



## How Do You Manage Failure? (Part II)

**Luke 22:32: (NASB) *But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.***



Failure, as everyone knows, is an unlooked for and unwelcome commodity in life. It disrupts our plans, impedes our progress, upsets our feelings and is generally intrusive to our lives. As a result of failure's glowing resume, we often do whatever we can to avoid it, and when we experience it we often try to soft peddle its impact or even hide its presence. All in all, these descriptions of and reactions to failure are really quite unfortunate. Failure gets too bad a rap. It is judged too harshly. A few weeks ago, we began a journey towards a better understanding of failure. In that journey, we began to see the place failure holds in our lives and the value it can bring us. Let's get back to it, for success begins when we understand our failures!

**The beginning, *Life After Failure*, Evan Hansen, TEDx Talk**

- *Let me tell you a story. Twenty-two years ago, a baby boy named Gabriel was born, and due to an incredibly early birth his precious life was snatched away almost immediately after it was given to him. The next year the mother was pregnant once again, and because of her first failed pregnancy the doctors knew that safeguards needed to be put in place. Among these precautions, the doctors had the mother spend 108 days lying in a hospital bed in order for the new baby to be born. Now in the end, their efforts turned out to be successful, and even though the baby was still born early, he lived. Now I am telling you this because I am that baby boy. I should not be standing up here today, but I am because of my parent's determination to raise a child, and because of the doctor's abilities to overcome the same medical failures that led to my brother's death.*

recap  
recap



### Failure's lessons learned:

*Correcting a lack of knowledge that brings us failure requires humility. It can be remedied through the intervention of those around us who truly care for our highest welfare, as well as through prayer and action on our part.*

Build the road *through* failure with your failures! Failure is good if you choose for it to be. For most of us it is debilitating, humiliating, frustrating, embarrassing, but we learn the big things through failure.



Sometimes we fail because we just do not know. The simple solution is to learn so we can be better or do better.

Last time we discussed failure in relation to God's plan. God has a Day of Judgment planned, and in that "day" (a time period, not 24 hours) there will be success and failure. The Scriptures tell us the kind of failure for which God will require accountability and those He will not.

To get God's perspective on how He views failure from a lack of knowledge, in Part I we started reviewing the Parable of the Sower. Jesus talked about four kinds of seed being sown. We related each type of seed to a different type of failure.

### Here is failure due to a lack of knowledge:

Mark 4:15: (NASB) *These are the ones who are beside the road where the word is sown; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word which has been sown in them.*

There was no opportunity for the seed to start to take root, as it never got into the ground and Satan snatched it away. God's word is not even allowed to take root in the hearts of many. The entrance of sin caused God's blessings to NOT be fully extended to all. God allowed this!

Does God judge the world based on a lack of knowledge? A lot of Christianity preaches this, saying billions of humanity will burn in hell because they did not know any better. (This is not what the Scriptures teach.)

### Look at this prophecy of God's future kingdom, as it explains the role of knowledge:

Isaiah 11:9: (NASB) *They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.*

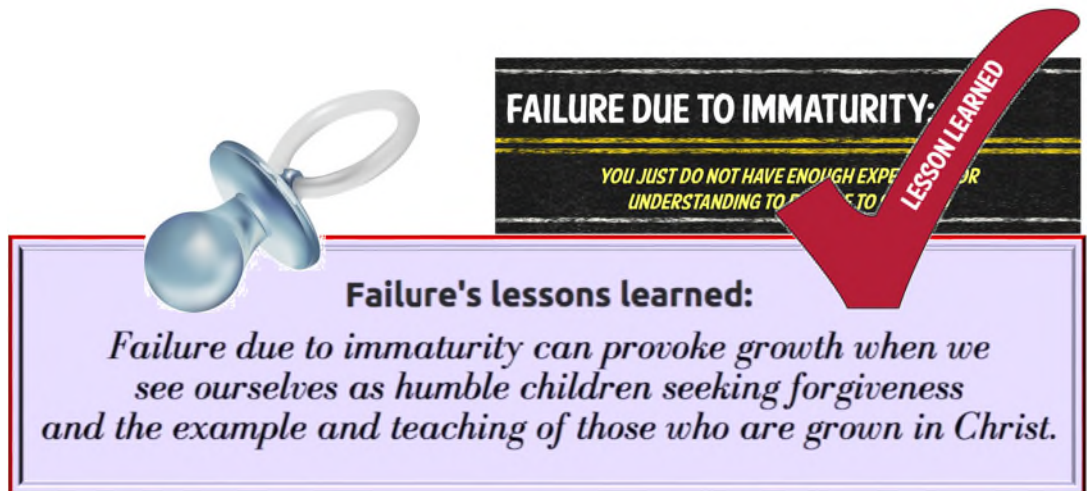
In the future, knowledge will be abundant and everywhere.

