

09/20/26 Message

Part of FollowJourney of Discipleship
September 14, 2026

Message: Exposed

Series: Follow

Background

I'm approaching this series as if we are all in the same stage of our journey with Jesus, at the beginning. For some, this will be a review, but for most it will be a guide for what comes next. For all of us, if we'll let God work in and through us, we'll grow closer to Jesus and each other.

—Pastor Chad

Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)

19 “Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

It's a circle of life with Jesus at the center. When you jump on the circle, it should be your goal to reach out and grab everyone you can and pull them on the circle with you. There's a lot more to it, but it's a great illustration. When you commit your life to Jesus and you commit to following Jesus, then you become His disciple. It's like being a student. You're only a student as long as you choose to be. That's the problem with this thing we call the spiritual journey. So many of us choose Jesus when we need Him, but when life is good, we forget all about Him. We stop being a student!

—Pastor Chad

- The spiritual journey is intended to be a LIFELONG commitment where you start and never stop.

Stop Playing Church

I really want to go to the beach. I love the sand. I love the ocean. I love seafood. But I can sit here all day with a whole lot of “want to” and it gets me absolutely nowhere! To get to the beach, I need to get my tail in gear and begin the journey. I’ll never get to where I’m not headed! I can recognize that God is my Creator. I can believe that Jesus is my Savior. But if I never start the journey with Jesus, I’ll never arrive in heaven. It’s just that simple! I’m asking you to start the journey to heaven with me and let’s go on this journey together. Today’s message is called Exposed.

—Pastor Chad

If we are on a journey together, we’re going to see each other trip and fall from time to time. It’s not always going to be a bed of roses. It’s like seeing a celebrity without the makeup and fancy clothes, there are imperfections and there are scars. We’re not playing church anymore. We’re becoming the real deal but more than that, we’re becoming okay with being real around one another. If we don’t get comfortable with that, we’ll never be okay with being real with God.

—Pastor Chad

– Search in the Bible and list out all of Peter’s mess-ups and failures

With all of them, Jesus said this:

Matthew 16:18 (ESV)

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Discipleship Exposes

- Following Jesus exposes more than CONFIDENCE

***Luke 22:31-34 (NLT)**

31 “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat.

32 But I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, that your faith should

not fail. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen your brothers.”

33 Peter said, “Lord, I am ready to go to prison with you, and even to die with you.”

34 But Jesus said, “Peter, let me tell you something. Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me.”

Discipleship isn't about how strong, how bold, or how confident you think you are. It's about how completely you depend on and how faithfully you follow Jesus.

—Pastor Chad

- Following Jesus exposes what is really INSIDE

Luke 22:54-62 (NLT)

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

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

56 A servant girl noticed him in the firelight and began staring at him. Finally she said, “This man was one of Jesus' followers!”

57 But Peter denied it. “Woman,” he said, “I don't even know him!”

58 After a while someone else looked at him and said, “You must be one of them!”

“No, man, I'm not!” Peter retorted.

59 About an hour later someone else insisted, “This must be one of them, because he is a Galilean, too.”

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

61 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.”

62 And Peter left the courtyard, weeping bitterly.

There's a truth that we all need to understand. Belief without following is not enough. Following without belief is not enough. It's a combination where you know enough about Jesus to believe in Him, and you believe in Him enough to trust Him, and trust Him enough to follow

Him! Judas didn't know enough to believe, and he didn't believe enough to trust, and he didn't trust enough to follow. He piece-milled it together, but it wasn't enough! After that betrayal, the betrayals kept coming! Peter ends up in the courtyard of the high priest, sitting by a fire. Close enough to see what's going on, but not close enough to be part of it. And three times over the course of the night, he is identified as one of Jesus' followers. And three times over the course of the night, he denies being a disciple of Jesus! Peter, the one who told Jesus, I'll go to prison with you, I'll die with you, I'll never deny you Jesus! Actions speak louder than words!

—Pastor Chad

Peter was in CYA mode where he was covering his own assets (I said assets) and he was protecting me, myself, and I, regardless of how quickly it made the courageous a coward.

