

Praying Together

Spend time praying together with your group, giving time to share joys and concerns, but making sure you have enough time to actually pray. Jot down your own prayer requests before your gathering begins.

Notes on How to Pray for Others

How to Pray for our Church

Pray for unity

Pray that people will take the time to carefully and prayerfully respond to the congregational survey

Pray for wisdom as we move forward in the senior pastor search process

Pray for the staff and leadership board members during this critical time

Other:

Pray for our Community, the World, and our Missionaries. Remember the families and community suffering in Florida in the wake of last week's shooting



"Reoriented by Failure"

Luke 22.54-62

Eric Sorenson

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Opening Up:

Have you ever had a “wanna get away” kind of experience?

Digging into Our Text:

Read Luke 22.54-62. Write out a summary of what’s happening here.

Imagine what is going through Peter’s mind as this scenario unfolds. How is Peter feeling during this? After Peter has been recognized, why doesn’t he just slip away? What do you imagine Jesus’ face looks like when he stops and looks at Peter after Peter has denied him (verse 61a)? What is behind Peter’s tears in verse 62?

From your knowledge of Peter, what’s he like? (If you aren’t familiar with him, here are some passages you can read: Matthew 14.22-33; 26.36-46; Mark 8.27-33; 9.2-13). How would you describe his character? What do you know about Peter *after* Jesus’ resurrection, including the stories in the early portions of Acts? Overall, do you think Peter was a coward?

It’s clear from more than this passage that Peter failed to really understand Jesus. Do you think Peter doesn’t understand because he didn’t listen carefully enough, or he just really wants Jesus to be the kind of Messiah Peter wants him to be? What are examples of how, today, Jesus’ disciples sometimes fail to understand him? As you look back on your discipleship journey, have there been times when you misunderstood who Jesus really was, or how he operates, or what he asks of his followers? What were the consequences?

How was Peter’s failure a good thing in the long run? Does that affect how you imagine the face of Jesus when he looks at Peter in verse 61a? Read Luke 22.32: How do you think Jesus’ comments to Peter might have helped him through his failure? If we have failed as disciples because we were operating under a false notion of Jesus, then how might that failure be a gift to us?

When you fail as Jesus’ follower, how do you pick up the pieces and keep on going? Clearly, failure happens when we misunderstand Jesus. What does one need to do to correctly understand Jesus? What habits can one form to get correct understanding? Last week we noted Dallas Willard’s comments that the permanent address at which the Word of God can be found is the Bible. How might that connect to getting right understanding?

Getting Personal:

Try *Lectio Divina* (holy listening) again (or for the first time). Select one of these passages that you’ve not spent time with before: Psalm 23; Isaiah 55.1-2; John 4.7-15; Galatians 4.1-7; Revelation 21.1-4. Read the passage once or twice, then pause a while, and notice what word or phrase is popping out to you. Read it again, trying to discern why it is that this phrase pops out (what might God be trying to say?). Read it yet again, and imagine what God might be calling you to be or do about this.

Things to Ponder:

In an effort to avoid Peter’s failure, what are some specific ways you can really spend some time in Scripture so you can better understand God for who he is, how he operates, and what he desires? Do you ever actually *study* the Bible? Do you read it *devotionally* (as in *Lectio Divina*)? Make a plan to invest some time in the Bible so you’ll be better equipped as Jesus’ disciple