

"That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works." **Psalm 26:7**

The Church Guide is a media ministry reaching out to One Million of our neighbors who do not know Christ and do not attend church of any kind. We are called to fulfill the Great Commission and that begins right here in our back yard. We also strive to inspire, lift up, encourage and help equip our brothers and sisters in Christ in order that they might be all that God has called them to be. For those in need, we want them to know that they are not alone and strive to provide a listing of Christian outreach ministries who desire to be of assistance.

It's so important that Jesus be in all aspects of our life ... not only in our churches, but also in our schools, in our work, in all of our daily thoughts and actions. Our goal is to provide you with current and vital information of Christian interest. By doing so, we hope to better enable you to select and support your "home of worship," and to find trustworthy ministers in the marketplace to patronize and conduct your business. We also present extra-ordinary schools that can provide the proper educational challenges for your children and yourself.

Disclaimer

The Church Guide and its columnists do not necessarily endorse or agree with every opinion expressed in every article printed or posted on our website. We do however, encourage a healthy and friendly debate on the issues of our day. The editorial staff reserves the right to print or not print any letters submitted. If you would like to voice your opinion and not have it appear in print please clearly indicate your intent.

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Danette Crawford
Joy Ministries

Cyndi Foster
Beauty For Ashes Ministries

Dr. Timothy C. Lambert
Christian Embassy International Church

Gene Markland
National Prayer Center

Joyce Meyer
Joyce Meyer Ministries

GiGi Olivieri
Camp Pain 4 Justice

Richard Spangler
Lion's Voice Ministries

Gerald Tyler
Evangelist/Pastor

Jennifer Wakefield
Tears In Action Ministries

Juanita Weiss
Weiss Ministries

Telephone:
(757) 285-2222

Email:
churchguide@usa.com

Mailing Address:
Post Office Box 56474
Virginia Beach, VA 23456



Ray Boetcher
Publisher

You Can Also Read The Entire
Church Guide Newspaper Online @

TheChurchGuide.com

.www.Facebook.com/thechurchguide

Follow on Twitter @churchguidenews

MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH GUIDE

Save One Million Souls
The River Room Coffeehouse
ChurchOfHamptonRoads.com
and www.ChristBizNet.com

COPYRIGHT 2012

Failing God ... Feeling Unforgiveable

Publisher's Commentary by Ray Boetcher

Have you ever felt like you failed God? Maybe you did something so sinful that you didn't think you could/should be forgiven. Or maybe you feel He doesn't speak to you as much as He once did.

As believers, we mature in our faith and strive to live our lives without sinning and without failing God. We put our faith in God, we put our trust in God, and we put our life in God's hands. Because we love God, we don't want to do anything that would defy His will, reject His love, or deny His greatness.

We try.

Some of us try harder than others, but we ALL try. It's just that we are all born sinners. And sometimes we commit a sin or do something so shameful, that we believe God cannot forgive us.

In those situations, we tend to run FROM God. We get fixated in our minds on what we've done or not done, and we listen to the lies of the deceiver and begin to believe there is nothing we can do to fix our relationship with Jesus. There's nothing we can do to regain God's trust, and favor, and there is nothing we can do to have Father love us again. What we did was just too unforgiveable.

Have you ever felt that way before?

Sometimes we even feel that way about our personal ministry.

I have had many friends confide in me their feelings of unworthiness and unforgiveness after committing a sin.

One friend committed one of those secret sins. You know the kind that only you and God know about ... It put him into a tailspin. He stopped going to church. He was constantly depressed.

Previously he loved to be in God's presence, but now he was hiding from God. He felt so unworthy of God's love ... just because he had committed a sin. A sin that he had committed over and over again in the past, but thought he had finally conquered it. But in a moment of weakness ... he sinned.

He couldn't forgive himself ... so how could he ask God to forgive him.

Most recently, I had a friend who is a worship leader tell me that he had sinned. He shared that he felt he was no longer worthy of leading worship.

His sin He had gotten a tattoo of a cross on his shoulder.

The Bible says that we are not to have marks put upon our body. ... He did it out of love, but now he felt condemned, unworthy ... he felt unforgiveable because the mark would always be there. He could see it. God could see it. Everyone could see it.

Both of these men loved God dearly. Both had given their hearts to God a long time ago. Both felt they had harmed their relationship with Jesus. Both felt there was nothing they could do to rectify it. Praise God for His grace and mercy.

This past fall, I felt that I was failing God in my ministry, The Church Guide.

Years ago, God showed me that The Church Guide was going to be an end-of-time newspaper. It was going to reach the lost and save souls. But in my struggles to publish every month, I began to feel this media ministry wasn't fruitful.

Matthew 7:16 says "Ye shall know them *by their fruits*." I would compare The Church Guide to other ministries that had an abundance of advertisers, or supporters, and those that appeared to be financially sound ...

The Church Guide has always struggled for advertisers, it has never come easy, we have never

had an abundance of funds in the bank ... so I felt the Church Guide was not fruitful.

I know the devil was getting into my mind, and was trying to destroy my ministry by deceiving me ... even using scripture to do so.

