**Free to Fail**

**(Matthew 16:13-19 Luke 22:54-62; John 21:15-19)**

**Yearly Theme: *“Love Does…”***

**Series Title: *Love Does***

**October 6th, 2019**

***Something to think about:***

In your worship folder today, you’ll notice that you have two nametags. Take one of the nametags and write a nickname that best describes you. Now, once you’ve done this, hold on to it for a bit.

As we continue in the “Love Does” series this today, we look at a famous Biblical character that not only exemplified great failure, but also, great success (and, not always in that order). Let’s take a look at a man named, *Peter*…

Our first instance of Peter this morning comes from Matthew’s Gospel in the New Testament. In the disciple’s dialogue with Jesus, Peter rises to the top of the heap. He proclaims something significant about Jesus, and Jesus praises him for it…

**Turn in your Bible to: *Matthew 16:13-19***

Now, not too long after this great proclamation of Peter about Jesus, there is a great fumble (mildly speaking). Just after Jesus is arrested by the Temple guards to be tried and crucified by the Romans, Peter opens his mouth again, but this time his words and actions result in utter failure…

**Turn in your Bible to: *Luke 22:54-62***

Finally, not long after Jesus had risen from the grave, He appears to the disciples next to the Sea of Galilee where they had been fishing throughout the night. After having breakfast with them, Jesus talks with Peter in one of the most amazing scenes of restoration in the Bible…

**Turn in your Bible to: *John 21:15-19***

Here’s the key point today…

**Key Point: “*There is freedom to fail as a follower of Christ, but there’s no freedom to stay there.*”**

How can we learn this from Peter’s experience?

1. **Peter wasn’t afraid to take a risk.**

*Matthew 16:15-16 (NLT), 15  Then he asked them, “But who do you say I am?” 16  Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”*

1. **Peter’s failure humbled him, but didn’t destroy him.**

*Luke 22:60-62 (NLT), 60  But Peter said, “Man, I don’t know what you are talking about.” And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. 61  At that moment the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered that the Lord had said, “Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me.” 62  And Peter left the courtyard, weeping bitterly.*

1. **Peter was willing to move beyond his failure.**

*John 21:17 (NLT), A third time he asked him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, “Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Then feed my sheep.”*

***Something to take home:***

Peter had some glorious failures in his life, but (with the help of Jesus) he moved beyond his failures. Peter learned to risk being a fool for Christ. Sometimes he succeeded, but sometimes he failed. Through winning and losing, through trial, and oftentimes error, Peter never gave up. Sure, he was humbled as all risktakers are a times, and yes, he was embarrassed a time or two in his life, but he never let his failures destroy who he was. Peter knew that He who began a good work in him would be faithful to complete it![[1]](#footnote-1) It’s because of this that Peter was able to move beyond his failures and was able to be the “Rock” that Jesus would use to build His church!

Now, remember the nametag from earlier? The one with your nickname on it. Take that one out and look at it.

While you look at it, consider this: Do you know what Peter’s name originally was before Jesus nicknamed him Peter? Before he was Peter, his given name was “Simon bar Jonah,” or “Simon Son of Jonah.”

What I want you to do is tear up the nametag with your nickname on it. Now, take out the other nametag you have and write God’s nickname for you (e.g., “child of God,” “prince,” “princess,” “champ,” etc.). Take some time this week to begin to see yourself as God sees you: Someone worthy to be loved; someone worthy to be saved; someone worthy to receive His grace and forgiveness.

And, now, for your homework assignment this week: *Place your nametag with your new nickname from God on it in a visible place this week (e.g., the dashboard of your car, your refrigerator, your bathroom mirror, etc.). Consider your worth and value in the eyes of God who created you. Consider the love with which He loves you, and consider the love that He’s placed in you for others. When you start to feel defeated, when you are reminded of your failures this week, remember God’s nickname for you, and find hope to press on.*

And, finally, remember…

**Key Point: “*There is freedom to fail as a follower of Christ, but there’s no freedom to stay there.*”**

1. Philippians 1:6. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)