A graphic with a purple background and a red border. On the left is a black silhouette of a person in a suit with a question mark for a head. To the right is a black rectangular box with yellow text that reads "FAILURE DUE TO LACK OF KNOWLEDGE:" and "YOU SIMPLY DID NOT KNOW WHAT YOU NEED TO SUCCEED". A large red checkmark with the words "LESSON LEARNED" written vertically inside it is positioned over the black box. Below these elements, the text "Failure's lessons learned." is written in bold. At the bottom, a quote in italics reads: "The world's miserable failure due to their lack of knowledge will be erased. God's plan intervened and the future will NEVER allow failure as a result of ignorance!"

**Failure's lessons learned.**

*The world's miserable failure due to their lack of knowledge will be erased. God's plan intervened and the future will NEVER allow failure as a result of ignorance!*

Yes, you have some responsibility for a lack of knowledge, but it will not be hard to fix as long as you are humble enough to say, "I did not know; I better learn!"



**Failure's lessons learned:**  
*Failure due to immaturity can provoke growth when we see ourselves as humble children seeking forgiveness and the example and teaching of those who are grown in Christ.*

If you are immature, recognize you have growing up to do and be willing to grow up. Build that road *through* failure with your failures!



I had an amazing experience and Rick's parents were there to help me out. Here I was a new Christian, reading the Scriptures and striving to honor God in my life, and I was privileged to be able to live with Rick's parents for about six months. What I saw were examples of maturity, what it takes to honor God, how you live a life. I had to have the hands-on "watch and see" so I could draw that lesson and implement it.

That was an "It is time for Jonathan to grow up" lesson! We all have those experiences that help us grow up. We often fail because we are not mature enough. But once that failure is in place, we are to make it a positive. "I do not want to be immature with that anymore; time to change my actions, reactions or approach."

Failure due to immaturity can be overcome and is not the worst kind of failure.

Look around you at those who are more mature. Like children, imitate the spiritual maturity around you.

What about God's Day of Judgment? Will He come down harshly on failure due to immaturity?

**Mark 4:16-17:** (NASB) <sup>16</sup>In a similar way these are the ones on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; <sup>17</sup>and they have no firm root in themselves, but are only temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away.

The first seed was taken by Satan. Now this seed could take root but is choked out by the individual themselves due to a desire for comfort in the face of adversity. It has the ability for growth but does not have the strength to overcome what is around it.





**How does God react to immaturity in the future? Let's look at another prophecy:**

**Zechariah 8:23:** (NASB) *Thus says the LORD of hosts, in those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*

This is a tremendous display of maturity - "The way I have done it does not get me where I need to go. Obviously, God is with you and I want to be with God, so therefore I want to be with you."

How humbling it will be for the nations to respect Israel because of the special relationship they have with our Heavenly Father.

God will give the world the opportunity to grow up.

**The world's miserable failure due to their lack of maturity will be eliminated. God, through Jesus' sacrifice, will never allow immaturity to determine a man's destiny.**



There are two more types of failure we will review:





**Next up is failure due to weakness -  
is this kind of failure worse than lack of knowledge and immaturity?**

Failure due to weakness does delve into another pathway that we have not talked about yet, and this pathway can be a real eye-opener. Failures due to lack of knowledge and immaturity are dealt with by acquiring knowledge and by growing up - failure due to weakness requires a lot more personal responsibility.



This type of failure can come upon us even when we are mature and experienced and can be a serious eye-opener to help us with exponential growth. (This can really humble you! You may not be as strong as you thought!)

**Let's review an example of a massive failure -  
the Apostle Peter denying Jesus:**

Matthew 26:33-35: (NASB) <sup>33</sup>But Peter said to him, even though all may fall away because of you, I will never fall away. <sup>34</sup>Jesus said to him, Truly I say to you that this very night, before a rooster crows, you will deny me three times. <sup>35</sup>Peter said to him, even if I have to die with you, I will not deny you. All the disciples said the same thing too.



Peter plainly said he would stay by Jesus' side, no matter what. "I am strong enough to handle it. Not me - I won't fall away." We believe his heart was right, his focus was clear and he was serious.

Our failures due to weakness are often set up in a way that we really do know the right answer before we end up giving and living the wrong answer. Peter's response was emphatic that he would not deny Jesus even if he had to die with him.

You would think after being with Jesus for years, Peter would know whatever Jesus said came to pass. He should have taken a second look at Jesus' words, but his emotions got the best of him.

**Later that same night:**

Matthew 26:69-74: (NASB) <sup>69</sup>...and a servant-girl came to him and said, you too were with Jesus the Galilean. <sup>70</sup>But he denied it before them all, saying, I do not know what you are talking about.

*I do not know what you are talking about - He starts with a general denial.*  
This is a convenient way to try to avoid an issue and move on.

<sup>71</sup>When he had gone out to the gateway, another servant-girl saw him and said to those who were there, this man was with Jesus of Nazareth. <sup>72</sup>And again he denied it with an oath, I do not know the man.



The denial escalates. He wanted to move away from the people so he would not have to deal with this, but they caught him anyway.

