



**Educate
+ Engage**



APOSTOLIC
ID:



His Message
is My Message

OVERVIEW

Jesus Christ is our example, and His message should be our message.

Scripture Passages

Matthew 4:17

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Luke 24:47

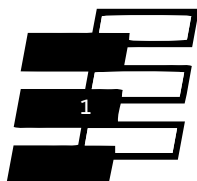
and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

EDUCATE

Judas had just betrayed his Master. The guards wrapped Jesus' healing hands in rope and led Him away like a criminal to Caiaphas, the high priest, to be prosecuted. The disciples forsook and fled from the one who first came looking for them to follow Him. The disciples' humanity caused them to fear for their own lives. However, one disciple followed the harrowing scene of Jesus' arrest and parade to the high priest where many angry elders and scribes also awaited. Peter, brash and impulsive, followed Jesus afar off.

Hours earlier, Peter adamantly promised he would never deny his close relationship with Jesus; Peter promised he would stand tall even under the threat of death. But Jesus knew differently. Peter folded like a lawn chair in a tornado. The cool wind of the evening was blowing through the courtyard of the palace. Peter was watching everything happen from a distance. He was outside the palace in a courtyard about to have his identity challenged and questioned. Jesus was inside the palace, also having His identity challenged and questioned.

After verbally assailing Jesus, the group began to spit and strike Him with the palms of their hands. Peter's presence near such a volatile, hostile situation showed his deep passion and concern for his Master. Remember, it was this same Simon Peter who boldly declared Jesus' true identity by announcing: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). But when faced with a crisis of faith that could have cost him his life, he proved to be more faithless than faithful. (See Matthew chapter 26.)



Undoubtedly the words of Jesus echoed in the ears of Peter during his identity crisis. Perhaps Peter thought back to the moment when Jesus peered into his insecure eyes and said: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). But Peter denied even knowing Jesus—three times. After denying Jesus Christ at such a pivotal moment, how could Peter find redemption back to his calling and destiny?

With God, failure is never final.

After Jesus' death, burial, and earth shattering resurrection (literally), something significant happened. God's plan of redemption for everyone became personalized. The angel who spoke with Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus gave them specific instructions to go back to the disciples "and Peter" and tell them the good news that Jesus had risen (Mark 16:7). It is no coincidence that Peter was the only disciple the angel specifically named.

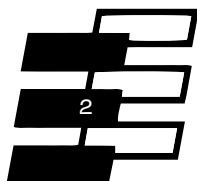
Discussion Question: Why do you think the angel specifically named Peter?

Could it be Peter didn't consider himself a disciple anymore because he denied he even knew Jesus—three times? God knew there was a man with a calling on his life who was fighting for his faith through the pain of his own failure. He was broken, but he was still blessed and still called by God. When the disciples learned that Jesus' tomb was empty, Peter passionately pursued his Master. He did not hide or bury himself in his own shame. Sure he struggled with his own identity—we know him as the disciple who denied Jesus—but Peter ran to Jesus!

Jesus reunited with His disciples. It was a joyous, authentic reunion. Jesus Christ had done what He promised He would do: He laid down His life, picked it up again, and found the disciples who ran from Him. And Peter ran to Jesus. The same man who had rejected any association with Jesus a few weeks earlier, was ready to embrace redemption. A few days later... in Acts 2, the fire fell. The Old Testament prophets had prophesied about this day hundreds of years earlier, and Peter was living it. Jesus' promise of His Spirit empowering their ministry became a reality, and this reality needed clarity. When the crowd had their questions, who would share this glorious gospel message with them? Peter would and he did.

The power and purpose of the cross were already impacting Peter's life.

Previously in his struggle with doubt, Peter felt like he forfeited his identity as a disciple of Christ. But on this historic day, the redemptive work of the cross won out. Peter boldly seized the moment. His identity with Christ was restored and he powerfully preached the greatest message ever told: the gospel. He proclaimed that the power of God's Spirit was now available to humanity. Peter took the crowd back over fifty days to Calvary, and then he reminded them of Jesus' resurrection.



Because Jesus rose from the grave, the promise of the Holy Ghost was being fulfilled right in front of their eyes and ears. It was visible and audible. This was the same Simon Peter, but he was not the same. Although he sounded the same and looked the same, he was not the same. He was now full of the Holy Ghost, and he preached the glorious gospel to reveal the greatest identity ever known to creation—Peter preached the identity of God incarnate as Jesus Christ.

When he preached, conviction fell. The crowd was cut to the heart; that's conviction's signature skill. Thank God He never gives up on people who refuse to give up on Him. Biblical order is of supreme importance. Conviction precedes the power of God because conviction precedes repentance. And repentance is our first response to God's invitation to salvation and transformation.

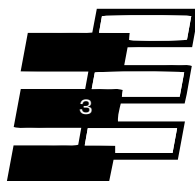
The multitude responded: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Their question opened the door for Peter to describe the vital first step in God's plan of salvation: repentance. In Acts 2:38–39, Peter emphatically answered with clarity the people's genuine question, which he had first lived out, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your children and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Discussion Questions: What can we learn from Peter's initial failure and identity crisis? What can we learn from the redemption Peter experienced in Acts 2?

Peter's declaration was not just for a short season or confined time period; God's gracious message of salvation is for all time and all generations. The psalmist wrote: "One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts" (Psalm 145:4). The outpouring of the Holy Ghost that Peter proclaimed first starts with a repentant heart, and continues to water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ and Spirit baptism. This unmerited gift is not bound by time; it is available to all who seek Him and obey Him.

Closing

Peter was redeemed from a terrible failure, yet he was used by God to set in motion the beginning of the Apostolic Pentecostal church. Peter initially was a fisherman who left his occupation to follow Jesus and became a fisher of men. Before Jesus ascended as recorded in John 20, He appeared once more to Peter and a few of the disciples at the sea of Tiberias. Peter wanted to go fishing on the sea, so he and his fellow Jesus followers entered a ship. Perhaps after such an emotional season in his life, Peter wanted to revert to a beloved hobby that would provide some food and some cash. They had fished all night long but had nothing to show for all their efforts.



Suddenly a voice came from a man on the shore instructing them to cast their net on the other side of the boat. John, the beloved disciple, approached Peter and convinced him that the man on the shore was Jesus. As they had initially done three years before, they obeyed the voice of their Master and changed course. Jesus spent more time making sure the message they would one day preach was the message He gave them to preach. And His message, which became their message, is still our message.

ENGAGE

The Word of God is transformational. The Word of God endures forever. Pray with boldness that your life will not be defined by failure, but by success with God. Make sure God's message is your message to this generation. You are a living epistle with a lively hope that our hurting world needs to hear. The only message that can make the difference is this glorious gospel message.

Will you allow His identity to be your identity? Will you allow His message to be your message? If so, what He did for people in generations past He will do in our generation.

