



Failing Forward

Mt 26:31-56
Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Oct 30

Failure is a common denominator. It's also like a two edged sword; Carrying with it seeds of blessing & bane. The very "humiliation" that failure brings can produce humility, Which can result in God's Grace! (Jms 4:6) It's possible to "Fail Forward", using the pain and disappointment of our failures to draw us closer to God. (Mt 11:29,30) God specializes in bringing "*Beauty out of Ashes*". (Is. 61:1-3; Rq. 8:28,29; Phil. 1:12)

Our stumbling blocks can become stepping stones! (Gen. 50:20)

1. Understanding Failure

A. FAILURE IS INEVITABLE *"All ye shall be offended because of me..."* Vs 31 (Ro. 3:23; Eccl. 7:20)

- 1) "To err is human, to forgive divine." Written by Alexander Pope more than 300 years ago. (paraphrasing a saying that was common 2,000 years ago, during the time of the Romans.)
- 2) *No matter how gifted or knowledgeable you are, you will make mistakes along the way to your dream. Failure is the price you must pay on the road to success.*

B. FAILURE IS AN INDICATOR.

- 1) Remember School tests. A failing grade on a test revealed something!
 - a) You didn't fail "The test", but the test revealed a failure to comprehend months of material.
- 2) The Apostles "Failure" began before the garden. (Pride, Preoccupation with self) Mt 26:40,41

C. FAILURE IS SUBJECTIVE. (Who defines what constitutes a failure?)

- 1) We tend to evaluate the significance of a failure on some inconsistent things. (Amount of embarrassment, cost, criticism, who finds out, etc.)
- 2) What one considers failure might be success to another!
- 3) Your perception of and response to your mistakes determine whether they are failures.

Three steps forward and two steps back still means progress!

Calvary seemed like the greatest failure, but it was actually the greatest victory.

"Jesus Christ's life was an absolute failure from every standpoint but God's." Oswald Chambers

D. FAILURE CAN BE A FRIEND.

- 1) Most people try to avoid failure like the plague; But it takes adversity to create success.
- 2) **We need to view failure as experiments!!!!** (Thomas Edison 10,000 tries)
On the heels of every mistake is a valuable lesson and another opportunity to improve.

E. FAILURE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE FINAL. (Peter came back!!!)

1) **Most "mistakes" are not "Earthquakes"**

Washington Irving once noted, "*Great minds have purposes; others have wishes. Little minds are subdued by misfortunes; but great minds rise above them.*"

2. HOW TO "FAIL FORWARD"

"The most important thing in life is not to capitalize on our gains. Any fool can do that. The really important thing is to profit from your losses." William Bolitho author of "12 Against the gods".

Anyone can make failure their friend by maintaining a teachable attitude and using a strategy for learning from their mistakes. Ask the following:

A. WHAT CAUSED THE FAILURE?

- 1) Unless you learn this, you're bound to repeat the failure.
- 2) What "set up" the apostles? Luke 22:31,32 *Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."*

B. **HOW** CAN I LEARN FROM THE FAILURE?

Warren Wiersbe says, "A realist is an idealist who has gone through the fire and been purified.
A skeptic is an idealist who has gone through the fire and been burned."

- 1) Some are so distracted (or disgusted) by the failure, they can't find the lesson and so learn from it.

C. **WHO** CAN HELP ME WITH THIS ISSUE? Peter went back to the Apostles first.

- 1) Who can help me "live" through the mistake? (**Comfort**)
- 2) Who can help me "Learn" through the mistake? (**Counsel**)

Those who have survived failure are the best comforters and counselors.

Experience doesn't have to be gained first hand.

- Admiral Hyman Rickover said, "All of us need to learn from others' mistakes. You will not live long enough to make them all yourself."
- "A winner knows how much he still has to learn, even when he is considered an expert by others. A loser wants to be considered an expert by others before he has learned enough to know how little he knows."

D. **WHERE** DO I GO FROM HERE? (John 21 *"Lovest thou me more than these?"*)

In their book *"Everyone's a Coach,"* Don Shula and Ken Blanchard state, "Learning is defined as a change in behavior. You haven't learned a thing until you can take action and use it."

