

FAILURE Mercy – Part 3

What Is the Cause of Our Personal Failures? Key Observations about Peter’s Failure:

OBSERVATION #1: We overestimate our **STRENGTH**.

“31 On the way, Jesus told them, “Tonight all of you will desert me. For the Scriptures say, ‘God will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ 32 But after I have been raised from the dead, I will go ahead of you to Galilee and meet you there.” 33 Peter declared, “Even if everyone else deserts you, I will never desert you.” 34 Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, Peter—this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me.” 35 “No!” Peter insisted. “Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you!” And all the other disciples vowed the same.” Matthew 26:31-35 (NLT)

“So, watch yourself! The person who thinks he can stand against sin had better watch that he does not fall into sin.” 1 Corinthians 10:12 (NLT)

OBSERVATION #2: We fear the **DISAPPROVAL** of others.

“58 Peter followed far behind to the courtyard of the high priest’s house, and he sat down with the guards to see what would happen to Jesus. 69 At that time, as Peter was sitting in the courtyard, a servant girl came to him and said, “You also were with Jesus of Galilee.” 70 But Peter said to all the people there that he was never with Jesus. He said, “I don’t know what you are talking about.” Matthew 26:58, 69-70 (NCV)

“It is a dangerous trap to be concerned with what others think of you, but if you trust the Lord, you’ll be safe.” Proverbs 29:25 (GNT)

OBSERVATION #3: We **SPEAK** without thinking.

“Then Peter went out to the entrance of the courtyard and there another woman saw him and said to those standing there, ‘This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.’ Again, Peter denied it, and this time he swore an oath and said, ‘I don’t even know that man!’ But after a while, the men who had been standing there came over to Peter and said, ‘We know that you are one of them because your Galilean accent gives you away.’ Peter lost his temper and started cursing and swearing. He shouted, ‘I don’t know the man!’ Immediately he heard a rooster crow.” Matthew 26:71-74 (TLB, NCV)

“5 So also the tongue is a small thing, but what enormous damage it can do. A great forest can be set on fire by one tiny spark. 6 And the tongue is a flame of fire. It is full of wickedness and poisons every part of the body. And the tongue is set on fire by hell itself and can turn our whole lives into a blazing flame of destruction and disaster.” James 3:5-6 (TLB)

What should we do when we fail? Three Steps Peter took:

STEP #1: **GRIEVE**

“Suddenly, Jesus’ words flashed through Peter’s mind: “Before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me.” And he went away, weeping bitterly.” Matthew 26:75 (NLT)

“The sacrifice God wants is a broken spirit. God, you will not reject a heart that is broken and sorry for sin.” Psalm 51:17 (NCV)

STEP #2: Let your **SMALL GROUP** support you.

“She went and told his companions. They were mourning and crying;” Mark 16:10 (GNT)

“That evening the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus appeared in the middle of the group, and said ‘Peace be with you!’ . . . The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord!” John 20:19-20 (NLT)

“A week later the disciples were together again meeting in a home.” John 20:26 (GWT)

STEP #3: **DROP** yourself on God’s mercy.

“All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation...” 1 Peter 1:3 (NLT)

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.” 1 Peter 5:7 (NIV)

WHAT DOES JESUS DO WITH OUR FAILURES?

“31 “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” Luke 22:31-32 (NIV)

KEY TRUTH #1: God isn't SHOCKED.

“God certainly knows what we are made of. He bears in mind that we are dust.” Psalm 103:14 (GW)

KEY TRUTH #2: Jesus PRAYS for us.

“That is why he is always able to save those who come to God through him. He can do this because he always lives and intercedes for them.” Hebrews 7:25 (GW)

KEY TRUTH #3: God BELIEVES in us.

“. . . And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers . . .” Luke 22:32 (NIV)

“A righteous person may fall seven times, but he gets up again...” Proverbs 24:16 (GW)

“6 He said, “Do not be afraid. You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth Who was nailed to a cross. He is risen! He is not here! See, here is the place where they laid Him. 7 Go and tell His followers and Peter that He is going ahead of you into Galilee. You will see Him there as He told you.” Mark 16:6-7 (NIV)

KEY TRUTH #4: God shows us mercy when we are DOWN.

“Jesus appeared again to the disciples beside the Sea of Galilee. Seven of the disciples were there and Simon Peter said, ‘I’m going fishing.’ ‘We’ll come, too’ they all said. So, they went out in the boat, but even though they fished all night, they caught nothing. At dawn the disciples saw a man standing on the shore, but they couldn’t see it was Jesus. He called out, ‘Friends, have you caught any fish?’ ‘Not a thing!’ they replied.’ Then Jesus said, ‘Throw out your net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you’ll get plenty of fish!’ So, they did what Jesus said to do, and they instantly caught so many fish, they couldn’t even draw in the net because it was so full of fish! Then John said to Peter, ‘it’s the Lord!’ “When Peter realized that he put on his tunic (for he had stripped for work), jumped into the water, and swam ashore, leaving the others in the boat to pull the loaded net to the shore, for they were only out about three hundred feet. “When they got to shore they saw that Jesus was cooking fish and bread over a charcoal fire. Jesus said, ‘Bring some of the fish you just caught.’ So, Peter went back aboard and dragged the net ashore. It was filled with a 153-large fish, and yet the net had not torn. ‘Now come and have some breakfast!’ Jesus said. Now they were sure it really was the Lord! Then Jesus served them the bread and the fish. This was the third time Jesus had appeared to his disciples since he had been raised from the dead.” John 21:1-14 (NASB, NIV, NIV)

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” Lamentations 3:22-23 (ESV)

KEY TRUTH #5: God uses our failures to build His CHURCH.

“And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” Luke 22:32 (ESV)

“After breakfast Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?’ ‘Yes, Lord, you know I love you,’ Peter replied. ‘Then feed my lambs,’ Jesus said. Then Jesus repeated the question: ‘Peter, do you love me?’ Peter said, ‘Yes, Lord! You know I love you!’ ‘Then take care of my sheep,’ Jesus said. Then Jesus asked the same question one more time: ‘Peter, do you love me?’ Now Peter was grieved that Jesus asked the question a third time, so he said, ‘Lord, you know everything! You know I love you!’ And Jesus replied, ‘Then feed my sheep!’” John 21:15-17 (ESV, NIV)

“Now I say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it!” Matthew 16:18 (NLT)