

## SERMON OUTLINE 2

# FREE TO FAIL

**NOTE:** It is recommended that you read chapter 4, “The Reach,” in *Love Does* before the sermon so you will be well acquainted with the stories from Bob Goff.

### I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Bob Goff’s grandmother, Grandma Mary, used to tell him, “You’re nothing until you’ve been fired once or twice.”
- B. Bob tells the hilarious story of his first experience of being fired while wearing an expensive tux and being on duty as a new waiter in a very exquisite restaurant. Bob writes about serving his first table: “At the pinnacle of my full extension across the table with a plate of prime rib, out came the most impressive and lengthy gassing you can ever imagine. . . . It went on forever . . . I was fired on the spot.”
- C. Bob contends that “God intentionally guides people into failure.” What do we learn about ourselves and about God as we contemplate this theme: “free to fail”?

### II. TEACHING

- A. By accepting failure, we learn something humbling about ourselves.
  - 1. We are dependent beings who need God, our parents, and others. “Apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).
  - 2. We are wanderers who veer off the path of God’s will. “All we like sheep have gone astray” (Isaiah 53:6).
  - 3. We are slow, sometimes obstinate, learners. Jesus demonstrates this when He speaks to Philip (see John 14:8–9).
  - 4. We are people who fail.

- a. Peter boasted of loyalty to Jesus, yet denied Him (see John 13:36–38).
  - b. After his yearlong hard work as a busboy and money spent on a tuxedo, Bob was “fired on the spot” for his one embarrassing moment.
- B. By accepting failure, we learn something about God. Because God intentionally guides us into failure, we learn . . .
  - 1. God is endlessly patient—a great theme of the Old Testament (see Exodus 34:6; Psalm 86:15; 103:8; Joel 2:12; Jonah 4:2).
  - 2. God, because He is love, keeps no record of wrongs/failures (see 1 Corinthians 13:5; 1 John 4:8).
  - 3. God trains us through our failures. Jesus restored Peter to God’s mission (see John 22:15–17).
  - 4. God transforms our thinking (see Mark 10:41–45; Romans 12:1–2).

### **III. APPLICATION**

- A. Bob writes, “And for me, I’ve realized that I used to be afraid of failing at the things that really mattered to me, but now I’m more afraid of succeeding at things that don’t matter.” How does failure clarify your values?
- B. Recall a failure in your life. Ask yourself, *What did God have in mind for me by that experience?* What do you learn about yourself and about God as you reflect?
- C. How will you allow God to change your thinking about others who fail . . . including your children, your spouse, your relatives, and your friends?