

“Inside Out: Knowing Ourselves -Type 6 The Loyalist”
John 18:15-18, 21:15-19

The story is told about Albert Einstein being asked by a reporter to name the most important question in the world and this is how he responded (screen), “I think the most important question facing humanity is, ‘Is the universe a friendly place?’ This is the first and most basic question all people must answer for themselves. For if we decide that the universe is an unfriendly place, then we will use our technology, our scientific discoveries and our natural resources to achieve safety and power by creating bigger walls to keep out the unfriendliness and bigger weapons to destroy all that which is unfriendly and I believe that we are getting to a place where technology is powerful enough that we may either completely isolate or destroy ourselves as well in this process. If we decide that the universe is neither friendly nor unfriendly and that God is essentially ‘playing dice with the universe’, then we are simply victims to the random toss of the dice and our lives have no real purpose or meaning. But if we decide that the universe is a friendly place, then we will use our technology, our scientific discoveries and our natural resources to create tools and models for understanding that universe. Because power and safety will come through understanding its workings and its motives. God does not play dice with the universe.”

In our world today, there seems to be a conspiracy to make us believe that danger is in every corner and that our world is falling apart. The overarching message is that the universe is not friendly! Last Sunday there was an ad for a home security system that was supposed to convince us that we need to invest in one. Here it is:

<https://youtu.be/nPwVtpNs6eU>

It paints a grim picture of our world. Fear sells! It motivates people to believe lies and to act based on our worst instincts, even if it means destroying others. Think of the recent political debates and news, most of which is based on fear of the other: the immigrant, the stranger, the other side of the political debate, the government, the Russians, the environment, measles, or whatever entity is being identified as the next threat to our security. It is fair to say that we live in a state of anxiety based on the changing circumstances of our lives.

The reason I bring fear up today is that Enneagram Type 6 is the personality type that is often prone to anxiety and fear. They imagine the world to be an unsafe place and spend a lot of their energy worrying about what could go wrong. Even when things are going well, Sixes are prone to an inner anxiety that does not let them totally trust life. As Steven Wright once wrote, “If everything seems to be going well, you have obviously overlooked something.” What Sixes look for is predictability and certainty. Enneagram Sixes are great guardians and group members. Their transformation is through learning to trust.

Enneagram Type 6

AT THEIR BEST

Loyal
 Liable
 Prepared
 Trustworthy
 Compassionate
 Witty
 Practical
 Supportive
 Responsible

AT THEIR WORST

Hyper-vigilant
 Dependent
 Unpredictable
 Judgemental
 Paranoid
 Defensive
 Rigid
 Self-Defeating
 Self-Doubting

Enneagram Type 6

We use our personality to protect ourselves from our Core Fear and to also obtain our Core Desire.

⊗ Core Fear:

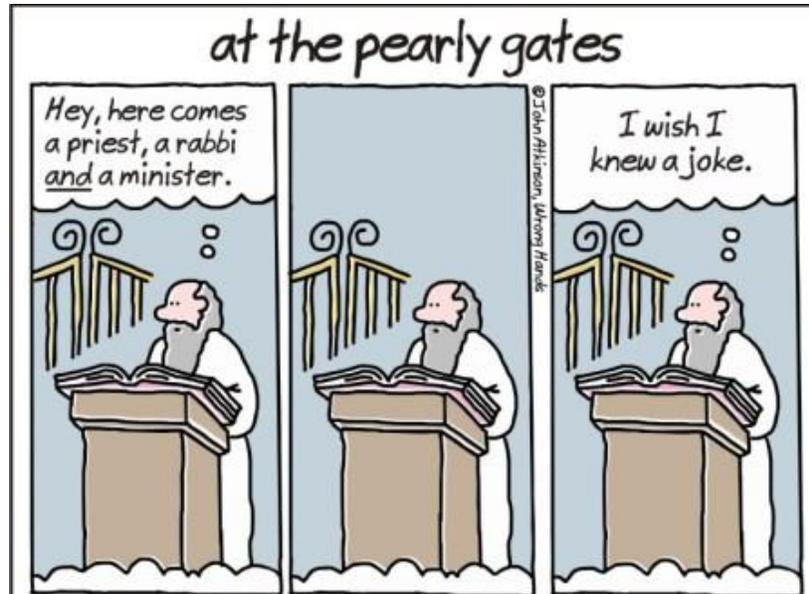
They have fear of fear itself, being in danger, uncertainty, chaos, not having support, security, and guidance. They also fear being blamed, in trouble, alone, targeted, helpless, unsafe, and physically abandoned.

⊕ Core Desire:

To have security, guidance, and support.

And so today we look at Peter, one of the disciples of Jesus, to help us understand Type Six and the process of transformation that could happen for us when we are consumed by fear and anxiety.

