

Which Peter Are You

by Aaron Hurst

This sermon delves into the transformation of Peter, highlighting his journey from self-reliance and denial of Jesus to repentance, restoration, and being filled with the Holy Spirit. It emphasizes the need for humility, brokenness, and reliance on God's power rather than self-effort. The message offers hope for those who feel hopeless, encouraging them to come to Jesus in repentance and experience His forgiveness, restoration, and empowerment through the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Luke 22:31, John 21:15, Acts 4:7, Hebrews 7:25, Matthew 11:28

Topics: "Transformation", "Reliance on God's Power"

Description

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Transcript

Well, good morning to you all. And greetings in the name of Jesus. He's alive.

Glory. He's not on the cross, and he's not in the tomb. He's alive.

Thank you, Jesus. As I was reflecting, my heart went back to two years ago, this month, when I had the privilege of passing the baton, as it were, of the role of lead elder here at charity to Brother Tim Eschbach. Can you believe it, Tim? Two years.

I just want to say that I want to affirm and bless our Brother Tim. The mantle has fallen upon him. I'm sure you've noticed it.

I want to commend you, Brother Tim, for the address to the church on Wednesday evening. I want to exhort the congregation here, give double honor to your elder by showing a heart that is in love with Jesus and in delight and desire to follow the example of your elder. You know, I can say that now because I'm not talking about myself.

Be a little hard for Tim to say that. The scripture charges elders, and the scripture charges us as a flock to example, follow the example of your elders. Submit yourselves to them.

They watch for your souls. They watch for your souls as those that must give into count. God bless you, brothers and sisters, at Charity Christian Fellowship, with the joy of the Lord and with the fullness of the Holy Ghost.

Well, you know, Tim's family loves him. He rules well his house, and his family delights in their daddy. And one of them told me, hey, now, Aaron, you do with it what you want, but I just want to put a little bug in your ear.

It's Dad's birthday today. Oh, yes, I love it. Could we sing happy birthday? Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you.

Happy birthday, dear Tim, happy birthday to you. May the good Lord bless you, may the good Lord bless you, may the good Lord bless you. Oh, thank you, Lord.

Thank you, Lord. Oh, yes, there's joy in the house of the Lord and in these people. Our God has done great things for us, and we are so grateful.

Also, as I was just reflecting, just share a brief testimony here before we get into the message. For Janice and I, these last two years have been a new chapter for us. It's been challenging in some ways, in some ways a bit stretching and surprising.

You know, when you served in a particular role for 20 years, and then you realize God is calling you to lay that down and pass the baton to a younger man, and it's affirmed by the church, and you know, the Lord is definitely in it, and this is God's moving and direction, and you take that step. I guess I wasn't really prepared for the sense of what is my role now. Where do I fit? Where do I belong? And even some, even some maybe slight depression.

I remember sitting on the chair, saying, Lord, why am I feeling like this? Just realizing, yeah, it's change, and change isn't always easy, and letting go, and releasing, and then an embracing of what God has for me, Janice and I, and then COVID, you know, and God uses all these things to shape us, to mold us, difficult things. Tim knows what that is. Wrestlings, feelings of our inadequacy, and our utter inability.

The task is way too great, and we cast ourselves on the Lord, and God, our Heavenly Father. He speaks to us in the stillness of the night, ministers grace and comfort to our hearts. I thought I would share just very briefly yet this one thing.

The next chapter for Janice and us, I just want to glory in the Lord. I have nothing to boast of. I just want to glory in the Lord for God's goodness and faithfulness, and the sense of His leading and direction, and that we are at peace, and at rest, and fulfillment in the center of God's will.

We believe that's where we are today, and I do know that my request to you brothers for the release to do some travel and so forth, some of you were stretched, and I probably didn't do it right. When I took on the request to spend time at Joy Fellowship for a season, I gave the request to our ministry team and received a release from them to pursue that, to go over to Joy, and Brother Emmanuel and I to seek to bring some blessing and help to Joy Fellowship in some of their difficulties. So I felt that release from my fellow ministers to accept that call, and to engage there, and attend regularly at Joy, and not be here every Sunday, but I did not ask for a release from you brothers and sisters before I accepted that, and I know that for some of you that caused a struggle, and I apologize for that here this morning.

