

☑ Overcoming Disappointments in Ministry

Wednesday, 13 September 2017 3:00 PM

Overcoming Disappointments in Ministry

I. Introduction:

1. Paul's Warning to Ephesians Elders

- Act 20:22 *And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, **not knowing the things that will happen to me there,***
Act 20:23 *except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.*
Act 20:24 *But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I **may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus,** to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.*
 - We do not know the things that we will experience in the journey of ministry
 - We love the successes but there are also the battles and difficulties and disappointments
 - We are part of an Apostolic Supernatural Movement...There is warfare
 - Apostle: apostello....sent away on a mission to penetrate and overcome enemy forces and establish the culture and ways of the Kingdom

2. Paul's Two Goals:

- **Finish my race with joy**
- **Finish the ministry I have received from The Lord Jesus**
- **Finishing strong is important**
- Paul's Warning
- Act 20:28 *Therefore **take heed to yourselves** and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*
 - *Take heed:...prosecho...to give attention, to guard, take care of*
 - Paul is giving his last words to the Elders. He will never see them again
 - Last words of a man are important words
 - There are several aspects of his warnings. We will focus on one
- "Take Heed to Yourselves"
 - No one else is responsible for the condition of your heart and life and faith
 - Leaders are committed to sacrifice and serving and often neglect their own welfare
 - Pastors and Leaders I counsel from many places
 - Unresolved issues going back to foundations

- Lack Apostolic Fathering
- **Our ministry is an overflow of our life and relationships and how we respond to the pain of ministry and life:**
- **Our Personal Ministry Life:**
 - Global Impact
 - Also betrayals and disappointments by people above, beside and beneath us
 - Setbacks in finances, family and ministry....all opportunities to humble self and grow
 - Still processing pain from last year
 - Determined to finish race with joy...and the ministry
 - *Col 4:17 And say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."*
- **Let's look at "Taking Heed to Yourself"**
- Many aspects to this
 - Inner Man
 - Physical Health
 - Spiritual Health
 - Emotional and Mental Health
 - Marriage
 - Family
 - Finances
 - Relationships
- **Tonight: Overcoming Disappointments in Ministry**

II. **Betrayal and Disappointment**

1. **Key Passage**

- *Luk 24:13 Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem.*
- *Luk 24:14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.*
- *Luk 24:15 So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.*
- *Luk 24:16 But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.*
- *Luk 24:17 And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?"*
- *Luk 24:18 Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?"*

2. **What is the background to this event?**

- The disciples gave their lives to follow Jesus
- They sacrificed their business, relationships and comfort
- They lived together, ate together, slept together, prayed together, ministered and travelled together

- They became His disciples and a key part of Jesus ministry team
- They experienced the Presence of God, and constant miracles and Revival
- They carried a dream and hope for their future together and for their nation.

3. **The Disciples Experienced Betrayal and Deep Disappointment**

- *Ps.41:9 My own familiar friend whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me*
 - Judas not only betrayed Jesus he betrayed the whole team
 - Judas attack on Jesus was an attack upon the whole team
 - Judas misrepresented his intentions, deceived and betrayed them all,
 - Judas destroyed their dreams and hopes for the future
 - He was not an outsider...he was a covenant partner in ministry

III. **Betrayal**

1. **What is Betrayal?**

- The word *betrayal* comes from the Middle English word *bitrayen* — meaning “mislead, deceive.”
 - To deliver into the hands of an enemy
 - To be unfaithful in guarding a trust, or confidentiality
 - To desert or abandon
 - To be unfaithful in a relationship
 - To profess love and commitment while planning to abandon
 - To speak or imply commitment and then break up with no discussion or reason

2. **How does Betrayal Impact People?**

- Opens the doors for demons to enter (Jn.13:2, 27)
- Causes shock and sometimes trauma. (2Sam.13:20)
- Feelings of abandonment
- Feelings of Shame (*Whats wrong with me?*)
- Feelings of Guilt. (*What did I do wrong?*)
- Grief over the loss
- Anger at the injustice
- Fear of further betrayal
- Emotional numbness at what has happened
- Drawing back from Intimacy with God and passion to serve
- **NB. Betrayal can trigger major reactions if there are previous unresolved experiences of betrayal**

IV. **Disappointment**

1. **What is Disappointment?**

- Disappointment is a part of life that we all experience when our hopes or expectations are not met.
 - It is an appointment we expected that never happened
 - Disappointment is a feeling of sadness or loss because someone or something was not as good as we expected.
It is feeling unhappy because our hopes and expectations are unfulfilled
 - There would be no disappointment without passion and expectation of

something

2. **How does Disappointment Impact People?**

1. **Disappointments Accumulate**

- Pro 13:12 *Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.*
 - "Sick"...grieved, saddened, wounded, weak,
 - When disappointments are not resolved their impact accumulates
 - We are often unaware how much we have been impacted

2. **Disappointments cause a loss of passion and desire**

- Pro 4:23 *Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.*
 - Our heart is the core of our desire, motivation, passion
 - Accumulated disappointments cause the heart to lose passion and desire, a loss of first love
 - What was a joy and delight before now there is an indifference, lukewarmness, coldness

3. **Disappointments lead to Fear of Further Disappointment**

- 2Ti 1:6 *Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*
2Ti 1:7 *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*
 - Accumulated disappointments diminish expectations and hope for the future
 - Hope is replaced gradually by fear and desire to protect self from further disappointment
 - Desire to protect self and minimise personal risk causes people to control and limit future potential disappointments
- Fear is a spirit. When you yield to it, Fear governs decisions rather than Faith

