

Viewing Failure Through a Gospel Lens

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Main Point: A Christian must relate to God not based on their performance, but by faith in Christ's performance.

Intro

I - We Failed...Badly

Acts 9:3-5 (110% in the wrong direction = epic fail)

II. Jesus Succeeded...Completely

1 Cor 15:9-10

III. We Can Worship...Freely

Application Questions

Describe a time when you felt "heavy" and "burdened" by your failures?

How do you know when you are carrying condemnation for something you did or didn't do?

What does it mean to relate to God based on faith in his performance?

Christians relate to God not based on their performance, but by faith in *Christ's* performance.

Their identity is not based on *their* performance, but on Christ's *declaration* that they are righteous.

Quotes

Don't buy the lie that cultivating condemnation and wallowing in your shame is somehow pleasing to God, or that a constant, low-grade guilt will somehow promote holiness and spiritual maturity.

It's just the opposite! *God is glorified when we believe with all our hearts that those who trust in Christ can never be condemned.* It's only when we receive his free gift of grace and live in the good of total forgiveness that we are able to turn from old, sinful ways of living and walk in grace-motivated obedience.

CJ Mahaney, *Living the Cross-Centered Life*, Pg126

No doubt, at first, the prodigal boy did not believe what was happening. There was his father, running, throwing his arms around his wayward child, embracing him, 'filled with compassion for him' as Jesus says. But the son's heart was probably still saying: 'I have sinned against Heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' His sin had so burdened him with guilt that he just could not have expected his father's loving gestures. How could his father still love him? In response, his father demonstrated his love by giving him the best robe, the ring, and the celebration party...

The reality of the love of God for us is often the last thing the world to dawn upon us. As we fix our eyes upon ourselves, our past failures, our present guilt, it seems impossible to us that the Father could love us. Many Christians go through much of their life with the prodigal's suspicion.

Sinclair Ferguson, *Children of the Living God*, pg27

This knowledge of our relationship to God is fundamental to Christian growth, and has a number of very practical implications. First, it produces a sense of security. I am a child of God. He is my father. He understands and cares for me. The Christian, of all people, should be increasingly aware of who he really is. That knowledge gives me stability in an unstable world.

Knowing in the very depths of my being who I am, as I come increasingly to appreciate what it means to be a child of God, has a tremendously powerful effect. It sets me free from the world's anxious quest to 'Be somebody.'

Sinclair Ferguson, *Children of the Living God*, pg51