I'm sorry for that. I do see that I failed there. I failed you in moving ahead without considering the church family here, and asking for a release and blessing.

So can you please forgive me for that? Can you please forgive me for that, my dear brothers and sisters? As I was thinking of sharing the word here, Tim had asked me a couple times, Aaron, when are you going to preach for us? And I had consented earlier, and then I didn't feel clear, and I was wrestling with the Lord, but what is it? Why don't I feel clear? And I believe that was part of it, what I just shared, that I hurt or offended unnecessarily by my lack of carefulness in that. So I pray that we can hear the Lord today, that I wouldn't be standing in the way in any way from God speaking to us, and thank you for your forgiveness. Let's stand together one more time.

Father, we do come in Jesus' name. Father, we acknowledge our utter dependency upon you and our need of you continually, Lord. Scriptures say that in many things we offend, but Lord, our heart is not to offend.

Father, I ask in Jesus' name, you would speak deeply to my heart, to the heart of my brothers and sisters, and that there would just be a beautiful sense of your presence here today, ministering life and truth to our hearts, and blessing, Lord. Father, I have nothing to bring, except you send the fire, except you anoint the word of the Lord. All is vain, but Father, we are looking to you, our faithful God.

Oh, Lord, anoint your word to our hearts. Grant us grace to receive it with meekness and truth. In Jesus' name, amen.

You may be seated. Luke chapter 22, Luke chapter 22, verse 31, the Lord Jesus said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.

And with thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

Give a title to this message today. Which Peter are you? Which Peter are you? Self-confident? Believing that I have it in myself? Self-assured I can do this? Confidence in my flesh? I am ready to go with you, Jesus, both into prison and to death. Mark 14, 26, and I don't know if you want to turn to all of these for sake of time.

We're following the life of Peter at the Last Supper and following Mark 14, 26, when they had sung a hymn. They went out into the Mount of Olives and Jesus said unto them, All of you shall be offended of me this night. For it is written, I will smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered.

But after I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I, self-confident, believing he has it in himself, he's strong enough, I won't be offended, Lord. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, This day, even this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

And Peter, oh Peter, he spake the more vehemently. Imagine he's talking to the Lord Jesus Christ, the more vehemently. If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee.

Working it out in my own flesh by my own strength and arguing back to the Lord. Jesus, basically what he's saying is, Jesus, you don't know what you're talking about. You keep telling me I'm going to deny you, but I know in my heart and in my own strength, I will not deny you.

I'm ready to die with you. Which Peter are you? Mark 14, 32, they came to the place called Gethsemane. And Jesus said to the disciples, sit here while I go yonder to pray.

And he takes with him Peter and John. And he began to be sore amazed and to be very heavy. The burden of the cross and the weight and the sin of the whole world was upon Jesus, our Savior.

And he was very heavy and he said unto them, my soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death. Tarry ye here and watch. And he went farther, a little farther, and he fell on the ground and he prayed that if it were possible this hour might pass from him.

And he said, Abba Father, all things are possible with thee. Take away this cup from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

And he cometh and findeth then sleeping. Then saith he unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst thou watch with me one hour? Simon, Peter, watch, watch ye. Peter, you watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation.

The Spirit truly is ready. But Peter, that flesh you're relying in is weak. Peter, the Spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

Mark chapter 14, verse 38. Which Peter are you? Are you the sleepy Peter, self-reliant, I can do this, I got this, but you're falling asleep? Are you sleepy, Peter? Would the Lord say to you this morning, awake, awake, out of sleep. It is high time to awake out of sleep.

Your fall into sin is closer than you imagine. Watch and pray. Sleepy Peter, awake.

John 18, 1. When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with the disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered and his disciples. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place. For Jesus oft times resorted thither with his disciples.

Judas, then having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said unto them, I am he.

Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. And as soon as he said, I am he, they went backward and fell to the ground. And he asked them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

And Jesus answered and said, I have told you that I am he. If therefore you seek me, let these go their way. Let the disciples go their way.

This he said, that the saying might be fulfilled of which he spake, of them which thou gavest me. Have I lost none? It wasn't Peter's time to die that night. Or any of the disciples.

They would give their life later. Verse 10, John 18. Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it.

