

¹¹ When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. ¹² For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. ¹³ The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray.

Transformation of Simon Peter (and us)

- Transformation process won't progress smoothly
- God is absolutely committed to our life-long transformation
- We must repent and confess our sin whenever we fail the Lord
- God will “redeem” and transform our failures (if we continue to love and trust Him)
- There will be evidences of the deep work of God's transformation in our lives

Evidence #1 of transformation (Acts 12: 1-19)

About that time King Herod Agrippa began to persecute some believers in the church. ² He had the apostle James (John's brother) killed with a sword. ³ When Herod saw how much this pleased the Jewish people, he also arrested Peter. (This took place during the Passover celebration.) ⁴ Then he imprisoned him, placing him under the guard of four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring Peter out for public trial after the Passover. ⁵ But while Peter was in prison, the church prayed very earnestly for him.

Evidence #1 of transformation (Acts 12: 1-19)

- 6 The night before Peter was to be placed on trial, he was asleep, fastened with two chains between two soldiers. Others stood guard at the prison gate. 7 Suddenly, there was a bright light in the cell, and an angel of the Lord stood before Peter. The angel struck him on the side to awaken him and said, “Quick! Get up!” And the chains fell off his wrists. 8 Then the angel told him, “Get dressed and put on your sandals.” And he did. “Now put on your coat and follow me,” the angel ordered.
- 9 So Peter left the cell, following the angel. (Acts 12: 1-9)

Evidence #1 of transformation?

Evidence #2 of transformation

- The Jerusalem Council (Acts 15)
- Peter, Barnabas and Paul addressed the Church
- They were in agreement: Gentiles do not need to be circumcised to become believers

¹³ When they finished, James spoke up. “Brothers,” he said, “listen to me. ¹⁴ Simon has described to us how God first intervened to choose a people for his name from the Gentiles. ¹⁵ The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, ... ¹⁹ It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.” (Acts 15: 13-15, 19)

Evidence #2 of transformation ?



Evidence #3

14 So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to [the day of the Lord], make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.¹⁵ Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. ¹⁶ He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. (2 Peter 3: 14-16)

Evidence #3 of transformation ?



Evidence #4

And now, a word to you who are elders in the churches. I, too, am an elder and a witness to the sufferings of Christ. And I, too, will share in his glory when he is revealed to the whole world. As a fellow elder, I appeal to you: ² Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly—not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God. ³ Don't lord it over the people assigned to your care, but lead them by your own good example. ⁴ And when the Great Shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of never-ending glory and honor. (1 Pt. 5: 1-4; NLT)

Evidence #4 ?

And now, a word to you who are elders in the churches. I, too, am an elder and a witness to the sufferings of Christ. And I, too, will share in his glory when he is revealed to the whole world. As a fellow elder, I appeal to you: ² Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly—not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God. ³ Don't lord it over the people assigned to your care, but lead them by your own good example. ⁴ And when the Great Shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of never-ending glory and honor. (1 Pt. 5: 1-4)

Transformation of Simon Peter (and us)

- Transformation process won't be always smooth
- God is absolutely committed to our life-long transformation
- We must repent and confess our sin whenever we fail the Lord
- God will “redeem” and transform our failures (if we continue to love and trust Him)
- There will be evidences of the work of God's transformation, especially in our relationships

What's Simon like?

- OUTWARDLY

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

- INWARDLY

- proud?
- insecure?

Sifted by Satan but preserved (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 experiences to help others

- Transformation process won't be always smooth
- What we must do when we sin (fail the Lord)
- God is absolutely committed to our life-long transformation
- God will “redeem” and transform our failures (if we continue to love and trust Him)
- Evidences of the deep work of God's transformation
 - Ready to go to prison and die for the sake of Christ
 - Harmony & agreement with other leaders on matters of primary importance to the faith
 - No competition and envy among the leaders, despite the differences in personality, approach and perspective
 - Humility – no lording it over the flock
 - Growing love for the Lord; increasing trust in Him

