

Here to There

Part 4 - Road to Fulfillment

Ice Breaker: What was your greatest achievement as a High Schooler? Why did you think so?

1. What insight, principles or observations did you take away from this Sunday's message?

Everyone faces Failure

2. How does failing at something make you feel? Why can failure elicit such strong feelings in us? (Genesis 3:7-9)

Genesis 3:7-9 *Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. 8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"*

What failure is in your story?

In the sermon, Brian discussed two ways that we "fail."

- When we do something wrong - sin.
- When we fail to do something - not accomplish a goal.

3. What are the differences between the two types of failures listed above? How can each type of "failure" cause separation between us and God?

4. How can we avoid defining ourselves and others by failures?

Pastor Brian used two of the twelve disciples as examples of failing:

- Judas betrays Jesus (Luke 22:1-6)

Luke 22:1-6 *Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching, 2 and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people. 3 Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. 4 And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. 5 They were delighted and agreed to give him money. 6 He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.*

- Peter betrays Jesus (Luke 22:54-62)

Luke 22:54-62 *Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance. 55 And when some there had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. 56 A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, "This man was with him." 57 But he denied it. "Woman, I don't know him," he said. 58 A little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." "Man, I am not!" Peter replied. 59 About an hour later another asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean." 60 Peter replied, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. 61 The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "**Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.**" 62 And he went outside and wept bitterly.*

5. In these examples, which kind of "failure" did Judas and Peter commit?

6. How are Peter and Judas' transgressions different? Similar?

Responding to Failure

Pastor Brian provided three ways that we can respond to our “failures.” Define each of the following:

- Ignore it
- Be defined by it
- Receive God’s Grace for it

7. How did Judas and Peter respond to their own failures? (Matthew 27:1-5, John 21:4-19) What was the important difference between the two responses?

- Judas

Matthew 27:1-5 *Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people made their plans how to have Jesus executed. 2 So they bound him, led him away and handed him over to Pilate the governor. 3 When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. 4 “I have sinned,” he said, “for I have betrayed innocent blood.” “What is that to us?” they replied. “That’s your responsibility.” 5 So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.*

- Peter

John 21:4-19 *Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. 5 He called out to them, “**Friends, haven’t you any fish?**” “No,” they answered. 6 He said, “**Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.**” When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish. 7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, “It is the Lord,” he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. 8 The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. 9 When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread. 10 Jesus said to them, “**Bring some of the fish you have just caught.**” 11 So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. 12 Jesus said*

to them, **“Come and have breakfast.”** None of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. 14 This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead. 15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, **“Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”** “Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.” Jesus said, **“Feed my lambs.”** 16 Again Jesus said, **“Simon son of John, do you love me?”** He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus said, **“Take care of my sheep.”** 17 The third time he said to him, **“Simon son of John, do you love me?”** Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, **“Do you love me?”** He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, **“Feed my sheep. 18 Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.”** 19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, **“Follow me!”**

8. How is “failure” in our lives a humbling experience? How do you respond to your own failure (either sin or not being successful)?

9. How has God provided grace to reconcile us to him. (Ephesians 2:3-5, Titus 3:3-7)

Ephesians 2:3-5 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. 4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

Titus 3:3-7 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. 4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

10. How could God use our “failures” to draw us closer to Him?

11. What role can grace play in the process of drawing us closer to him despite our failures? (1 John 1:9, Philippians 3:12-14)

1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

Philippians 3:12-14 *Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

12. In the past, how has turning to Jesus, like Peter did, help you grow closer to God?

13. Do you have “failures” for which you need God’s redemption now? Share if you are comfortable.

Challenge - Are we allowing our failures to define us or are we accepting God’s grace to write a new story?