

Strategize Your Comeback

A Setback is a Setup for a Successful Comeback

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John 21:1-7 (CEV)

¹ Jesus later appeared to his disciples along the shore of Lake Tiberias. ² Simon Peter, Thomas the Twin, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, and the brothers James and John, were there, together with two other disciples. ³ Simon Peter said, "I'm going fishing!" The others said, "We will go with you." They went out in their boat. But they didn't catch a thing that night. ⁴ Early the next morning Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize who he was. ⁵ Jesus shouted, "Friends, have you caught anything?" "No!" they answered. ⁶ So he told them, "Let your net down on the right side of your boat, and you will catch some fish." They did, and the net was so full of fish that they could not drag it up into the boat. ⁷ Jesus' favorite disciple told Peter, "It's the Lord!" When Simon heard that it was the Lord, he put on the clothes that he had taken off while he was working. Then he jumped into the water.

³ Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing.

THERE ARE THREE IMPORTANT TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS STORY IN JOHN

1. THE COMMENT

John 21:4-5 (CEV)

⁴ Early the next morning Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize who he was. ⁵ Jesus shouted, "Friends, have you caught anything?" "No!" they answered.

Jesus shows up and asks the disciples a question. A God who knows everything yet chooses to ask questions, lots of questions.

Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, "Where are you?" Moments later, "Who told you that you were naked?" Then again, "Have you eaten from the tree...?" (Gen. 3). God asked Cain, "Where is your brother Able?" (Gen. 4:9). God asked Isaiah, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" (Isa. 6:8). The Lord asked his followers, "Who do you say I am?" (Matt. 16:15).

THE QUESTION: "HAVE YOU CAUGHT ANYTHING?"

We can all relate with John 21 because it is a graphic portrayal of failure and fruitfulness. The hard lesson of life is to realize what Jesus meant in John 15:5

John 15:5 (NKJV)

⁵ I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

We can all appreciate the veracity of Scripture because God records the failures of his saints openly. From Genesis to Revelation we are witnesses of how God can redeem the failures of His people.

Adam, with God, could have dominion over all creation; without God, he couldn't resist a single bite of the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3).

Noah, with God, could build an ark for the saving of the world; without God, he got drunk, took off all his clothes and passed out in his tent (Gen. 9:21).

Abraham, with God, defeated the four kingdoms of the Euphrates River (Gen. 14), yet while in Egypt, lied about Sarah being his wife (Gen. 12).

Moses, without God, murdered a man (Ex. 2:12), with God he delivered 600,000 men...from bondage (Ex. 12:37).

Jacob, without God, the best he could do was steal his brother's blessing (Gen. 27), he became a Prince with God and Father of 12 tribes.

David, with God, slew a giant; without God, he had a man killed and stole his wife (2 Sam. 11).

"With Me"... "Without Me" life is lived between those two statements.

NEVER FEAR FAILURE; INSTEAD, FEAR LEARNING THE LESSON THAT FAILURE CAN YIELD.

The world's greatest violinist, Isaac Stern, was in concert with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. He was playing Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 3. Midway through the first movement, Stern lost his place. He forgot where he was. What did he do? He stopped playing, walked over to the conductor and asked if the orchestra could start the piece again. Then he turned to the audience and apologized. Stern could have faked his way through the piece. He could have ignored his mistake and continued as if nothing had happened. Few people in the audience would have known, but he knew and he could not give less than his best. *Gordon MacDonald, Rebuilding Our Broken Worlds (Nashville: Oliver Nelson, 1990) p. 161.*

What failure do you keep repeating in your life because you don't admit it?

2. THE COMMAND

^{6a} *So he told them, "Let your net down on the right side of your boat, and you will catch some fish."*

Jesus gives them a directive, not a suggestion which moves them from failure to fruitfulness. It is astounding to me how easy it is to succeed in life. Simply do what Jesus says, when He says it!

3. COMMITMENT

⁶ *So he told them, "Let your net down on the right side of your boat, and you will catch some fish." They did, and the net was so full of fish that they could not drag it up into the boat.*