



THE NAZ FERGUS FALLS

Series: Easter

Message Title: He Is Risen

Speaker: Clay Mitchell | Lead Pastor

Date: April 5th, 2026

[Link to the Message](#)

This week Pastor Clay delivers an Easter message about how Jesus deals with people in sin, using Peter's denial and restoration as the central example. Many Christians hide their 'rotten bag of potatoes' - secret sins or moral failures - believing Jesus will condemn them. However, through Peter's story of denying Jesus three times and then being lovingly restored by the risen Christ, we see that Jesus doesn't condemn but rather calls us to confession and restoration. Ultimately, Jesus meets us where we are spiritually and transforms us through His grace, not by our performance.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank You for this Easter and the celebration of Your Son's resurrection. As we gather to study Your Word, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to what You want to teach us. Help us to be honest about the areas in our lives where we need Your grace and restoration. Remove any barriers that would keep us from experiencing the fullness of Your love and forgiveness. Holy Spirit, guide our discussion and help us to encourage one another as we grow in our relationship with You. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What's one Easter tradition from your childhood that you remember most fondly?

Key Verses

- Matthew 26:33-36; 58-64
- John 21:1-19
- Mark 16:6-7
- Romans 3:23-25
- Proverbs 28:13
- John 11:25-26
- 1 Corinthians 15:58



Questions

1. Pastor Clay used the analogy of a 'rotten bag of potatoes' to describe hidden sin. What makes it so tempting to hide our failures rather than bring them to Jesus?
2. When Jesus asked Peter 'Do you love me?' three times, He was addressing Peter's heart condition. Why is the condition of our heart so important to Jesus?
3. The angel specifically mentioned 'the disciples and Peter' when announcing the resurrection. What does this tell us about how God views us after we've failed?
4. Peter's response to his failure was to go back to fishing - his old profession. How do we sometimes retreat to 'old ways' when we feel disqualified by our sin?
5. Jesus met Peter at a charcoal fire, similar to where Peter had denied Him. How does Jesus use our past failures as opportunities for restoration rather than condemnation?
6. What's the difference between condemnation and conviction, and how can we learn to recognize when the Holy Spirit is convicting us versus when we're experiencing false guilt?

Life Application

This week, identify one area of hidden sin or failure in your life that you've been avoiding. Instead of continuing to hide it, bring it to Jesus in honest confession and prayer. Ask Him to help you experience His grace and restoration in that specific area, and consider sharing your struggle with a trusted Christian friend or mentor for accountability and support.

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the powerful reminder that You are the God of second chances and restoration. Help us to stop hiding from You and instead run to You with our failures and struggles. Give us the courage to confess our sins and the faith to believe in Your complete forgiveness. Transform our hearts to love You more deeply, and help us to live in the freedom and new life that Your resurrection provides. May we never forget that because You live, we can live abundantly as well. Continue to work in our lives this week as we seek to follow You more closely. In Your precious name we pray, Amen.