

The Rooster of your life

My first memory of a rooster was visiting my grandfather in France. Even in the cities people kept rabbits, chickens and roosters. I was a New York City boy and roosters were certainly not part of our cityscape. Now living in El Salvador we again have a visiting rooster who lives up the block in the city. He struts down the street accompanied by two or three clucking hens. It is a nice memory from childhood except our neighbor begins his serenade at 3:00 A.M. and continues on into the morning.

The only time a rooster is mentioned in scripture is the familiar story of Peter denying knowing Jesus. It is found in all four Gospels. The rooster crowing becomes a signal of the human will failing. Peter said, "Even if I have to die with you I will never disown you." And the scriptures also record in Matthew 26:35, "And all the other disciples said the same."

The story continues in John 18, "Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard, but Peter had to wait outside at the door." Then Peter was let in - on his way to failure. The other nine disciples, who were no where to be found, had already failed. There is not much comfort in being in the company of failures when your failure stands out (and is recorded for posterity.)

We are familiar with the story of Peter's denials and how his world was rocked by a rooster. The sudden realization of his own fear, frailty and failure drove him out and he went outside and wept bitterly. This is a stark contrast to Judas who was seized with remorse and went and hanged himself.

Peter's failure is common to us but our denials take a different form – a very human form of discouragement, worry, paralysis and even temper. We forget. He said He would never leave us. He would not forsake us. He would not put on us more than we could bear. He would give us our daily bread. He would guide us. He would fill us with His spirit and His love. But we forget. We fail. But He prays for us. "But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." Luke 22:32

And yet we fail.

God aren't you interested in our success?

Success speaks to our actions

Failure speaks to our character.

God is more concerned with us than He is concerned with our ministry. Our ministries will end but we go on forever Yes, our ministry is important but what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul?

There is a saying that success has a thousand fathers but failure is an orphan who nobody wants to claim.

So, what does failure teach us that often eludes us in success?

Let's start with humility. Never failing gives you a feeling that you will never fail. It impacts your character and sometimes gives you God-like feelings of infallibility where the dependence is on yourself

instead of God. This infallibility makes us less human. We lose the gift of compassion for other pilgrims who lost their way. Dr. Montessori holds humility as the first virtue that a Montessori teacher needs to acquire. Biblical meekness is not submission or being easily imposed on. It is having power that you don't have to demonstrate. Humility is often learned in the fires of failure. Not fun but often the road to excellence.

There is a second part to this story. Peter's leadership is both part of his personality and part of his calling. "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not overcome it." Matthew 16:18

You also have this dual calling – personality and anointing – and both are given by God – and refined in the fire.

I am sure that every time that Peter heard a rooster crow he turned his heart heavenward and thankfully smiled that there was success after failure.

Every time I hear the rooster crow (except at three A.M.) I am reminded of Micah 6:8, "He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

A salute to the rooster in our life.

Poem for life

The singer of songs says,

"When I was young, I have never seen the righteous forsaken."

Your song reminds me,

When I was young

And when I was old.

And there are two seasons

When life is good

When life is hard.

He calls us to enjoy the good

But reminds us to rejoice in the hard

Always reminded that the joy of the Lord is my strength

The sunrise offers joy for the day

The Son rise offers joy for eternity