

Sanctification and Failure

November 19, 2017

For those with genuine sorrow and hatred for their sin...

God never tempts us to sin, and He never initiates our failure, but in His loving and redemptive sovereignty He uses our failures in His process of sanctification and in molding us into whom He wants us to be.

Some basics about sanctification:

1. ***"Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?" (Romans 6:1)***
2. ***We will never attain sinless perfection in this flesh, in this earth life.***

Genesis 4:7 NASB [God speaking to Cain] "And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it."

"I groan daily under a body of sin and corruption. Oh for the time when I shall drop this flesh, and be free from sin!" — Charles Spurgeon

3. ***The more sin God grants us victory over, the more sin in our hearts and lives is uncovered.***

***"I believe the holier a man becomes, the more he mourns over the unholiness which remains in him."
--Charles Spurgeon***

Luke 22:31-34 ESV

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."**

34 Jesus said, **"I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me."**

1. ***Seeing the truth about ourselves is one of the hardest things we must confront. Peter's perception of himself was not the truth, yet Peter really believed in himself so strongly.***
2. ***We are safe with God knowing our weaknesses, failures and sins.***
 - *Jesus never rejected Peter nor loved him any less. God knows all our failures and sins before we commit them and yet still loves us, still sent His Son to die for us.*
 - *God won't love us anymore once we are sanctified. The sanctification is for our good, not His. It is His love for us, not punishment.*

3. **God's hand remains on our life even in our failure and sin.** *Jesus prayed for Peter in the midst of his failure and sin. He does not reject us, desert us or love us less.*
4. **What Satan meant to destroy us, God sovereignly filters and controls for our spiritual cleansing and maturity.** *Jesus' prayers for Peter spared him from Satan's sifting. Only God can turn our disaster into His victory.*
5. **God puts our life experience to good use in ministry to others.** *What disqualifies us in man's eyes, God can redeem to make us more qualified and better equipped to minister to others.*

Jeremiah 17:9-10 ESV

9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

Why is it so hard for us to know and understand our own heart?

- *pride of self-righteousness*
- *fear of rejection*
- *loss of reputation, status, position*
- *justification, blame-shifting, excuses*
- *lust and affection for the sin*

Jeremiah 17:9-10 ESV

10 "I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds."

God will chasten His children by giving them according to their ways (*reaping the consequences*), to reveal to them the wickedness and sin of their own heart.

Galatians 6:7-8 ESV

7 Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

Hebrews 12:6 ESV

6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."

Hebrews 12:10-11 ESV

10 For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.

11 For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

"The paradox is that God must destroy in us, all illusions of righteousness before he can make us righteous."

— Martin Luther

"No man trusts God as God ought to be trusted, who does not trust himself as himself ought to be distrusted."

— Dr. Alexander Maclaren

Luke 22:33-34 ESV

33 Peter said to him, "**Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.**"

34 Jesus said, "**I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.**"

Luke 22:61-62 ESV

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."**

62 **And he went out and wept bitterly.**

Job 23:1-7 ESV

1 Then Job answered and said:

2 **Today also my complaint is bitter; my hand is heavy on account of my groaning.**

3 **Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat!**

4 **I would lay my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments.**

5 **I would know what he would answer me and understand what he would say to me.**

6 **Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power? No; he would pay attention to me.**

7 **There an upright man could argue with him, and I would be acquitted forever by my judge.**

Job 42:5-6 ESV

5 **I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you;**

6 **therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.**"

2 Samuel 12:1-7 NASB

1 Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said, "There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor.

2 "The rich man had a great many flocks and herds.

3 "But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb Which he bought and nourished; And it grew up together with him and his children. It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom, And was like a daughter to him.

4 "Now a traveler came to the rich man, And he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, To prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; Rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

5 **Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die.**

6 **"He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion."**

7 **Nathan then said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul.'"**

2 Samuel 12:13 ESV

13 David said to Nathan, "**I have sinned against the LORD.**" And Nathan said to David, "**The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.**"

"Much of our problem in continuing fellowship with a holy God is that many Christians repent only for what they do, rather than for what they are." A.W. Tozer, "Whatever Happened to Worship?"

