

Difficult Decisions: When You Have Failed
John 21:15-19

Introduction:

- A. Do you feel guilty after you sin? Because we strive to live for God, most of the time our shortcomings bring about guilt and shame.
- B. Even when a person is forgiven by others or God, it can be difficult to find a release from guilt.

PETER'S PRIDE (Matt. 26:30-35)

- A. Peter was so sure of himself. Even if all the disciples denied Him, Peter was certain he never would.
- B. Jesus saw Peter's pride and called him out in front of all the other apostles (vs. 34-35).
- C. Sometimes we can become prideful and think there are certain things we would never do (I Cor. 10:12).

PETER'S MISTAKE (Matt. 26:69-75)

- A. Although Peter thought he would always stand with Jesus, he found out that is sometimes easier said than done. He publicly denied Jesus three different times.
- B. Imagine the guilt and pain Peter must have felt when the rooster crowed (Lk. 22:61).
- C. Sometimes, even the best of us, will fall short and do things we know are sinful (Rom. 3:23).

IN THE FACE OF FAILURE (JN. 21:15-19)

- A. We must own our wrongs that we have committed (Jam. 5:16; 2 Cor. 7:8-10).
 - 1. Perhaps one of the reasons Peter was grieved to the heart was because Jesus' questions reminded him of what he had done previously when denying Jesus.
 - 2. When we sin and mess up, it's tempting to go easy on ourselves. EX: it was just once, I'm a good person, I attend each service, I'm not as bad as..., etc.
- B. We can obtain forgiveness for our sins.
 - 1. Peter denied Jesus and yet he still obtained forgiveness.
 - 2. No matter what is in your past, confess your sins to God and allow Him to extend His limitless forgiveness to you (I Jn. 1:9; Eph. 1:7-8).
- C. We don't have to be perfect to be used by God! Jesus told Peter to follow Him...
 - 1. Instead of scolding him, Jesus asked Peter to feed His lambs.
 - 2. We must not allow our mistakes to define us (Prov. 24:16).

Conclusion:

- A. What could have been the end of Peter turned out to be a motivating factor in his service to the Lord.
- B. What will your story read? Will it be one of shame and regret or one of service and repentance?