Let's see what Peter did with his regret:

- Jesus was killed, taking on your sin and my sin, shedding his blood on the cross. His beaten, worn, dead body was placed in a tomb. Three days later, he walked out of the tomb alive, resurrected for the world to see he really was the Son of God, and he conquered sin, death, hell, and the grave.
- Sometime later, the disciples were gathered beside the Sea of Galilee. Peter said, "I'm going fishing." — They were coming back in just as the sun was breaking. They saw a man standing on the beach but didn't know who he was, they were still pretty far out. He yelled out asking if they caught any fish. They said, no, we didn't catch anything.
- The man told them to throw their nets out on the right-hand side of the boat. They did, and like before, their nets filled so full they couldn't haul it in! That's when John said to Peter, look, it's Jesus!
- This was only the third time the disciples had seen Jesus since he was raised from the dead. Peter jumped out of the boat and ran 100 yards to Jesus! Jesus had breakfast waiting on them, fish cooking over a charcoal fire and some bread.

John 21:15-19 (NLT)

15 After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," Peter replied, "you know I

love you.” “Then feed my lambs,” Jesus told him.

16 Jesus repeated the question: “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

“Yes, Lord,” Peter said, “you know I love you.” “Then take care of my sheep,” Jesus said.

17 A third time he asked him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said,

“Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Then feed my sheep.

18 “I tell you the truth, when you were young, you were able to do as you liked; you dressed yourself and went wherever you wanted to go.

But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and others will dress you and take you where you don’t want to go.”

19 Jesus said this to let him know by what kind of death he would glorify God. Then Jesus told him, “Follow me.”

If Peter’s story ended with him denying Jesus, he’d be no better than Judas. But this tells us Peter didn’t give up. He didn’t surrender to the sin, and he didn’t surrender to the guilt of his sin. Instead, he kept on keeping on. Peter hadn’t reached the end of his story, it was a turning point. His bitter weeping or violent wailing as it was, was a turning point. It was the beginning of repentance. He was turning away from his sin, and he was choosing Jesus!

—Pastor Chad

– It is not the failure that determines your future with Jesus, it is the journey from that moment on.

- Following Jesus exposes you to RESTORATION

– Jesus sees beyond the brokenness.

– Jesus refused to allow Peter’s worst moment to become Peter’s identity.

– Jesus refused to allow Peter’s past to shape the man Jesus knew Peter could and would be!

– Following Jesus means failure doesn’t get the last word!

Did you notice that Jesus asks Peter the question three times? He asked; Peter, do you love me? Peter, do you love me more than you love anyone else? Peter, do you really love me? Why three times? Because Peter denied

Jesus three times! Jesus is restoring Peter!

—Pastor Chad

- Peter's restoration doesn't just include forgiveness. Jesus didn't just forgive Peter, Jesus put him back together, and Jesus put him to work!
- Peter, you've repented and you've been restored; feed my lambs, take care of my sheep, feed my sheep!
- Peter, you're not finished! You've just begun!

Jesus is telling Peter, this is your life, the good, bad, and ugly. Now it's time for a choice to be made. Peter, it's time for you to make a commitment. Peter, are you in or are you out? I'm asking you to follow me! This was the last thing Jesus said to Peter that was recorded in the Bible. It was literally a mic drop moment. I believe for the first time, Peter got it. He knew what he was committing to, and he knew the path Jesus had prepared for him. But more than anything else, he knew what he would experience this side of heaven really didn't matter because with Jesus, his earthly life would be better. And by following Jesus, Jesus would lead him to heaven. Peter was exposed and it led to him choosing a life with Jesus and an eternity in heaven.

—Pastor Chad

Rooster Moment

When the rooster crowed Peter made a life changing decision that changed his eternity. Peter was exposed! It was a rooster moment. We all have rooster moments. Moments we wish we could erase, words we wish we could take back, decisions we wish we could undo. But discipleship isn't the story of perfect people perfectly following Jesus. Discipleship is the story of imperfect people following a perfect Savior. Don't overestimate your own strength. Don't underestimate the power of failure. Don't underestimate what Jesus can still do with you.

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- Maybe you've failed -> follow Jesus
- Maybe you've wandered -> follow Jesus
- Maybe you thought God would never use you -> follow Jesus

Jesus is asking you: Follow me!