

Learning From Failure

Preview

Failure is an unwanted but inevitable part of life. Everyone will experience failure(s) at some point. How can we make the most of our failures? Is it possible that our struggles can serve to take us to a higher level? How can God work through everything in our lives, even our failures, to make us into who we need to be?

Praise

We give honor to a God who is perfect! He has never made a mistake, but He understands our struggles; He was tempted in the same manner we are. God is not looking to find the worst in us. Rather, He wants to bring out the best in us. He guides us through our successes and failures and helps us to grow through it all!

Parable

Have you ever tried something that ended hilariously bad? Maybe it was a recipe you saw on the internet or a craft that didn't end up quite right. (You can look up Pinterest Fails for examples, but make sure to preview everything to check for appropriate content.) We all experience failure. No doubt in the process of learning to ride a bike, you fell off more than a few times. If you play music or sports, you've probably had your share of missed notes, missed shots, and missed assignments. Yet if you want to learn and reach your potential, you've got to embrace the possibility of failure. Few people enjoy the weight room and the practice room, but resistance builds strength. Without adversity and resistance, we would never become who we need to be. Likewise, we must remember that failures in the spiritual realm are not final; our struggles are only temporary. If we keep our attitude right, our failures will help to propel us into a better relationship with Jesus.

(In this section, you might ask people to talk about some of their more comical failures or about learning something difficult that involved failure and struggle along the way.)

Present

Failing does not make you a failure. If that were the case, everyone on the planet would be hopeless. At some point, we've all fallen short of living the life that we know we need to live. The difference in failing and being a failure comes in our ability to pick ourselves back up and start again. Sometimes when we pick ourselves up, we realize that we need to go in a different direction. Other times, we may realize that we simply need to try harder and keep pushing. We cannot change the fact that falling and failing are part of life, but we can make sure that we have the right attitude toward it!

"Do not gloat over me, my enemies! For though I fall, I will rise again. Though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be my light" (Micah 7:8, NLT). However, persistence and a good attitude aren't always enough. We need something that will keep us from falling into the same sins and mistakes repeatedly. The Bible tells us the grace of God teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts (Titus 2:11-12). If we will wrap ourselves up in the love of God and His sacrifice for us, our desire for wrong things will fade away. When we focus on the price that Jesus paid, we allow the grace of God to teach us how to live.

It is important to note that all of our struggles are not caused by our own mistakes. For instance, the apostle Paul dealt with his own problems, and on three occasions, he prayed that God would release him from his struggle. God answered Paul's prayer in a way that many of us wouldn't expect. "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me" (II Corinthians 12:9, NIV © 1984).

Our struggles and shortcomings teach us to rely on Jesus. If we could do everything God has called us to do without His help, it wouldn't be much of a calling. If we didn't need Him, there would be no such thing as a miracle and no such thing as deliverance. Often, we don't allow God to fully have His way in our life until we realize that His plan for us is

greater than our own ability. Is it possible that our struggles are setting the stage for God to do some of His greatest work in us and through us?

Practice

Think about some past mistakes and failures in your life. Write down what you could have learned from that situation. Did you “rise again” from it or did you let failure

- have the final word? Did you ever address the problem? Sometimes we need to keep heading in the same direction we were going; sometimes we need to change course.
- Did you experience failure because you strayed from the path God intended, or was the adversity you faced due to everyday circumstances?
- When we find ourselves struggling or facing failure, we must reflect on what we can do differently. When we do this, failure ceases to be final. Rather, it becomes a significant step toward success!

Pray

- Lord, help us to have the right mindset toward failure. We know that You love us despite our mistakes, faults, failures, and insecurities. We ask that You always give us the strength to persevere through the difficult times. Help us to always remember the grace You have shown us. We know it is nothing but Your grace that teaches us how to live lives that glorify You. When we are faced with our own inabilities, we ask that You help us to see how Your strength is made perfect in our weakness.

Plus

- Discuss some ways you can help one another when you struggle. As the body of Christ, we are called to lift each other up. Nobody is made to go through life alone. How can your P7 club help people overcome their failures through godly friendships, community, and the Spirit of God?

