

JUNE 12<sup>TH</sup>

## DEALING WITH DISAPPOINTMENT AND FAILURE

*“The LORD look on you and judge, because you have made us stink in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us.” Then Moses turned to the LORD and said, “O Lord, why have you done evil to this people? Why did you ever send me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people, and you have not delivered your people at all.”* **EXODUS 5:21-23**

The thrill of victory and the agony of defeat. Professional athletes remember their mistakes far more than they remember their triumphs. The defeats and disappointments create a drive for excellence that can only be quenched when they have finally won. Are we much different? There are lots of life events that we celebrate and remember fondly, but often our mistakes and pains are remembered longer than our successes. Why is this? It's probably our insatiable desire to be perfect and be independent. When we make mistakes and hurt people this reminds us of our sin. We want to rise above those moments because we want to feel like we have arrived somehow. Moses was no different than us. We're now past the burning bush and Moses and Aaron have words of hope to bring to the people. The people are excited that God has finally visited them...except things don't quite go as they expected. What does God have to teach us through these disappointments and failures?

Instead of the Hebrews' lives getting better, their lives actually get worse here in chapter 5. The message that was once hopeful has turned into a terrible burden. Pharaoh turns the table against the Hebrews here. What do we find that he says here? Exodus 5:17-18 describes it like this: “But he said, “You are idle, you are idle; that is why you say, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord.’ Go now and work. No straw will be given you, but you must still deliver the same number of bricks.” As Moses states in the next verse, they knew they were in trouble. They had to make the same number of bricks, but they had to gather their own straw also! Naturally, the people come and complain to Moses and Aaron. How does Moses respond? He throws a pity party for himself. Moses hasn't been back with the Hebrews for very long, but he already has adopted their complaining ways. You can almost hear his voice: “Why did you ever send me...you have not delivered your people at all.” This is a test of Moses' faith. God is showing him that it was never about Moses, Aaron, or the Hebrews. God is teaching them that it's all about God and His glory.

Moses was disappointed because it seemed like he failed. After the three objections/excuses that he gave in Exodus 3 and 4, he finally relented and went back to the Hebrews in Egypt. But his efforts didn't work. No wonder he was so discouraged and disappointed. He was disappointed that God didn't work according to his expectations. Moses expected immediate impact and redemption. God was redeeming the people, but only after he humbled Egypt's gods. What's interesting here is that God is doing exactly what He told Moses that He would do. Go back and read Exodus 4. God told Moses that He would harden Pharaoh's heart. Moses misunderstood because he made it about his timing rather than God's timing and plan. Men, are we any different than Moses here? How often do we put expectations on God for what He needs to do in our lives? How often do we put God in a box and treat Him like we are the master and He is our puppet? We become discouraged, depressed, and disappointed because life doesn't turn out like we expected. But God. God is never on our timeline or along for the ride of our expectations. God has something much bigger for us. His design and plan is all about His glory. His perfect plan for us is to enjoy Him forever. The sooner we get on that bus, the sooner we will have the true peace and joy that we've always been looking for.

***Spend some time asking forgiveness for ways that you have put expectations on God. Ask Him for help to find rest in His plan for your life.***

**For Further Reading: Exodus 6:1-13**

