

SESSION SEVEN: THAT SINKING FEELING

FAILING FORWARD...no one likes to fall. Failure is personal; a failure to one person may not be a failure to another. Labeling Peter's sinking a "failure" seems harsh. There were other events in his life where he failed more dramatically. Jesus didn't pull him out of the water, scream, "you worthless Disciple" He asks

You of little faith, why did you doubt? Not, your poor failure

Jesus first saved him before he scolds him. Both the saving/scolding were signs of love. Despite their flaws, he never berated his friends or treat them as failures.

Question: Why does failure energize some but paralyzes others?

Our sense of failure is tied to our falling our own EXPECTATIONS or the expectations of others. We all fail. Can we fall forward? Will failure prompt us to improve, to learn needed lessons, and move forward? Instead of falling forward and growing, many fall and fall backward. They retreat into defeat and give up hope of ever improving.

THE STORY OF DAVID...Ortberg uses David as a case study in failure. Was he as a success or a failure? The same man who defeated Goliath lived a roller coaster life filled with UPS/DOWNS, heroic stories of valor and tragic stories of sin. It took of lifetime of GOD CORRECTING HIM before he reached his potential. God was faithful even when David was unfaithful. Life is a gift. Every part is sacred; every part is designed by God and has meaning. There are lessons we should learn in the good/bad moments alike. We can't get away from God. We can refuse to serve God. In the process, we become less and our lives are diminished. One way we can measure character: how we react when we are pushed to the edge. It has been said that adversity introduces us to the PERSON WE REALLY ARE as compared to PERSON WE'D LIKE OTHERS TO THINK WE ARE.

DAVID'S WAKE-UP CALL...we all betray our ideals; we make wrong choices by listening to the wrong voices. We fail. Our failures are often self-inflicted. What God wanted from David was honesty. God sent Nathan to confront him and give him a wake-up call. Sadly, we prefer REMORSE to REPENTANCE. Better to live with GUILT than to let God make CHANGES in us. These days, no one comes clean about anything. Nathan points him toward truth/healing but David shows no sign of remorse.

STARTING AFRESH... no failure should define us. God defines us. He does not want to EXCHANGE US but to REDEEM US. Peter's water walking wasn't not a work of perfection, but Jesus helped him to learn from it.