

Sermon Based Small Group Guide  
For January 23, 2022 sermon:  
***"Fear not: Failure is not final"***

**Warm up:**

1. Can you share about a time when you "tried but failed" in your life? Maybe you tried out for a sports team but were cut, or auditioned for a play but didn't make it, or interviewed for a job but they chose someone else. How did you deal with it?
2. Do you have a story about a time when you didn't let a "fail" keep you down? What attitudes and actions did it take to get you ready to try again?

**Digging deeper:** (20-30 minutes)

1. We moved pretty quickly past the story of Israel's first big victory in the Promised Land over the fortified city of Jericho. Take a few minutes to review the very specific instructions God gave them and how completely they obeyed them:
  - Joshua 3:14-17: What is their act of faith?
  - Joshua 4:8-9: How will they remember God's miraculous act?
  - Joshua 5:10-12: How would celebrating Passover remind them of the special place they had in God's plans. (see Exodus 12:13-14)
  - Joshua 6:2-5: God's instructions for taking Jericho don't make military sense, but in faith, the priests and soldiers follow them to the letter (almost).
2. Achan was apparently a part of Israel's military that went into the city to destroy the residents and take the plunder that was to be devoted to God. Joshua 7:1 gives the simple explanation of what he did and that it caused God's anger to be against all of Israel. Let's be honest, our first reaction is that it is "unfair" to punish an entire nation for the sin of one man. How does this show our limited understanding of how the holiness of God is such a dominant part of His nature? Read 1 John 1:5-10 and discuss how God expects His holiness to impact our lives?
3. Read Joshua 8:1-2. Achan's sin dealt with and God's justice satisfied, Israel is given permission and very specific instructions on how to go against Ai. If you scan Joshua 8 for details, you will see that God actually uses the circumstances of their first attempt (and defeat) to draw the men of Ai out of the city and into a battle that they cannot win. God doesn't waste anything...even our failures can be used to give us victory in the future. See Romans 6:1-4 for proof God doesn't want us to sin so He can work!

**Apply it:** (10 minutes)

God wants to give us victory over our struggle with sin! Have you felt accused and condemned by some failure in your past and convinced God is still holding it against you? Let your small group family speak grace and hope into your life as you close!