

Sunday Leftovers

Sermon Title: Back to Ones – Again?

What's this message about?

Perhaps no one in the New Testament better understood what going “Back to Ones” meant than Peter. Time after time Peter had to take a step back and start over. Time after time Jesus demonstrated the grace that changes lives and provided Peter with an opportunity to begin again. Even after Jesus rose from the dead, True to his impetuous and stubborn nature Peter continued to mess up, even after Jesus died and rose from the dead. Yet, true to His forgiving nature, Jesus offered him another do-over. This blundering disciple is actually the perfect model for most of our relationships with God. Peter, though he screwed up a lot, continued to grow closer to Christ, despite making mistake after mistake, Peter's life is a great example of how God offers forgiveness and grace as He draws us closer to him.

Questions for discussion:

- *What do you think was the main point of Matt's message?*
- *Read Matthew 16:13-23: What lesson(s) do we learn from Peter's interactions with Jesus? What does this teach us regarding how God deals with our failures?*
- *What were some of Peter's failures? How did God offer opportunities for him to go “back to ones?”*
- *What do Peter's failures and victories teach us regarding how we should deal with our own failures?*

Do something about it:

Ironically, our failures sometimes lead us to distance ourselves from God because we either feel ashamed or we feel angry. Usually, this leads to us feeling like we have to step away and create a distance. But, just like with human relationships, resolution and the ability to move forward comes only with honest communication. We need to go “back to ones” in our relationship with God and remember that no matter how long we've been “gone,” or how bad we think we've messed it up, Jesus is still desperate to re-establish a relationship with us. That being the case, He is waiting for us to return. How we best connect (or reconnect) with God is a very personal thing. Think of times when you have felt closest to God (prayer, worship, study, meditation, taking a walk or listening to music, etc.) and use those venues to have an open and honest talk with God.

Digging deeper: Matthew 16:13-23; Luke 5:1-11; John 18:10; 27; Acts 3:1-8; 10:28-11:18; Galatian 2:11-21; Matthew 7:7-11; Hebrews 10:21-23