And he smote the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Marcus. Then Jesus said unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath.

The cup which my father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Which Peter are you? Are you the confidence in the flesh, Peter? Taking matters into your own hands. Pull yourself up by your own bootstraps. Pulling out the sword.

Warring in the flesh. With carnal weapons. Earthly methods.

Earthly psychologies and approaches. Ten steps to renew you. Meditation to make you feel at peace and at ease.

Armed in the flesh. Self-reliant. Confident in the flesh.

You know, the older I get. And the more that I've seen. The more I realize my utter dependency upon Jesus.

And how I can do nothing without Him. I am totally dependent. I dare not trust past successes.

I dare not be defeated by past failures. I dare not lean, like the hymn writer says, on the sweetest frame of past blessings, past successes. Oh, but to wholly lean on Jesus' name.

And on Christ the solid rock I stand. All other ground is indeed sinking sand. Which Peter are you? Are you trying to work righteousness and spiritual life by the arm of the flesh? Are you trying to overcome by your own grit? It's pretty amazing what people can do who are not even Christians.

By their own grit and strength. They can quit smoking. They can quit drugs.

They can quit alcohol through Alcoholics Anonymous help and whatever. And they can better themselves. But that is not salvation.

Salvation is only through the redemptive work that Jesus Christ did on the cross to save us from our sins. Peter, put up thy sword into its sheath. Another one of the Gospels proclaims it this way, that all those that take the sword are going to perish with the sword.

You cannot fight spiritual battles with carnal weapons. It does not work. It may look like it's working.

You may force compliance. But spiritual life comes by the Holy Spirit of God. Through fighting those battles with the mighty weapons that are spiritual weapons.

And they pull down the strongholds. Hallelujah, we have victory in Jesus. And He supplied us with mighty weapons to fight and wrestle and overcome.

Which Peter are you? Would your wife say you draw out that sword? There's a fighting spirit within you? Are you a fighting Peter? Are you an angry Peter? Are you a take matters into my own hands type Peter? Which Peter are you? Luke 22. 54, then took they Jesus and led him and brought him into the high priest house. And Peter followed afar off.

Peter is starting to be shown up for the weakness of his flesh and who he really is. You know, God in His mercy will do that with us. God in His love will allow us to fail if we are relying on the flesh.

And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall and they were sat down there together, Peter sat down among them. Another one of the gospels says he also warmed himself by the fire. They stood around and warmed themselves by the fire, it was cold.

Peter sat down among them. Which Peter are you? Are you following Jesus afar off? Which Peter are you? Compromising, sitting down by the enemy's fire, sitting with them, the enemies of the Lord Jesus, and warming yourself at their fire? Which Peter are you? A certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him and said, This man was also with them. And Peter denied him.

Peter denied Jesus, saying, Woman, I know him not. Luke 22, 58, after a little while. Another saw him and said, Thou art also of them.

And Peter said, Man, I am not. In Matthew's gospel it says he denied with an oath. Matthew 26, 72.

And about the space of one hour, another confidently affirmed saying of a truth. This fellow also was with him, for he's a Galilean. Another one of the gospels says, Did I not see thee in the garden with him? And in Matthew it says, Thy speech betrayeth thee.

You have an accent. And in Matthew's gospel, it gives us further revelation of Peter's denial. Verse 60 of Luke says, Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest.

In Matthew's gospel it says, Then Peter began to curse and to swear and to say, I know not the man. I hope there's no one here this morning that would deny the Lord Jesus by word or deed. You see, Jesus said they say the right words.

But by their deeds, by their actions, they deny. They deny me by their deeds. Which Peter are you? Self-reliant, self-assertive, confident.

I can do this. And how many times has your wife said, Oh, daddy, your approach is not working. Or a daddy to a mama.

Or a pastor to a brother or sister. Put away your sword. Put away your self-effort.

Humble thyself. Get down off your high horse of arrogancy and pride. Which Peter are you? Luke 22, verse 60.

Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately while he yet spake, the cock crew and the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. Wow.

And I believe according to scripture, their eyes met. And all at once it came flooding back. Everything Jesus was saying.

Peter, Peter. If only I could get the message across to you, Peter. You've been listening to the enemy's voice.