We will begin with the fear that made Peter deny Jesus at the hour of his crucifixion. Peter was one of the key disciples of Jesus. The jokes about Peter being the guardian of the Pearly Gates remind us of the central role Peter played in the mission and ministry of Jesus.



Peter became the rock on which Jesus built his church. As a Six, Peter needed an outside authority to give him direction and security. He found all that in Jesus. He found his mission in life through following Jesus. He worked hard and thought of himself as a loyal member of Jesus' inner group of followers. He was loyal to the mission of Jesus and believed that he would defend it until the end. But when life's fears came crashing down on him, he lost his focus on Jesus and was even willing to deny Jesus to save his own life. When fear crept in, Peter denied Jesus and decided to save his own skin. Let's listen to how he acted (Read John 18:15-18). He denied Jesus and then went on to do that two more times!

It is said that Peter's denial of Jesus is the most known event in Peter's ministry. In fact, all four Gospels record this episode. In John 13:37 at the Last Supper, Peter confessed his commitment to Jesus saying that he was willing to lay his life down for Jesus. (screen) "Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." Skip forward just a little bit and then you see Peter willing to deny Jesus completely and not just one time, but three times! In the Bible whenever something is repeated three times, we know that it is a way to emphasize a point. Peter's denial happened three times, so we don't overlook it. Peter, the Rock, the one who was supposed to be faithful and loyal to Jesus till the end, cowered under pressure. His fear got the best of him. He didn't want to be crucified like Jesus. He also put all of his faith in Jesus, an outer authority and when this outside authority was gone, Peter could not find a strong enough inner authority to replace it. He had not yet found his inner authority to weather the storms and fears of life. As a Six, Peter relied on things staying stable and safe under the protection of Jesus. But when Jesus seemed to be out of the picture, Peter did not know what to do. After

Jesus died, Peter went back to his old profession of fishing. This was where he found stability before. Then Jesus appears to the disciples and asks Peter to be the one to feed his sheep, meaning to continue his mission (Read John 21:15-19). I love the emphasis here on Peter's role. Jesus repeats his call to Peter three times as if to reverse the three-fold denial that took place. And the amazing thing is that Peter ends up doing just that. Peter was transformed from a cowardly denier to a courageous proclaimer of the good news. Two things shifted for Peter that could be clues for Sixes and for all of us when we deal with fear and anxiety.

1. The Resurrection: In his mystical experience of Jesus after the crucifixion, Peter learned an important lesson. In light of eternity, all his worries and fears were not final. With having an experience of Jesus after the resurrection, he was reminded that life was not limited to this side of eternity and that all will be well in the end. Ian Cron and Suzanne Stabile put it this way (screen), "Sixes need to remember the spiritual truth that they are ultimately safe. This doesn't mean they're magically protected from disaster or calamity, just that from an eternal perspective this Story ends well." So even after Jesus was crucified and seemed to fail from a worldly perspective, Peter learned that Jesus was actually triumphant, and that death was not the final word. This means that ultimately the universe is friendly and benign, even when things seem to be falling apart. Keep eternity and the resurrection in mind when you are fearful and feeling unsafe.
2. Inner Authority: Peter learned to trust himself. For a long time, he relied on the rules of society and other authority figures to tell him what is true. He didn't know how to trust his inner authority. As a Six, he had a lot of doubts about himself. Unfortunately, this is not limited to Sixes. Many times, even in the church, we are taught to not trust ourselves because we often confuse ego with soul or true essence. But once we learn to access God's guidance in our souls, we can trust the wisdom that comes to us knowing that it is always for the service of the greater good of the world. Through his failure and then his mystical encounters with Jesus, Peter learned to distinguish between the voice of his ego (often associated with fear) and the voice of his soul (always associated with love). That was how he was transformed to face the challenges of life without wavering and becoming fearful and cowardly.

Today, I would like to invite you to take a few moments and let one of your fears or challenges you are facing right now come to your attention. As it comes up for you, ponder these questions: How do I see this situation in light of eternity and in the light of my soul? How do I act based on my inner wisdom for the greater good of all involved?

We will conclude this time with a prayer from Joyce Rupp called "Prayer of Disruption" "Divine Challenger, when did I stop risking? When did I lose my edge for adventure and surprise? When did I start pretending that what I now know is all there is to know? When did I give in to fear and bow to security? When did I let uncertainty press against my free spirit? When did I start moving toward the sure, easy thing? When did I give away my ability to be disturbed? When did I start refusing to pay the price for fuller depth and joy? When did I let panic of the unknown future wrap its barbed wire fingers around my desire to grow? Inner source of courage nudge me toward growth. Urge me away from my strongholds. Convince me of my potential to leap beyond the barriers." Amen.