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Stuff that matters to Wayne

Sinners Sin: Dealing With Disappointment in Myself and Others

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"What do you expect? Sinners sin." - Unnamed Pastor, 2001

Struggling with disappointment in others and in myself seems to be a never-ending theme in my life. Deep in my heart and in my mind has always been the very keen awareness that there does exist somewhere perfection. The concept of perfection is set deep in all of our consciousness. We all know things were supposed to be perfect but they aren't. Some people seem to be able to cope better in this imperfect world whereas people like myself take imperfection very personally (and sometimes hard). In myself, I have a strong desire to live in a very perfect and systematized world where I go to the cupboard, open it, and find exactly what I need and instantly because it's perfectly organized. When I leave the cupboard, it should close by itself because why would a cupboard that doesn't close itself even exist in a perfect world? It simply wouldn't. I desire also that the food items in the fridge would be in a perfect rotation (like what you would have in a retail environment) so that old food moves to the front so that food wastage is reduced to zero. My alarm would always work perfectly and I would always be up before 4am so that I could maximize the day – reading my Bible and spending time in prayer so that I would then have the strength to go to my wife and kids, and love them with all that I have – encouraging them and being a great inspiration to them. I would then start my day and I would call people, leave them a message of value, and they would call me back when they got my message. The suppliers that I work with would supply everything on time and the communication would always be predictable. Inside the company, everyone would be on the same page and things would never have to be repeated twice because even children don't require that kind of babysitting usually. One email sent would conclude the matter and I could move on. Balls would not get dropped because everyone else also wants a perfect world, surely. Surely it's not just me who wants a perfect world and a world without fights and tension. In all facets of life, when something is communicated transparently and clearly such as 'this is very important to me' then no person would throw that aside and do exactly what would upset or hurt me because I have clearly explained to them how to not upset or hurt me. I made it impossible for them to hurt me... Yet everything and everyone is broken. Broken, broken, broken. Imperfect, screwed up and lost. Everything. Everyone. Including me. Yes. Including me – as much as I despise the thought of being 'one of them'. How can I possibly live like this? How can I go on? How can I not quit and get into despair and depression? Everything is so, so broken. Thankfully, there is hope and with this hope, I write the rest of this really to encourage myself. I hope that as I write this next part that someone else also benefits from what I believe will be deep revelation. You can (and should) read about how there was a time when humans walked in the earth in perfection. They didn't fight, they walked in the cool of the day with God and they had dominion over nature. Things were perfect. But all men are sinners, thanks to Adam/Eve making a poor life choice. Here is exactly how bad it is. Read it. Soak it in. Really get a grasp on this reality:

As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat [is] an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps [is] under their lips: Whose mouth [is] full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet [are] swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery [are] in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes. ... For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:10-18, 23)

And so we have a pre-programmed hunger for that Garden of Eden perfection, yet we live in broken vessels full of wickedness. Here is how we live now:

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, [even] his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: (Romans 1:20)

We *know* God is out there. And we *know* He is perfect. His creation all around it *proves* it beyond the shadow of a doubt. Even our own minds have gone dark:

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (Rom 1:21)

And so this life remains a balance between grace and longing. We long to be with our Creator in perfect perfection forever, yet we need His grace to get there. Once we have this grace we can then possibly have the grace required to deal with others around us. Once we realize this incredible brokenness and weakness we are living in, it's very difficult to expect others to be perfect. In fact, you would be downright surprised when they get anything right, or do anything good. I'll never forget this one time when I approached a pastor to vent my incredible disappointment towards someone. He asked me "Is he a believer?" I replied "No." He then said the most simple thing that has helped me ever since when he replied back "Sinners sin. That's what they do." He was perfectly right. Our very nature is full to the brim of sin. Our only desire is wickedness and selfishness and our programming code is so messed up that all we know to do is wickedness. Lately, I have decided to make this whole thing much more simple for myself. When dealing with myself and all the disappointments I have in myself, I'm going to remind myself that I'm not perfect, and that although it's ok to long for perfection, it's not ok to expect it on earth. I'm also going to spend more time asking God to totally change my nature. I know that it is a biblical promise for this change, and I need it real bad. The more that God changes my nature to be like him, the more grace I will have towards myself and others. Here is the promise onto which I firmly grasp:

Therefore if any man [be] in Christ, [he is] a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Until then, I'm going to simply one step further. I'm going to look at every person, no matter who they are and their background or current status in the world and say: "Look at this poor, broken vessel. How much God loves this person and how much God wants to start the work of transformation him/her! But this person is broken and unable to do even the things they want to do. They, like me, fail themselves daily and others. When they fail you or disappoint you, never forget they are broken. God, help me to love them just as they are and help me, a broken vessel, deal with them the best I can with your strength." A to the MEN!

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