Remember what Jesus said? Peter. He said it to Peter. Get behind me, Satan.

Thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men. Because Peter said, No, Lord, you're not going to die. Peter was carnally minded.

He was earthly minded. Yet he was trying to mix the gospel in and the truth of Christ. And he was trying to walk in both camps.

And as their eyes met, as he heard the crow of the rooster that morning, that early morning hour. And Jesus looked upon Peter. And their eyes met.

It all came rushing back. Scripture says, And Peter remembered the word of the Lord. Can you just feel it? Like a ton of bricks, as we say.

Just hitting him in the chest. And it hit him. Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice.

And it hit him. The full weight. The guilt.

The shame. The anguish. I can't believe I did it.

I denied the Lord. He went on and he wept. Oh, he wept bitterly.

Oh, Peter. Jesus said, I have prayed for thee. I have prayed for thee, Peter.

That thy faith fail not. Peter, when you're converted, when the light opens upon your heart of who you really are, and how much you need saved and conversion, when that happens, Peter, go strengthen the brothers. Peter, Peter, there's hope.

Peter, there's hope for you, Peter. I have prayed for you. That your faith fail not.

Though you will fail me. I have prayed for you, Peter. That your faith fail not.

So this morning, maybe as hard as the first part of this message is, it's full of hope for the Peters here today. The sleeping Peters. The self-reliant Peters.

The self-confident Peters. The self-made man. Macho.

There's hope for you today. There's hope for the Peter who comes to Christ Jesus and falls on the rock and is broken. Ah, Peter.

He went out. He went bitterly in repentance and brokenness. All that self-confidence and all that self-reliance and all those good ideas and all those answers that he had, all his quick outspokenness, was gone.

All Peter's self-righteousness was gone. Peter was at ground zero. Oh, my dear brother and sister today, which Peter are you? Today you can be the broken Peter.

And today you can be the forgiven Peter. You can be the restored Peter. You can be the converted Peter.

Yes, you. You, who for many years have fought and wrestled and tried and failed. You can be the restored Peter.

You can be the repentant Peter. You can be the converted Peter. Yes, you.

You, who have miserably failed. You, who are hopeless and discouraged, wondering is it ever possible. Yes, you.

You can reach out to Jesus today and you can touch the hem of His garment, as it were, and be made every wit whole. The only requirement is repentance, humility, brokenness. I'm done, Lord.

I've been fighting this battle against porn for years and I can't overcome it. Come to Jesus today with the same absolute desperation of Peter, weeping over your sin and crying out to the Savior. He'll deliver you.

He'll save you. He'll set you free from any demonic force, oppression and bondage. He's the deliverer.

But you know, as long as Peter was willing to keep fighting himself, okay, Peter, have at it just a little longer. I think brother Emmanuel preached the message where he said, okay, just another night, Pharaoh with the frogs. Just another night.

Just keep on going. You know, just that we got this thing. How long will you fight on your own strength? Your own wisdom? Your wife can't tell you anything.

The pastor can't tell you anything. Your boss at work can't tell you anything. You're smarter than them all.

You got this. And if it gets too tough, you pull out the sword and cut off somebody's ear. I don't care what it... Let the chips fall where they may.

It's really sad when that happens in homes and you see homes wrecked and destroyed and all blown apart. Which Peter are you? Praise God, hallelujah. He's alive.

Jesus is alive. And he showed himself to the disciples. We don't have time to go into it all, so we're just going to sort of fast forward real quick into John's Gospel, chapter 21.

Showed himself alive to his disciples many times. Now here he shows up. In John's Gospel 21, verse 15, when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? And he said, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.

Now I should rely on our brother for this Greek scholarly exegesis of this, but I did a little bit of connection from my strong concordance. And it says here that Jesus would have asked Simon, lovest thou me more than these? Lovest was the Greek number 0025. Agapo.

Am I correct, brother Paul? I think that's agapo there. And it means to have a loyal, sacrificial, deep love. Is that how you love me, Peter? And Peter answered back and said, You know that I love you.

And Peter used Greek number 5368. Phileo. You know I love you.

I am fond of you, Lord Jesus. I have feelings toward you. I love our friendship.

You're a good buddy. And then Jesus says unto him, Feed my lambs. And then the second time he said to him again, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? And Jesus again used Greek number 0025.

