

Week 6 – No More Sifting Through the Rubble

Notes:

As we've talked about the past few weeks, we don't want to work our way through these sessions/go through the motions and at the end, say that sure was (or wasn't) a good study and move on. We want there to be change for each of us and to have an impact in our homes, our church and in society.

Make it personal. **Week 1** – No More Hiding Behind the Past: What from YOUR past are you laying down and giving completely to God?

Week 2 – No More Holding Back: Is there something that is and has been holding you back from being who God has called you to be? From stepping out in faith and doing whatever God has called you to do? Is it fear? Selfishness (my time)? Lack of Confidence?

Week 3 – No More Weak Leadership: As a man, what is my role and responsibility in my home, church, community and God's Kingdom?

Week 4 – No More Going Through the Motions: What is priority in your life and what defines you? Is it work/career, money, hobbies, status, etc.? When people look at you, what is the first thing they see or think of? How do you want to be seen or thought of?

- For a lot of years I was content to only go through the motions and my life didn't have much 'true' meaning. I certainly didn't have an impact in my church and community. It was only when I started making an attempt to put God first in everything that I saw true change and meaning in my life (Christ's Hands).

Week 5 – No More Compromising Your Integrity: Last week we examined the dangers of going through the motions. Why is going through the motions such an easy pattern to fall into if we're not diligent?

Perhaps because it is easy and comfortable. Everything becomes a routine that has an expected/calculated outcome. Everything is less stressful when 'someone else' does it. (<https://www.allworship.com/elses-obituary/>)

Week 6 – No More Sifting Through the Rubble: In Week 5 we talked about integrity, what it is and why it is so important not only in our personal lives, but also the impact that it has on those around us extending from our family to the members of our church, community and beyond. Week 6 focuses on our failures and how we respond. Do we give up or seek restoration in Christ? We will see that **Peter** is a great example and **went on to have an even greater ministry after he was restored than he ever did before.**

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Who's a man who models well what it means to live with integrity?

- We read about Joseph, Daniel, Job and many others in the Bible who displayed great integrity and were dedicated to doing what was right, even in the midst of persecution, false accusation and adversity. They faced attacks from not only strangers, but also from family and people they knew and trusted. Through it all, they continued to do what was right and seek God's will in their lives.
- I can personally name a number of people in our church and in our men's Bible study that inspire me and I feel are men of integrity. One I think about is David Howard and the years that we have been in Bible study and taught together; I admire how faithful and genuine he is and that encourages me.

What's one lesson you can put into practice from his life?

- To be humble and live with integrity; be a man of honesty and sincerity. I know that if we commit to putting God first in all things, even though the devil will attack us, the Lord will be with us and we will find favor and experience blessings...perhaps those around us may be blessed as well! An example can be found in Genesis 39: 1-23 – V2. The Lord was with Joseph, V3. The Lord was with him, the Lord cause all that he did to prosper, V5.

The Lord blessed the Egyptians house for Joseph's sake, V21. But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love; he gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer.

What are some common responses to failure (examples: blaming others and feeling shame)?

- I have seen two groups of people. Those who blame everyone around them and burn bridges when things don't go their way and/or often give up and those who are humble, focused, and will not stop pursuing their goals, dreams and calling in life.

In what ways can failure contribute to greater success in the future?

- Who among us has ever failed at anything? Did you learn anything from it? Did you grow as a result?
- In the words of Denzel Washington, "If you're going to fail, fail big." Thoughts?
- Experience and Knowledge: Thomas Edison said, "I have not failed; I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."
- Resilience: Success/progress will take time, perhaps a different approach, and a lot of hard work.
- Growth: To answer the question above, we have all failed, but it is important to step back and put things into perspective. Get back up and keep going. An example I read about was when a baby is learning to walk. Even through failure, progress and growth are achieved with each attempt.

From the Watch Section on page 93, did any of the statements stand out to you?

- A lot of men are praying, "God, do something with **me**, change **me**, rebuild **me**, reuse **me**" when they're not willing to confront their sin before a Christ who's offering them another chance.
- Any good counselor will tell you that the first step to recovery is admitting that you have a problem. We must be willing to truly (remember we talked about honesty, sincerity, integrity, genuineness) confess our sin and seek healing. Even though we are seeking change and restoration in ourselves, the prayer above has a lot of **me** statements. I think I should be more focused on **Him** and His will for my life. At that point, there will be a change in **me**.

Pg. 94 – MAN UP

'When they got out on the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish placed on it, and bread.' John 21:9

- Read the first paragraph on pg. 94; note that a reference to a charcoal fire appears two times in John's Gospel (21:9, 18:8)

Why do you think Jesus chose to redeem Peter over a charcoal fire, and reminder of Peter's failure?

- To be redeemed, we must admit and confront our failures before healing can occur and healing is needed before Christ can truly use us. Jesus gently reminded Peter of his sin and then asked him 3 times if he loved him to make up for his 3 denials and to seek a humble response & evidence of a sacrificial love.

John 21: 15-17

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.'

Describe the lengths God will go to restore someone. How does that effort make you feel about your own future or the futures of people you love?

- I feel that God is willing to go as far as is needed to bring someone to restoration. I think about Paul and his former life. The bridge to Reckless Love comes to mind... 'There's no shadow You won't light up, Mountain you won't climb up, Coming after me, There's no wall You won't kick down, Lie You won't tear down, Coming after me'. How far would you go to save and restore your children? Have you even seen someone restored that you really had doubts would ever happen?
- I feel encouraged and it gives me hope. I know it is probably strange to say, but I do feel encouraged when I read about the failures of Peter, Paul and the other disciples. I want to do everything that I can for the Lord and I try, but I fail a lot and their examples remind me that He still loves me and is willing to restore and use me.

How can a greater understanding of God's intended outcome help men persevere in the process of restructuring, rebuilding, and personal development?

- Dr. Evans said, "God has a **purpose for your life**. He has a **plan for your life**, and yes, we messed it up a lot of times, but God knows how to rebuild."
Jeremiah 29:11
11 "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
- Billy Graham delivered a message in 1978 in Toronto, Canada titled 'Living on the Fault Line' (<https://youtu.be/vyB0A1HzbYc>). What he said around 7 minutes in has always stood out to me. "God still loves and He loves with such an everlasting love that He gave His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ to die for you. And if it were not for that, there is no hope in the world. He died on the cross and He rose again and He's alive and He's coming back and that's the hope that we have. And that's the good news of the gospel. The word gospel means good news. **I have good news for you. The good news is, God loves you. He has a plan for your life. There's a purpose for living. There's a reason for existence. Don't give up. Don't let the headlines frighten you. God is still sovereign, He's still on the throne. And those of us that follow him and serve him have a future that's brighter than tomorrow.**"

Have you witnessed God's rebuilding and restoration in your life or in someone else's life?

- My dad

What are some hindrances that prevent men from accepting Jesus' call to restoration and rebuilding after they've failed?

- The paragraph following this question is a great response; a false sense of pride and a spirit of self-sufficiency are the surest killers of future ministry, influence and impact. Men, when you've failed, admit it. Acknowledge your sin to God and repent. He's in the business of rebuilding, but it starts with your honesty and sorrow over sin. **Peter went on to have an even greater ministry after he was restored than he ever did before.**

How can our small group and church create a culture in which men feel free to acknowledge failure and seek God's restorative power? Give examples of ways we can invite honesty and hope into our relationships and our church environment.

- I think what we are doing now is where it starts; coming together as men and simply sharing our thoughts, failures, victories and how God has moved in our lives and how we can continue to grow / build God's kingdom together.