

SERIES: SAINT AND SINNER-2/25/24 (#3)

PASTOR LEE

When We Fail
... "Fall Forward"

- Pastor Lee relates a story about his daughter's "falling-forward" ('fail well/move forward') college business course and contrasts it with the notion many grew up with....that is, 'failure is fatal'.
- Relating topic to Peter and his relationship with Jesus...we see the good and not-so-good in Peter (fisherman, businessman, and, ultimately, follower of Jesus) and we can identify with him. But, in order to follow Jesus, he has to leave the rest behind. In doing so, he spends the next 3 years witnessing healings, miracles of all sorts, amazing teachings....day after day. And then this conversation:

Peter's Failure;
Jesus' Prayer

Luke 22:31- -"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, (32) but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." (33) Peter said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death."

Prompts Many
Questions...

- Prompts so many questions like: can Satan ask Jesus to cause us to fall? Does Jesus pray for us too or was this just a special situation? If Peter failed, does that mean that Jesus' prayer was not answered? What chance do I have if Satan is after me if Jesus prays for us and we still fall? And why does Jesus say after all this you need to go strengthen your brothers?
- Notice that Jesus calls "Simon, Simon"...his old name. Why? It's as if Jesus was speaking to the guy He *used* to know. Peter's response was a natural disclaimer...'no, I won't fail you, Jesus', not me....not the 'old me'...I'm all in!!!!

Beware Pride
& 'self
sufficiency'

1 Cor 10:12- - Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. (13) No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

- With Peter's disclaimer, there is this sense of pride, self sufficiency and 'me-centered confidence'. He should, instead...at least...be totally alarmed with the notion that Satan, himself, is demanding power over Peter. Later in his life, Peter would write this:

And The Power
of Satan!

1 Peter 5:8- - Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

- So - there IS a real devil/satan....real demons...all with an intent/plan to destroy you. He, satan, would have you believe he's just a myth so as to lower your

Jesus Can
Control Satan!

guard...but, in fact, he is real, evil and destructive! The demonic world promotes all injustice, sin and death. In this regard, Pastor Lee forewarns...."stay away from astrology, stay away from fortune-telling; stay away from anything involving demonic activity at all..." The devil, indeed is seeking to devour you!

- Look at Judas, who sells Jesus out for some cash...and Peter, who denies Jesus three times....satan never asked God for permission to 'mess' with Judas but... with Peter, he did. Neither man, in themselves, could control Satan but Jesus' power could.
- In terms of satan's intent to "sift Peter like wheat", we see the metaphor. 'Sifting' wheat is the third stage in its processing. After being cut and pounded (oxen), finally is thrown through the sharpness of the tiny grates of the sieve. So, lots of rough/tough stuff happens before the 'good stuff' comes out. So Jesus is saying to Peter, you're going to experience this very tough/miserable process but 'post-sieve', something good will ultimately manifest.
- Re: V32..."I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail". Satan's agenda for Peter...and for us.... Is that our faith would fail! QUESTION: How do we make it through this 'sifting'....in a world that is trying to convince us that we should just accept living in an inherently bad place.
- There are blessings and cursings....Do it God's way-blessed; Not Satan's way: cursed. Blessings for obedience....curses for disobedience. AND YOUR BLESSINGS SPLASH AND ARE AMPLIFIED! (Similarly, cursings/disobedience splashes as well). God's instruction verses 'deconstruction' produce diametrically opposite results.

Don't Fall Prey!

Rely On God's
Strength/Blessings

Peter Falls;
Denies
Jesus (3x)

Luke 22:54- -Then they seized him and led Him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance. (55) And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. (56) Then the servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at Him, said, "This man was also with him." (57) But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him." (58) And a little later, someone else saw Him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." (59) And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with Him, for he too is a Galilean." (60) But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. (61) And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times."

-- But --

He 'Falls
Forward',
Turning to a
Loving Jesus!

- Re: the Lord turning and looking at Peter.....our perspective, with a mentality that "failure is fatal", one could only imagine Jesus' angry face.....but with a faith-based 'falling forward' perspective, we see a face of love, forgiveness and restoration. This gets at the heart of the QUESTION for all believers: WHAT IS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF FAILURE? ANSWER: JESUS IS THERE AND LOVES YOU AND FORGIVES YOU AND HOLDS YOU UP ON THAT OTHER SIDE!
- Juxtaposition of Judas verses Peter. When Judas sold out Jesus, he felt horrible and headed toward destruction (without 'turning'). Peter denied Jesus and went out and wept bitterly....then he 'turned again' (ie. repentance) (V32)). Are you just

Confront And
Repent Sin--

Like Peter!

Turn (Back)
to
Jesus!!!

horrified at your sins (as they BOTH were).....and what do you do?.... do YOU turn (toward Jesus and His grace).....or not?

- Referencing 2 Timothy 4:2, Pastor Lee is calling us out as a local Church ("reprove, rebuke, exhort")....whatever it takes....there are sins in our lives....but we tend to take in an incomplete message...that is.....yes, he is a forgiving, loving God who takes you just as you are....sin and all (ie. "Grace"). But there is a more complete message. The sin (eg. Peter's sin of self-sufficiency/pride...or our sins of deceit, lust, or envy, etc.) need to be paid for....that why Jesus went to the cross and that's why we need to turn....repent.....bring Jesus into the world around us. We offend a sinless, almighty God! Only when you have turned, can you fully understand what Jesus has done for us (and Peter).and then you can help others.

- Some of us are unwilling to turn and are stalled in our spiritual progress.....are you? Confess and repent....turn from it and toward Christ....no excuses.....all sin is wrong!!!! Do we care??? As a Church...as individuals ...Pastor Lee expresses extreme concern that many are anemic and unrepentive.and his desire / prayer is that the Holy Spirit convicts us all to turn and to live holy lives with ALL of our resolve.

- BE QUICK TO TURN...WALK HOLY...STAND FIRM IN FAITH