Agapo. And Peter responds and says, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. And Simon is using Phileo.

Yea, I love you. You're a good friend. I have fond feelings.

I have affection toward you. And Jesus says unto him, Feed my sheep. And then he says a third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? And then as you look those words up in the Greek there, from

Strong's Concordance, it says here Jesus went and turned the word, and he said, Okay, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Do you Phileo me? You're fond of me? I'm a good friend? You have feelings toward me? And Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? Do you Phileo me? And now Jesus used that.

Simon, son of Jonas, do you Phileo me? So you love me with that kind of love, Peter? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love thee. I Phileo thee.

Jesus said unto him, Feed my sheep. Here we see Peter restored to his Lord. We see him restored and entrusted to feed the lambs, to feed the flock of God.

Peter, not only are you forgiven, Peter, you're restored into fellowship. Peter, you're going to feed the flock. You're going to feed my lambs.

Peter, you're a chosen vessel unto me, Peter. Today, that's God's will for you to be not only a forgiven, humble, broken Peter, but a restored into fellowship Peter. And not only that, Acts 4, after the Lord worked through Peter, John sitting there, the man sitting at the gate, beautiful, being healed, and then they were brought before the council.

And in Acts 4, 7, when they had set them in the midst, they asked, by what power, by what name have you done this? And then Peter, oh yes, Peter. Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, and you know the rest of the story. Peter, filled with the strength of God.

No longer the old Peter. It's now the converted Peter. It's the new man in Christ Jesus, filled with the Holy Ghost.

That's what you need, my brother and my sister. You need the anointing and the infilling and the indomitable power of the Holy Ghost to live the victorious Christian life. Oh, thank you, Jesus.

Yeah, if you want to examine us by what means this man stands here whole, hey, it's not by our greatness or what we've done, but it's by the power of Jesus Christ. It's by the power of the Holy Ghost that this man stands here whole. It's in the name of Jesus that this man stands here whole.

And by the way, look at the boldness of Peter, whom ye crucified, and you denied the just and the holy one, and you demanded that Robert the thief Barabbas to be given. You guys are guilty. Whoa, Peter, wow.

It says in verse 13, when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Hallelujah. May our lives be so empty and broken of our selfish ambitions and abilities to that Christ Jesus flows out of us and people around us take knowledge.

It's not Aaron. It's not Jonathan. It's not Luke.

It's not Tim. It's not Emmanuel. It's not Elmer.

It's the Jesus they're spending time with. It's the Jesus Christ that has anointed them. And we could go many more places.

Which Peter are you? Which Peter would you like to be? Is there something yet awake in your spirit and heart that says, oh, if only, if only I could have what Peter had. There's hope for you today. Great hope.

Where there's a longing desire in your heart and a holy dissatisfaction with my powerless, my sleepiness, my warmness. Where there is a holy dissatisfaction and a longing for God. Oh, yes.

Blessed are those that hunger. Blessed are those that thirst. For they shall be filled.

Yes. Peter anointed. Peter filled with unction of the Holy Ghost that when he preached, the hearts of men and women were pricked.

That's the Holy Ghost. That's the spirit of the living God working in our hearts to show us our need and his abundant supply. Oh, come to the waters.

There's a bountiful supply. Remember the words we began with where Jesus said, oh, Simon, Simon. Satan has desired to have you.

But I have prayed for you. Today, the Word of God tells us in Hebrews 7, is it 25, that Jesus ever lives to make intercession for us. I just want to, oh, by all that is within me, stir you to reach out to Jesus because he's reaching out to you.

Humble yourself. God resists the proud. Oh, but he gives grace to the humble.

Humble yourself. Jesus is inviting you today. Come to me.

Weary, heavy laden, you who are fighting in your own strength and wrestling and failing and failing. There's hope for the failures today. Hallelujah.

Jesus gave his life for failures like me so I could be transformed and converted and be changed and filled with his Holy Spirit. Just like Jesus spoke with authority, so Peter now spoke with authority and hearts were pricked. Which Peter are you? You can switch camps today.

I welcome you to switch camps today from the self-reliant, self-confident Peter into the broken, shattered Peter and the anointed, Holy Ghost filled Peter.

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