

Daily Devotional, May 5, 2021 Where You Go I'll Go

Again, 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." The 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. Very 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 someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!" John 21:16-19 (NIV)

Traveling at a speed of 90 mph, it takes 400 milliseconds for a baseball to go from the pitcher's mound to home plate. Yale University physicist Robert Adair's study of baseball science has determined the ability of the batter to hit a baseball into fair territory is "clearly impossible."

According to Adair's study, it takes 100 milliseconds for the batter to see the ball as it leaves the pitcher's hand. Seventy-five milliseconds for the thinking process to determine the speed and location of the ball. It then takes 50 milliseconds for the batter to make a decision (25 milliseconds about whether to swing or not to swing, and 25 milliseconds to pick a swing pattern). Then 25 milliseconds are needed for the batter to take action, as the whole body prepares to swing.

The process of swinging the bat takes 150 milliseconds, and the margin of error is seven milliseconds. No wonder professional baseball players only average three hits out of ten hat bats per season. The act of batting brings about more failure than success. Players constantly have to deal with the fact that their performance at the plate, produces a 70 percent failure rate. A career like that would make most people quit on day one.

In Peter's life, we see a man familiar with failure; a man accustomed to doing things his own way. Peter was bold at times and yet cowardly at other times; confident one moment, but insecure the next. Peter's batting average would put any player into a slump or make them want to quit. Jesus saw deep into Peter's heart, saw the leader he could be, and encouraged him when He said, "feed my lambs" and "tend to my sheep". Jesus expressed His unconditional love toward Peter by casting a vision for him, and assigning Peter his role to teach and disciple believers; to take care of the flock that He was leaving behind.

For three years, Peter committed to be on Jesus' inaugural team, but in John 21:19, it's as if we see Jesus renewing Peter's contract with a vote of confidence by saying, "Follow me." "Follow me" – even though you denied me three times. "Follow me" – even though you'll be persecuted. "Follow me" – even though your selfishness prevails. "Follow me" – even though you'll fail 70% of the time. "Follow me" – even though the world keeps throwing you a wicked curve ball.

Like Peter, don't let the strikeouts discourage you. Listen to your Coach. He has some amazing encouragement for you. Take heart, follow, and see if you don't have what following the Good Shepherd requires.

Prayer: Jesus, help me to not only discover and understand your guidance and your will, but to bend my will to obey yours. Give me ears to listen carefully to what I should do, and a willing heart to carry out your directives. Guide me into all wisdom, even when it looks different from the "wisdom" of the world. Help me speak what you tell me to say, to do what you tell me to do, and to follow wherever you would have me go. Thank you for guiding me every step of the way. Amen.