This past fall, I was weak, I was susceptible, I began to believe the lies. So much so that in November, I had decided that December 2012 would be my last issue.

But thank God I never separated myself from Him or the church. I continued to pray. I continued to ask God if it was His will that I shut down. If it was, that would be OK with me. I didn't want The Church Guide to be a "me" thing, or a "pride" thing. If it wasn't His will, then I was sure He had a better plan for me and that He would have something else for me to do.

So I continued to pray, and God finally answered me.

His answer came in the image of a pot of soil, and He began to speak to me in the Spirit.

If I were to take a seed and put it into that pot of soil and fertilize it, and water it and continue to do so every day for a week, or even two weeks ... and after two weeks, if I were to look at that pot of soil and not see a plant growing ... was I a failure?

My answer of course was NO.

"Why?" God asked ... I replied, "because it was not time yet."

He then reminded me that The Church Guide is an end-of-times newspaper to save souls. You don't measure its fruit by dollar bills. You measure it by souls saved and lives changed. And then God asked me ... "is it the end of times?" ... Not yet ... "so keep on publishing."

Jeremiah 29:11 in the NIV reads, "*For I know the plans I have for you,*" declares the LORD, "*plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*"

It wasn't time yet. I need to keep to the plans He has set for me.

We all fail from time to time. Failure is not the end of the world. Failure can lead to some very positive results.

There is a love story that we can all learn from in the Bible, of a man who failed God. It's the story of the night Jesus was arrested and how Peter denied knowing Him. It is an important story because it is mentioned in all four of the gospels ... and it provides a beautiful story of how Christ restored Peter. The story begins in John 18 ...

Jesus had just been arrested and taken away to the house of the high priest. Most of the disciples are nowhere to be found. They are gone, scattered, and have drifted off into the darkness.

When the crowd of soldiers led Jesus away, Peter decided he would follow them. He followed the crowd and enters into the courtyard of the high priest.

The sun had gone down hours before and it's chilly. There are campfires in the courtyard so that people can warm themselves.

He brushes past a servant girl on his way to warm himself by a fire. She sees Peter and asks "aren't you one of this man's disciples?"

He acts like she doesn't know what she is talking about. He answers, "**no I am not.**"

He decides to move around the courtyard. Walking past a second girl, she turns and says "didn't I see you in the garden with him." But Peter denies it saying "**I do not know the man.**"

It is now after midnight. A man speaks up from

the other side of the fire ... "Didn't I see you with him in the olive grove?"

It is at this point that I want to pick up our story in the gospel of John and move to the gospel of Luke, Chapter 22, verse 61 ... because it adds information not found in the other gospel accounts.

It was at that time that the guards were taking Jesus to stand trial. They were leading Jesus through the courtyard ... at that very moment as Peter was denying Christ for the third time. In that tiny spec of time, Peter cursed and said "**I do not know him.**" As the rooster crowed, Peter looked up and saw Jesus looking directly at him.

Jesus, probably all beaten and bloody, doesn't say a word. But everything that Jesus said would happen ... has happened, just as Jesus said it would.

Peter had failed Jesus.

When we fail someone we love, our minds become a whirlwind of emotions. We are embarrassed ... we are angry ... we feel fear ... we are ashamed of ourselves ... we feel cowardly ... unworthy ... we feel we've blown it and our relationship will never be the same, and we'll never recover from our weakness.

The Bible does not tell us what Peter did the next two days after his denial of knowing Jesus. He was probably too shameful to face the other disciples. Sin has a way of isolating us, binding us into our own self-imposed prisons of solitary confinement.

There is nothing in the scriptures that tells us where Peter was during the crucifixion the next day or the burial later that evening before sundown.

He probably wanted to be alone to weep and mourn the loss of his beloved Jesus. His friend, whom he swore he'd never leave his side, was now dead. Peter's mind kept recalling the last image he had of Jesus ... that moment where their eyes met after he had denied knowing him that third time, and then the rooster began to crow. And now Jesus was gone, and he was alone.

But we serve a God of grace and mercy who loves us. God wants to forgive us, heal us, and restore us in a loving relationship with Him. There is no sin too large that God will not forgive.

After His resurrection, one of the very first things Jesus did was that He sent for Peter.

We read in the scriptures that when the women arrived at the tomb early on that Sunday morning after the crucifixion, an angel announced the good news and instructed them to "*go, tell his disciples and Peter*" (Mark 16:7). What does that mean... "his disciples and Peter?"

It's a good indication that Peter's denial had separated him from the other disciples. But Jesus knows that Peter is agonizing in pain for having denied his love for Jesus, and Jesus wants to fix his relationship with Peter and he wants to heal him of his suffering.

Jesus didn't look at Peter as a failure. He still plans to give Peter a hope and a future ... a second chance. Sometime on Easter Sunday, we find it mentioned twice in the gospels, that Jesus made a special appearance to Peter.

"*It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon*" (Luke 24:34).

"*He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve*" (1 Corinthians 15:4-5).

I can only imagine the tears of joy streaming down Peter's face upon seeing the risen Jesus, and knowing that he was still loved.

That's amazing grace.

No humiliation...no correction...no I told you sos.

