

OW2P Study - Failure (Part 9)

Goal

To help students gain a better understanding of true repentance and God's forgiveness; and to help students get back on track if they have broken their commitment to saying "no" to alcohol, drugs or tobacco.

Key Scriptures

Luke 22:54-61; Acts 3:19

Warm Up

As the group comes in, ask each person to find one person and share his/her most embarrassing moment in sports. (i.e. dropping a pass in the playoffs, shooting a game-losing airball, etc.).

Watch

Show the Week 9 video "Failure"

Workout

The San Francisco 49ers were playing the Green Bay Packers in a playoff game. Twice the 49ers were driving to score and were stopped because their own receiver dropped the ball. With seconds left and the Packers ahead by three, Steve Young hit the second-year receiver in the end zone for the winning score. He made an unbelievable catch with two Packers right on top of him.

As the receiver came off the field, he wept openly. In the post-game interview, he was asked about the rare show of emotion. His answer was as incredible as his catch. He said he was overwhelmed by the fact that, after having dropped what should have been a routine catch, his coaches and teammates didn't give up on him but trusted him with the most important play of the game. He came through big time!

In Luke 22, we see the disciple Peter drop the ball three times as he does the very thing he said he would never do: deny and desert the Lord Jesus. As Peter stood in the courtyard denying Him, Jesus had just been arrested and was being cruelly mocked and beaten, only hours away from being condemned to die on a cross.

Peter was one of the Lord's "starters." He was one of only 12 men chosen by God to be key leaders in changing the course of human history and impacting the world for Christ like no other group of people. Yet, in the middle of probably the most important event of all time, Peter fumbled the ball.

What happens next is one of the most powerful scenes in the whole Bible. Luke 22:61 says, *“The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered...”* What kind of look did Jesus give Peter? What did Peter remember? Was it a look of hurt or disappointment or anger? The expanded definition of that word “look” means “to gaze intently and meaningfully at.” Jesus was giving Peter the same nod the receiver’s coaches and teammates had given the NFL player. It was as if the Lord said, “Yeah, Peter, you blew it, but let’s get moving again. I see your potential; I see how I’m going to use you once you learn to trust me more fully. Don’t give up!”

Peter may have remembered two things at this incredible moment. He definitely remembered how Jesus told him he would fail, and he might have recalled his conversation with Christ the first day they met when the Lord predicted that Peter would accomplish incredible things for God’s purposes.

Are you like Peter? Have you ever made a commitment you couldn’t keep? Maybe you desired to say “no” to alcohol, drugs or tobacco, but somehow you failed. Through Peter’s life, God shows us an awesome example of His grace and forgiveness. In the middle of your failure, you need to know that the Lord is gazing intently into your life. He sees your weakness but also your great potential; and He only wants to see you succeed. Just as He wanted it for Peter, He wants you to grow to trust Him more by learning to let Him overcome in you every temptation you face.

Workout Questions

1. What is the usual reaction of fans when an athlete makes an obvious mistake?
2. Have you ever blown it in an important game? How did your teammates react? What about the fans? How did their reactions make you feel?
3. If Jesus had been your teammate, what would have been His reaction?
4. How can you relate to Peter? Why is it so important to immediately receive God’s forgiveness?
5. What prevents you from going to God and asking for His forgiveness?

Wrap Up

Encourage anyone who has blown it to take the action steps below and remind them that their testimony of failure and ultimate victory could make the difference for many others.

“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.” Acts 3:19

Acts 3:19 gives you four steps to take if you have broken your commitment to say “no” to alcohol, drugs or tobacco:

1. *Repent* ? Underage drinking is wrong. Admit your failure to God, ask Him to forgive you and decide now to trust Him for His strength to say no.
2. *Return* ? True repentance includes a turning around and turning away from the thing that caused us to sin. One of the best ways to do that is to make yourself accountable to others. Consider going to three people:

The pastor or youth leader at your church

Tell him/her plainly what you did, asking him/her to pray with you. Be open to advice.

Your parents

Tell them about your previous commitment to say "no," your talk with your pastor and your renewed commitment. Be willing to submit to their discipline.

Your FCA Huddle Coach

Ask him/her to hold you accountable on a weekly basis.

3. *Receive* ? Receive God's forgiveness and His new direction for you, remembering that He desires a personal, loving relationship with you and is more concerned with your freedom and fulfillment than He is with anything you could ever do for Him.
4. *Recognize* ? Apart from Jesus, you can do nothing (John 15:5). It is the Lord Himself who will say "no" within your heart if you will allow Him.

Bible Reference:

Acts 3



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