4. **Disappointments are an Enemy of Intimacy and Destiny**

- Rev 2:4 *Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.*
 - Disappointments **cause the heart to cool, and passion diminish**. Often people blame God for their expectations not being met. *God has let me down*
 - They draw you away from the passion of first love and willingness to trust God
 - **The desire to avoid more disappointment causes people to wall up their heart the heart in self protection**
 - Intimacy for God is replaced by indifference.
 - Passion is replaced by ritual..going through the motions
 - Because we no longer trust, we **focus on staying safe rather than fulfilling God's destiny**
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5. **Disappointments are exploited by Satan as a weapon of warfare against you**

○ **Satan is an Accuser...a Slanderer(Rev.12:10)**

- Satan wants you to brood over your disappointments ...to nurse your hurt
- Satan sows lies and distortions into our mind
- If right now you find yourself in a season of deep disappointment, the enemy wants you to believe the lie that God is not listening to you and that He doesn't care about you.
- Satan points to your circumstances and present them as irrefutable evidence that
God doesn't care, God can't be trusted

6. **Disappointments lead to Offense with God and the Church**

- Pro 18:19 *A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, And contentions are like the bars of a castle.*
- Mat 24:10 *And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.*
 - Unresolved disappointments lead slowly to the heart becoming offended
 - Offense...skandalon...to cause to stumble, trip and fall
- **Are you carrying Disappointments in your Heart?**

V. **How were the Disciples affected by the Betrayal and Disappointment? (Lk.24:13-)**

1. **Withdrawal from Assignment(vs13)**

- They drew back from their assignment
- They drew back from the coming outpouring of the Holy Spirit
- *Drawback...hupostello..to shrink, to conceal, hold back out of sight, become timid (Heb.10:38)*

2. **Seeking Substitutes (vs13)**

- *Emmaus....Place of Warm Baths, of comfort from pain*
- They sought comfort and distraction from their pain
- Substitutes are ways of avoidance of facing painful issues

3. **Inner Conflict (vs15)**

- Luk 24:15 *So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.*
 - *"reasoned" ...debate, dispute, argue*
 - They were in shock over what had happened
 - They were arguing and reasoning

4. **Loss of Discernment(vs.16)**

- Luk 24:16 *But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him.*
 - *Restrained...krateo...a spiritual force, strength*

- They Lost discernment of Jesus Presence
- Their circumstances and pain had stolen their attention
- Their vision became clouded by their pain

5. **Grief (vs.17)**

- Luk 24:17 *And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are **sad**?"*
 - "Sad"...angry, dejected
 - They experienced Grief that was visible
 - Grief takes many forms and expresses unexpectedly
 - Unless grief is resolved a spirit of grief can take hold of people

6. **Loss of Hope and Vision (vs21)**

- Luk 24:21 *But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel.*
- Pro 13:12 *Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.*
 - They were focussed on their pain and distress
 - They lost hope and motivation for their future
 - They were troubled how to explain this setback to their families

VI. **Key Steps to Healing and Restoration**

1. **Return to The Presence of God**

- 2Co 1:3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,*
2Co 1:4 *who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*

2. **Acknowledge What has Happened**

- Naming is the first step to Dominion
 - What happened to me?
 - How has it affected me?
 - Does this bring back to mind other experiences like this?
 - What experiences?

3. **Grieve your loss**

- Express your emotions before God
 - Jesus wept (Jn.11:35, Lk.19:41)
 - David wept (1Sam.30:4)
 - Samuel wept(1Sam.16:1)
- Leaders tend to minimise their losses and grief
- Tears are a way of releasing the sadness and disappointment carried in the heart
 - Take time in the presence of God to worship and share your feelings
 - Use journaling to help the process of feeling the sadness and bringing it to Jesus
 - What has God exposed in your life through this disappointment?

- Express grief and release it to the cross
4. **Forgive**
- Be specific not general
 - What are you forgiving? What debt are you releasing?
 - Speak the words out.
 - Speak release.
 - Release the debt. Release them to Jesus
 - (There may be a emotional soul ties to break)
5. **Build an Altar to the Lord**
- It is easy to become bitter at the injustice we have experienced and feel regret at time we have wasted on people and service
 - In our heart we may have expected honour and gratitude
 - **Build an Altar**
 - Take all your sacrifice, time, love, teaching, supporting
 - Present all you have given and done to Jesus as an offering to Him
 - Is there anything you need to repent of?
 - The cross can make the bitter waters become sweet (Exod.15:25)
6. **Strengthen Yourself in The Lord**
- 1Sa 30:6 *Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. **But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.***
 - David turned his greatest sorrow into a victory
 - **David strengthened himself in The Lord and received fresh revelation and breakthrough**
 - **How?**
 - Strong Praying in the Spirit
 - Time in Worship and fresh surrender
 - Meditation in the Word of God
7. **Renew your Commitment to the Vision: The Harvest and Making Disciples**
- Luk 24:30 *Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.*
 - Luk 24:31 *Then **their eyes were opened** and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.*
 - Luk 24:32 *And they said to one another, "**Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?**"*
 - Luk 24:33 *So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,*
 - Luk 24:34 *saying, "**The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!**"*
- 2Co 4:16 *Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is*

perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.

*2Co 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, **is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,***

2Co 4:18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Ministry

- Disappointment
- Betrayal
- Grief
- Witchcraft