

# Journey CHURCH

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## Love Does Session 2: Leader Guide

### FREE TO FAIL

We are no longer defined by our failures. We are defined by Christ. - Love Does video

### INTRODUCTION

Most people, if they are honest, hate to fail. However, if you asked them why they hate failing, you might not get a great answer. They may say, "Because failing stinks." Agreed. It does, That's obvious. But why does it stink? Why do we hate to fail?

The reason we hate to fail is the same reason we hate finding awkward pictures of ourselves in old photo albums. It's embar-rassing! Failure shakes up the fantasy that we're in control of things and makes us feel vulnerable.

Vulnerability. Now we're getting somewhere. Feeling vulnerable is a scary thing. It's not a place many people want to be. However, it is exactly the place that God so often meets us and changes our lives, think about it: if everything we did suc-ceeded, we might never learn to trust God at all. And if we're not trusting God, we'll start trusting something else, and then we'll lose our way pretty quickly. However, once we've failed-even just once-and experienced God's love and acceptance in that place of exposure and vulnerability, things start changing.

This week in Love Does we'll explore the nature of failure, how it works, and what God does with it. How have you dealt with failure in the past? Do you handle it well now? Where has God been in your failure? Hang on to these questions as we jump into Session 2, because maybe your failures are actually opportunities. Opportunities to ask not "Who am I now that I've failed?" but "Who is God leading me to become?"

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## CHECKING IN

As you begin, go around the group and answer this question:

What was your first job, and do you have good memories or bad memories of the experience?

## HEARING THE WORD

Read John 21:15-19 aloud in the group. Then briefly answer the questions that follow.

15When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord/ he said, 1'you know that I love you."  
Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." 16Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?)" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep"  
17The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. 18Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and some-one else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." 19Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

What has Jesus' and Peter's history been before this story? Why do you think Jesus asks Peter the same question three different times?

What does it say about God that Jesus takes Peter back as a disciple? What does it say about Peter that he accepts this reinstatement?

If you were Peter, how would you have responded to Jesus' questions?

## WATCH THE VIDEO

Watch the Session 2 video clip, using the space below to take notes. When the video ends, take a moment to reflect on one or two things that you learned, disagreed with, or were surprised by.

## GROUP DISCUSSION

- 1) Before everyone shares in the large group, turn to one or two people next to you and finish this sentence, "After watching the video, one question I now have is..."
- 2) Have you ever utterly failed? What happened
- 3) Does God lead us into failures? Bob says yes. What do you think and why?
- 4) Bob says, "We are no longer defined by our failures. We are defined by Christ." What does this mean, and do you think it's true? Have you ever experienced it?
- 5) In the video Bob says, "Because most of us are afraid of failing, we end up faking it and acting like somebody who isn't us." Have you ever play-acted to be someone you're not? Who or what did you pretend to be?
- 6) When you are tempted to fake it, think about whom you are tempted to act like. What does that image say about what you're afraid of? What does it say about who you are afraid to become?
- 7) Bob tells a story about posing in a wax museum and suggests that he is a poser when he tries to live into someone else's call-ing instead of his own. Do you know what your calling is? What are you doing to be faithful to that calling? (If you don't know your calling, brainstorm with the group to determine one step you can take toward discovering it.)