Your sins and God's chastening for those sins are speaking to you - are you listening? In Psalm 51, after Nathan's rebuke, after the consequences and chastening for his sin, see the clarity in David's vision of his spiritual condition.

Psalm 51:1-13 ESV To the choirmaster. **A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet went to him.**

1 **Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out** (*machah - to wipe out, wipe away, stroke, rub, erase*) **my transgressions.**

Exodus 32:33 ESV

33 "But the LORD said to Moses, 'Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot (*machah*) out of my book.'"

2 **Wash me** (*kabac - perform the work of a fuller, washed out, trample with the feet, to wash garments by treading on them when under water*) **thoroughly** (*rabah - multiply, increase, become many, become much*) **from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!**

3 **For I know** (*yada - know, learn to know, find out and discern, know by experience*) **my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.**

Genesis 4:1 ESV "Now Adam knew (*yada*) Eve his wife, and she conceived..."

4 **Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.**

Proverbs 16:6 ESV

6 "...by the fear of the LORD one turns away from evil."

5 **Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.**

David is beginning to see that the real problem is not what I did but what I am.

6 **Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.**

Hebrews 8:10 ESV

10 I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

7 **Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice.

Lamentations 3:1, 4 ESV

1 I am the man who has seen affliction under the rod of his wrath;

4 He has made my flesh and my skin waste away; he has broken my bones;

9 Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

10 Create (*bara'* - create, shape, form) in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

*Genesis 1:1 ESV "In the beginning, God created (*bara'*) the heavens and the earth."*

11 Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

Psalm 51:12 New Living Translation "...make me willing to obey you.

Psalm 51:12 New English Translation "...sustain me by giving me the desire to obey!"

13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

1 John 1:5-10 ESV

5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

6 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses (*katharizō* - to consecrate by cleansing and purifying, remove by cleansing, free from sin and faults) us from all sin.

8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive (*aphiēmi* - to send away) us our sins and to cleanse (*katharizō* - to consecrate by cleansing and purifying, remove by cleansing, free from sin and faults) us from all unrighteousness.

10 If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

- We can't confess what we don't see.
- We can't be forgiven and cleansed from what we don't confess.
- Therefore God uses our failures and their consequences in His chastening to open our eyes to our own deceitful heart.
- Seeing our sinful condition is the first step towards confession, forgiveness and cleansing.

“So, dear soul, cursed with the sin which thou hast taken into thy heart, God hates the sin, but He loves thee! He knew all about it before He chose thee. He will never be surprised. He will never be disappointed. He will never love you less. But the more sinful you are, the weaker you are, the more often you have a relapse and go back, the more often you fall, God, who has a parent’s heart towards you and who has come into your heart, will fight sin step by step with you. Your weakness will command His strongest love.

He sits down beside you. The fever is on your head and body. He knows it will take long vigil, long care, long patience. He has counted the cost; He is prepared for a long sickness. He has taken you in hand, your passions, your impurity, your garrulous gossip, your sulkiness, your jealousy, your vainglory, your love of money, your love of sin; God knows it all. If you will let Him, He will make short work. If you resist Him, you will make the work longer. But He will never leave you, He will never give you up, and however often you fall, go back to Him again.”

“O soul, thou hast thought ill of thy God! Thou hast thought because thou didst so often fall that God was tired of thee. Ah! Thou knowest not that His tender mercy is infinite, and He will never let you go, never, until in heaven He kisses your face, out of which the fever and the brand of sin have gone forever. O, my God, thou wilt kiss my soul into health!

Remember further that His purpose is to deliver from the power of sin. The guilt is gone, but the power remains, and He can only deliver from this gradually...stage after stage He will carry on His work within me, weaning me, saving me from the love and the power of sin, deeper, deeper, deeper down into my heart.”

--F.B. Meyer, *Fit for the Master’s Use*, “Deliverance from the Power of Sin”, first published 1897