

The Gospel of John - #59 - 03/20/2022 - "Looking at Failure in a God-honoring Way!"

John 18: 1-27 Believers can move on after failure if we make these four courageous decisions...

Introduction: IL- My experience with feeling like a failure as a child when it came to prayer.

*Lots of details in the four Gospel accounts! John focuses on more of Jesus as the divine Son of God, written probably last of all the Gospel accounts. Let me give you an example of John's careful detail as an eye witness of the events- we'll look at verses 1-10 for a moment and then highlight these four courageous decisions that will keep us from failure now and in the future!

IL- W. Graham Scroggie- "Courage and cowardice mingled in Peter."

Verses 3- 10: "a band of soldiers,... officers from the chief priests..." **"I am he..."** "I have lost not one..." ["The servant's name was Malchus."]

...to cling to the character of God- verse 4 "...knowing all that would happen to Him..."

Jeremiah 29: 11- "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." **IL-** Open Theism- God doesn't know everything. Oh yes, He does! Matthew 26: 15-17- And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven." Example: God's faithfulness- Deuteronomy 32: 4- "The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice, a God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he." I can give up or go on- you can make a brand new start! Romans 8: 28- "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose!"

...to put pride in its place- verse 10 "Then Simon Peter, having a sword..." Matthew 26: 33- 35- "Peter answered Him, 'Though all fall away because of you, I will never fall away...even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!'" John 13: 37- "Peter said to Him, 'Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you!'" And he did, at the hands of the Roman government years later! There were times when he expressed humility- Luke 5: 8- "Depart from me for I am a sinful man, oh Lord!" **IL-** Theodore Roosevelt said, "The only man who never makes a mistake is the man who never does anything." Luke 22: 49- 52- "And when those who were around Him saw what would follow, they said, 'Lord, shall we strike with a sword?' And one of them struck the servant of the High Priest and cut off his ear. But Jesus said, 'No more of this!' And He touched his ear and healed him." He learned much about humility as his life rolled on- 1 Peter 5: 5- "Clothe yourselves, all of you with humility toward one another for 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'"

...to seek the solitude of prayer- (Luke 22: 45, 46) "Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation." In Matthew 17 and Mark 9 we read about the time on the mountain when Jesus was transfigured before Peter, James and John. Peter wanted to stay there long term, but he didn't realize what He was saying. He learned how important prayer was and is later in life. 1 Peter 5: 6- "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, casting all your cares upon Him for He cares for you!" **IL-** Sometimes we fail at communication (with others, not with God unless sin is unconfessed), relationships,

finances- but the failure isn't final unless I quit as a Christian and walk away from God! 1 Peter 4: 7- "The end of all things is at hand, therefore be self-controlled and sober minded for the sake of your prayers! IL- During 1978 and the fireman's strike in England, the British army took over emergency firefighting. On January 14 they were called out by an elderly lady in South London to retrieve her cat. They arrived with impressive haste, very cleverly and carefully rescued the cat, and started to drive away. But the lady was so grateful she invited the squad of heroes in for tea. Driving off later with fond farewells and warm waving of arms, they ran over the cat and killed it. Hardly "hero" status at that point in time!

...to spend in-depth time in the Word of God- verses 19-21 "They know what I said." 1 Peter 1: 24-26- "All flesh is as grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower falls, but the Word of the Lord remains forever!" 2 Peter 1: 17-21- "For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to Him by the majestic glory, 'This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.' we heard this very voice borne from Heaven, for we were with Him on the holy mountain. And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed to which you do well to pay attention, as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit!"

Conclusion: What should I do to recover from a personal failure? Honestly face your failure and confess it to God- He already knows about it! Learn what you can from it so you can determine why it happened. Recommit to walking with God while spending time in His Word and in prayer as you walk with Him daily. The result will be that you will thrill at the thought that you belong to God as one of His children and He loves you and wants the very best for your life!