

Christ Over All – Including Our Failures

Xenos Summer Institute 2019

Failure, not a beloved term, especially in our culture. No one likes to fail and for some the fear of failure results in either an unhealthy drive to succeed or the opposite; becoming overly risk averse. Failure is simply a part of life and no less so in the Christian life. If we purpose to follow Christ and are unwilling to risk failure, we are defeated before we even begin. This workshop looks at a biblical perspective of failure and how God redeems our failure for our benefit and to further His purposes

Introduction

Failure – Run!

1. Oh we hate that word!
2. Fear of failure can produce unhealthy responses
3. Failure is simply a part of life
4. Our response to failure and/or fear of it is key to longevity and fruitfulness in the Christian life

Failures in the Bible

Moses – Numbers 11:10-15

Elijah – 1 Kings 19:1-4

Isaiah – Isaiah 22:4

Jeremiah – Jeremiah 20:7-13

David – 2 Samuel 11, Psalm 51

Peter – John 18:25-27, John 21:15-17, Galatians 2:11-ff

Paul – Philippians 1, 2 Timothy 1:14

Xenos history of failure

Our own failures

Types of failure

- Sin – Moral Failure (David)
- Faithlessness – caving (Peter)
- Ministry – (Paul, many of the OT guys)
- Relational – (Paul, Jesus)
- Goals/hopes – (Paul to Rome and Spain)

Responses to failure

- Push harder!
- Avoid weakness
- Pull back
- Explain away
- Give up
- Trust God

God's Redemption of Our Failure

Framework for viewing failure

- God is sovereign
- God is merciful and good

God's Redemption of Our Failure – continued

God's promises in our failure

Matthew 28:19-20

Romans 8:31-39

Hebrews 4:14-16

Galatians 6:8-10

What we can learn/gain from failure

Dependence of God

2 Corinthians 4:6-10

2 Corinthians 1:8-10

How to minister under grace

2 Timothy 2:1-3

1 Corinthians 15:10

Discernment

2 Romans 12:2-4

What works and doesn't work

Deeper spiritual convictions about ministry

John 13:17

Acts 20:35

1 Corinthians 4:2

Who is a servant and in the fight for the long haul

2 Timothy 4:1-5

Dangers of Avoiding Failure

- Hard to trust someone who has never failed
- Too much success can make people hard to lead
- Always convinced they are right – push for their view
- Fear of failure can result in unethical or manipulative methods
- Resistance to input
- Failure avoidance can also result in the fear of delegating to others

The Effects of Failure Avoidance on the Church

- Aversion to risk taking
- Young or new leaders never get the experience of trying and failing
- Defensive posture – very conservative