Conclusion: Without some conscious changes, we won't really benefit from our failures.

➤ **Lasting Change usually requires that we:**

- 1) Hurt enough we're motivated to change.
- 2) Learn enough we're able to change.
- 3) Love enough we're willing to change. *"Lovest thou me more than these?"* Jn 21:15

Application:

Jesus came to redeem our failures! Is 61:1-3 *"the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, . . . to comfort all that mourn; to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified."* (See Luke 4:14-22)

God can redeem our failures if we're willing to partner with him (Mt 11:28,29) and humbly and honestly:

- **Seek to understand what caused them. (James 1:2-5)**
- **Be willing to learn from them. (Ro. 8:28,29)**
- **Learn to lean on (and learn from) others. (Gal. 6:1-2)**
- **Listen to God's voice and direction for the next steps in your faith journey. (Pr. 3:5,6)**

What Satan did to Peter and the Apostles; he will seek to do to us!

Lk. 22:31,32 *"Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I've prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."*



Thankfully, what Jesus did for them, He does for us! Heb. 4:14-16

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

POEM: DON'T QUIT

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will, When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,
When your funds are low and the debts are high, When you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
when care is pressing you down a bit- Rest if you will, but don't you quit.

Life is queer with its twists and turns, As everyone of us sometimes learns;
And many a person just turns about When he might have won had he stuck it out.
Don't give up, though the pace seems slow- You may succeed with another blow.

Often the struggler has given up, When he might have captured the victor's cup;
And he learned too late when the night came down; How close he was to the golden crown.
Success is failure turned inside out- The silver tint on the clouds of doubt.

So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit-
It's when things seem the worst that YOU MUSTN'T QUIT!"

- A failure is a person who has blundered but is not able to cash in on the experience.
- A failure is not someone who has tried and failed; it is someone who has given up trying and resigned himself to failure; it is not a condition, but an attitude. Sydney J. Harris
- A failure, within God's purpose, is no longer really a failure. Thus the cross, the supreme failure, is at the same time the supreme triumph of God, since it is the accomplishment of the purpose of salvation. Paul Tournier (1898-1986)
- A stumble may prevent a fall. Sir Thomas Fuller (1608-1661)
- He who has never failed cannot be great. Failure is the true test of greatness.
- I'd rather attempt to do something great and fail than attempt to do nothing and succeed.
- No amount of falls will really undo us if we keep picking ourselves up each time. We shall of course be very muddy and tattered children by the time we reach home.... It is when we notice the dirt that God is most present in us; it is the very sign of his presence. C. S. Lewis
- Our Father in heaven ... help us to see that it is better to fail in a cause that will ultimately succeed than to succeed in a cause that will ultimately fail. Peter Marshall (1902-1949)
- Failure is a better teacher than success, but she seldom finds an apple on her desk.
- God uses broken things. Broken soil to produce a crop, broken clouds to give rain, broken grain to give bread, broken bread to give strength. It is the broken alabaster box that gives forth perfume. It is Peter, weeping bitterly, who returns to greater power than ever.

You've failed many times, although you may not remember. You fell down the first time you tried to walk. You almost drowned the first time you tried to swim, didn't you? Did you hit the ball the first time you swung a bat? Heavy hitters, the ones who hit the most home runs, also strike out a lot. R. H. Macy failed seven times before his store in New York caught on. English novelist John Creasey got 753 rejection slips before he published 564 books. Babe Ruth struck out 1,330 times, but he also hit 714 home runs. Don't worry about failure. Worry about the chances you miss when you don't even try!

Somebody asked Winston Churchill one time, "What most prepared you to lead Great Britain through World War II?" For a period of time, Great Britain stood virtually alone against Nazi Germany as it dominated the Western World.

This was Churchill's response: "It was the time I repeated a class in grade school."

The questioner said, "You mean you flunked a grade?"

Churchill said, "***I never flunked in my life. I was given a second opportunity to get it right.***"