

## Transformed Through Jesus Community!

Scripture used: Acts 9:36-43 (NLT)

### OVERVIEW

The big idea for our current series is that a living relationship with Jesus can transform each person's life in amazing ways. This week - the third message of the series -- Pastor Tina showed us how an utterly transformed Peter was able to be used by God to transform another person in a dramatic way. In Peter's life, his true transformation became evident after Jesus was crucified, resurrected, and ascended. He spent time in fellowship and community with other Christians, and that allowed his faith to mature. We are inspired by Peter's ability to preach, teach, and heal in Acts, especially knowing how "rough around the edges" he is described to be in the Gospels! God used him to heal a paralytic and even raise a disciple named Dorcas from the dead! (Acts 9:40)

### KEY POINTS

**The Big Idea:** The old is cast away and the new arrives when you are in relationship with Jesus.

- 1. Transformations are still happening.** The followers of Jesus are still doing His works. It's been almost 2,000 years since the crucifixion, but Christians are being used by God to perform miracles around the world.
- 2. The community expects God to act.** When Dorcas died, the disciples immediately sent two "mystery men" to call for Peter to come -- demonstrating an expectation and a faith that God could use him to raise the dead! Do we exhibit that kind of expectancy in our lives and actions?
- 3. God acts through His people.** Each of us is a vehicle for God to bless the world, and to call others to Him. That is the essence of our role as Christians. We do amazing works in His name, and His fame increases as a result. Peter saw Jesus perform miracles on so many occasions, he knew the basics of how to invite God to use him to do the same!
- 4. Hurt people hurt people, but transformed people transform people.** Rather than allowing hurt to be the dominant force in our lives and relationships, spiritual renewal can characterize us and our personal relationships. God means for us to be transformed -- and to be agents of transformation when others around us are carrying around pain, brokenness, and come asking for help.
- 5. Real transformation occurs in the context of community -- Jesus-community.** We change more by indirection than by individual intention. We grow when we are nested in a supportive network of other Christians who will challenge us, pray for us, and embody faith in their lives -- just by their examples! Although Bay Area regional culture is often characterized by isolation, overwork, long commutes, and loneliness, the investment of community is worth it. No one should struggle with doubt, sin, and death alone. Let's go the extra mile for each other.
- 6. Regional transformation is the result.** When God showed up in powerful ways, the word would spread, many believed in Jesus, and whole cities experienced revival and renewal. The map of the Bay Area is strikingly similar in size and scope to the map of the Holy Land. Jesus is encouraging us here at NBCC to see that we are established in 55+ life groups all over the region, and how God might be using our vibrant and beautiful community to make an impact upon this entire region.

## DISCUSSION

1. **HEAR** God was patient with Peter. Peter spent 3 years with Jesus and the disciples (Jesus' life group) before his faith was strong enough to perform miracles. What are the areas of your life that you wrestle with the most? How could Jesus community strengthen and refine you?
2. **UNDERSTAND** Imagine the impact you could have if you grew strong inside our Jesus community. Now imagine that multiplied by over 1,200 people in the NBCC community. How could the Bay Area be transformed by our Jesus community?

**DO:** Reflect on your present life compared to your past. Identify one concrete area or way that you have been transformed through the power of Christ. Then identify one person in your life that could be transformed through Christ's influence over that area in your life. Pray specifically for the power of God to work in and through you!