



Message 5 – Peter After His Betrayal

Warm-up

One of the earliest reality TV shows aired in 1973. It was called *An American Family*. Since then, hundreds of “non-scripted” shows, which appeal to millions of viewers, have been produced. What is your favorite reality TV show? Why do you think reality TV shows are so popular?

Overview

Our fifth message in the series, *One to One: Encounters with Jesus*, takes a look at Peter--a man who was no stranger to failure. Because of Peter’s failures, we can learn much about God’s restoration power and how to make a fresh start after defeat.

Word and Application

Read Luke 22:34-62

1. The fall.

The pressures of life came upon Peter, and he failed by denying Christ--not once but three times. He was part of Jesus’ inner circle and had previously experienced the miraculous.

- Does having a lofty “spiritual” position insulate us from failure?
- What makes us prone to failure?
- **Read 2 Corinthians 2: 10-11.** How can the enemy take advantage of us? Give an example of ignorance to the enemy’s schemes.
- **Read 1 Peter 5:8.** What does it mean to be well-balanced? Peter’s warning in this verse instructs us to be alert and cautious at all times. How might his past experiences have helped him to write this to believers?

2. The focus.

Luke 22:62 says that after Peter denied Christ and the rooster crowed, he went out and wept bitterly. A temptation after failure is to become bitter--bitter with God, life and even ourselves.

- **Read John 21:2, 3.** Because of his failure, Peter lost his focus, he lost his perspective, and he lost his vision for the future. Who else followed Peter on his impromptu fishing trip?

What impact does our inability to focus have on those around us?

- **Read Philippians 3:13, 14.** What are Paul's instructions on how to regain focus?

3. The future.

No matter how bad the fall, Jesus is always ready to bring us to a fresh start.

- **Read John 21:15-17.** How many times does Jesus ask Peter if he loves Him? What do you think is the significance of that number?
- Why did Jesus give Peter an assignment? Does Jesus have an assignment for you?
- **Read Jeremiah 29:11.** What are God's plans and thoughts for His children?

Three Ways to Start Fresh

1. Return to God and confess your sin.

The first step in overcoming failure is to confess our sin.

- **Read Acts 3:19.** According to this Scripture, what is the result of confession?
- What are some things that make confession difficult?
- Unconfessed sin interferes with our intimacy with God. How does this truth motivate you towards repentance?
- **Read Psalm 51:10-12.** This Psalm of David was written after the prophet, Nathan, confronted David about his sin with Bathsheba. What does David ask to be restored?

2. Live renewed in God's love.

When we confess our sin, we then need to receive His love. This enables us to stand up and move forward.

- **Read 1 Timothy 14-17.** How was Paul renewed in God's love? What specifically gives you hope from reading these verses?

3. Learn from it and let it go.

If we do not let go of the grief and sorrow of failure, then we hinder our future. We must let the past be the past and go on.

- **Read Romans 8:28.** How does this Scripture help us to accept the things we don't understand?

Life Challenge

In Christ, failure is never final. In fact, failure can act as a classroom for life. Reflect on the things you've learned from past failures. How might your past experience through failure to success, help you now? How can it help others?

Prayer

Father, we are thankful that in Christ, no failure is permanent. Thank You for restoration and fresh starts. Please help us to let go of every failure so that we can move forward in Your will to a future that brings You all praise and glory. In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen! Pray for the specific needs of the group.