

Intro: It has been almost 40 years but I still clearly remember my very first sermon. Preaching class, everyone had to prepare and present; I spent a LOT of time getting ready. I got a new outfit. Pants, shirt, tie, coat...even new shoes and belt! Color coordinated...Latest thing going (Burgundy plaid!) Had a great opening illustration...3 awesome points...great close... Day of...All dressed...got up to preach... I was AWFUL! Gave Introduction...looked up to God...ok...what should I say? He was SILENT! You see, I had spent so much time getting outfit ready...Never really worked on sermon I went home and I felt awful. I remember thinking...My Life is THIS!!! My arrogance and my pride, my desire to LOOK good caused me to fail. My Fault

Have you ever totally failed at something? Been in the place where you don't have anyone to blame but yourself? When you failed, You Let God down...Let Friends down...People depending on you down...Let yourself down
If we are honest...we all have been in that position at some time in our life.

What If...There was hope when we fail?

That is what I want to talk with you about this morning. I want to look with you at that first Easter, and in the events surrounding that day see one of the greatest stories of failure...and hope...In History

The events of that first Easter...Teach us that there IS HOPE...regardless of how profoundly we have failed
What If There IS Hope? Mark 16:7ff Page 722

1. We Have Hope Because Peter Teaches Us That Failure Is A Common Part Of Life. Mark 17:17ff

When we fail, we usually feel like we are the only one, no one has every fallen as hard or hurt as much as we are That simply isn't true. In fact, one of the things we learn from reading the bible is that even the very BEST people fail The only one that has never failed is Jesus. Every single other person in the bible failed...and in all of history see the same! Read the accounts of the great men and women of bible and you see failure...not just small...often Significant

There is perhaps no great story of failure in the bible than Peter (*you may know parts of the story...but lets take a look*)

- Mk 14:17-21; 27-31 *Jesus warned Peter he would fail: Peter was so arrogant and self assured...didn't listen*
- Mk 14:32-42 *Peter fell asleep on Jesus when needed him (3 times!)*
- Mk 14:43-50 *Ran away with all the others*
- Mk 14:53-54 *Warmed himself at the enemies fire: Close...but not supportive*
- Mk 14:66-72 *Adamantly denied Jesus 3 x*

It might be possible to fail someone more profoundly than Peter failed Jesus that day...but it's hard to imagine. Picture it: 3 years of one on one teaching, Seeing all the miracles, hearing all the sermons, healings, Everything But when it was time to stand up and be counted...Peter failed: Put yourself in Peter's shoes...He must have felt AWFUL. He failed His Lord, He failed His Friends, He failed those watching Him...He failed Himself

Illus: Here is what the bible says: Rom 3:23 *"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"*
There are a LOT of words for "sin" or failure in the bible...Hebrew and Greek very picturesque (22-24)
We have an amazing ability to get it wrong!

- >Fall short of target
- >Cross over the line
- >Crooked when should be straight >to rebel
- >to be broken
- >to be blemished >to owe a debt
- >wander off path

Here is the good news: As good as we are at getting life WRONG...God is BETTER at Putting life back into ORDER! Getting it Right! It is literally impossible for us to mess things up so profoundly that God can't redeem them! Even when we destroy something profoundly, God can take the pieces, and restore them...or create something better! Even Death isn't final!

2. We Have Hope Because The Cross Teaches Us Our Failure Is Paid For And Redeemed. Mk 15:33-47

The story of the Cross is the story of hope...Hope in the face of what appears to be a hopeless situation. Remember what the soldier at the cross said? Mt 15:39 *"Surely this man was the son of God!"* If that's true...Jesus son of God Why would he do that? If He was the Son of God, If He could call 10,000 angels, If he could have been delivered: WHY Because the wages of sin is death...and SOMEONE is going to pay the righteous and holy and just demand of God for sin

Here is what Peter said later in his life: 1Pe 3:18 *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit,*

- *Christ died for sins:* Notice the plural: Not His own sin: He was the perfect Son of God: Our sin
- *Righteous for unrighteous:* He was perfect and holy, I am not. He was innocent: I was guilty He righteous,
- *To bring you to God:* Jesus died to open the door of heaven to all who believe!

The story of the Cross is the story of the holy and righteous son of God paying the price for the sin of the world!

Jn 1: *"He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him." Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--*

THE CROSS TEACHES US OUR SIN IS PAID FOR BY THE DEATH OF JESUS IN OUR PLACE

Yes, we may have failed, But the story of the cross is the story of that failure being paid for!

3. Finally, We Have Hope Because Jesus Teaches Us He Cares For Us Personally In Spite Of Our Failure. Mark 16:1-7

This is the heart of why we can have hope. Notice what happens in the events of the resurrection.

- Ladies go to the tomb early Sunday am vs 1-3 Go expecting a dead body, don't understand
- Meet the angel tells them of the resurrection vs 4-6 Greatest event of history: Sin of mankind paid for
- Message for the disciples: vs 7-8 Go to Galilee: Meet Him there, Just as He said
- **AND PETER!!!** Vs 7 Specifically calls Peter out! Why?
 - >Peter had failed spectacularly >Put yourself in his shoes >Despair
 - >Failed Jesus >failed Others disciples (leader) >Failed all those following them
 - >Failed Himself!
- Jesus called Peter out because Peter needed HOPE!
 - >Needed to know he hadn't disqualified himself >Needed to know Jesus forgave Him
 - >Needed to be told...this is going to be OK >Needed encouragement to go to Galilee
- When you have failed someone what is the LAST thing you want to do:
FACE THEM; EXPLAIN; SEE Disappointment
- Here is where the HOPE is found:
 - >In the middle of the single most important event of all history...
 - >the salvation of all who would believe
 - >the resurrection...broadcasting to the world that the grave could not hold him
 - >Jesus cared enough about Peter...one man...that had failed him miserably...they he specifically reached out to Him

Applic: And here is what I want you to see...He cares about you too! He cares personally and individually!

In exactly the same way he cared personally for Peter, He cares for you...or for anyone you know struggling

It doesn't matter what your failure may have been, how awful you think it is, how irrecoverable you believe it to be

The Cross of Jesus and His personal attention to Peter at that moment tells us all we need to know to have hope!

CONCL

You may well know the rest of the story...Peter DOES go to Galilee...and meets Jesus there...

And there is a beautiful story of Jesus asking Peter 3 times "Do you love me?" "

3x ... for 3 denials...

Peter found hope that day:

- He, like all men and women...failed...
- His sin...was paid for on the cross
- Jesus cared for Him enough to seek Him out...call him out...restore him...and use him amazing ways

Have you found that kind of hope in Jesus? You can...very simple

- Admit you have failed...fallen...sinned
- Trust what Jesus did for YOU on the cross...Not Just Sin of WORLD...but YOUR sin!
- Listen for His voice to call you to Himself...He will...(Still small voice that says...I love you...forgive you...want relationship with you)
- If you want that forgiveness...that hope...that relationship...Do this...take connect card...fill it out..drop Riva Link
- Ill contact you this week...and we will talk about Hope...and how you can have it.

That is the question for all of us...not just for Peter

Anyone that has failed...anyone that has stumbled...anyone that has fallen...anyone that feels alienated, separated from God

Not just do you BELIEVE that He lived...that He died...that He rose again...James wrote... Even Devils believe and tremble
Just believing...isn't enough...Jesus is looking for the kind of commitment that says...I believe...enough to follow...and obey

And when He is done...Peter becomes a major force in the foundation of the new church