*He denied it with an oath, I do not know the man - He adds solemnity to the denial and is specific. When we get into these situations, we are like Peter and tend to pile onto our failure instead of admitting it and backing away.*

*<sup>73</sup>A little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter, surely you too are one of them; for even the way you talk gives you away. <sup>74</sup>Then he began to curse and swear, I do not know the man!*

Now he is angry, emphatic and lashing out at those around him. He adds cursing to an over-the-top emotional reaction since just denying was not enough. He entered into a massive failure.



*And immediately a rooster crowed. Luke 22:61: (NASB) The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Matthew 26:75: (NASB) <sup>75</sup>And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, before a rooster crows, you will deny me three times. And he went out and wept bitterly.*

Peter had no place to go. He tried to deny. He tried to be specific in his denial with an oath. Then he got over-the-top and out of character, but when Jesus looked at him, he knew. You can see his character. He had a huge failure, but when confronted he went out and wept bitterly.

### WHAT WENT WRONG?

Peter's circumstances overwhelmed his strength and he fell prey to what was around him - the pressure of the moment. He just was not strong enough.



I fell to fear and peer pressure. In high school, two young guys asked if I party. They had beer and I liked beer when I was in high school, so sure! I went to their car and they pulled out a joint, which I was not expecting. In my mind, I was NEVER going to go down THAT road and do drugs because I thought that was stupid. I pretended to smoke and they told me I was not doing it right. The peer pressure made me fall into the weakness of the moment. The problem with that moment is that it lasted eight years. From that moment of weakness and failure, I went downhill fast. It was so sad.

This is a typical story of the human experience, where we do something or have something happen in our lives and get stuck in it. The strength of the pull of the vortex is too strong to pull out of. Sometimes the remedy for our failure due to weakness comes much later.

*What was the  
remedy  
for this failure?*



**The powerful intervening words and challenge of Jesus:**

John 21:17: (NASB) *<sup>17</sup>He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love me? Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, do you love me? And he said to him, Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you. Jesus said to him, tend my sheep.*

The response of Jesus to Peter's failure was to look at him to show that Jesus trusted in him, even though he blundered so completely on that night when





Jesus was abandoned by everyone. Jesus knew Peter's heart. That is the beauty of the remedy. "I know your heart. I know that is not what you meant to do. I know you are weak. Do you love me?" He asked three times, the same number of times Peter denied Jesus. (Incidentally, Jesus originally called Peter to follow him three times.)

*Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly. — Robert F. Kennedy*

Peter was a great example of this. He grew up to be a powerful example of Christlikeness.



*The beauty of failure, Life After Failure, Evan Hansen, TEDx Talk*

- *Now as I grew up with the knowledge that my very existence stemmed from adversity, I began to believe that I should do everything in my power to avoid failure, but somewhere along the line I began to see the beauty of failure. I began to realize that we are not defined by how we succeed, but that we are defined by how we fail. Now at some point in time, every one of us has failed; there's no denying it. And while logic might dictate that failure is something to avoid, it is imperative to understand that personal failure is one of the most important building blocks necessary to create positive changes in this world. It's also important to understand that failure is not the same as quitting or using excuses to validate falling short of our potential. Embracing failure involves understanding that each time we do not succeed we can use our failures as leverage to strengthen our resolve and to face our obstacles with new found knowledge and fresh perspectives.*

#### **A failure due to weakness remedy:**

**2 Corinthians 4:7-12:** (NASB) <sup>7</sup>*But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; (Humility comes first...)* <sup>8</sup>*we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; <sup>9</sup>persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; <sup>10</sup>always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. (Changing the source of our strength is second.)*



#### **FAILURE DUE TO WEAKNESS:**

*YOU DO KNOW BETTER. YOU HAVE DONE BETTER.  
BUT YOU SIMPLY GIVE UP ANYWAY.*

**LESSON LEARNED**

#### **Failure's lessons learned:**

*Failure due to weakness is a true window into our fallen humanity and can be used as a VITAL tool of growth, IF we are willing to accept the intervening challenges and teaching of discipleship.*

We might think that once we recognize our failures due to weakness, we can change them. Sometimes our weaknesses will never go away, so we have to learn to compensate for them. If you know you are weak in a particular area, here is a simple solution - do not go there anymore! Avoid it!



## Will God's plan treat failure because of weakness with eternal harshness in His future judgment?

Failure due to weakness is a hallmark of the human race, and it makes sense to many Christians that God would focus on and attack such a hallmark. However, when we look at the Scriptures on this type of failure related to God's judgment, we see an entirely different story.



### SOME 'FAILURE DUE TO WEAKNESS' SYMPTOMS

- THINKING MORE HIGHLY OF YOURSELF THAN YOU OUGHT
- GIVING IN TO PEER OR SITUATIONAL PRESSURE
- HAVING AND FEEDING OUR NATURAL AND IMPERFECT TENDENCIES



The one thing, *Best Motivational Video 2015, Power of Choice, Tony Robbins*

- *What is the single force that controls the quality of your life? If there was one gift that our Creator has given us or the universe, whatever you believe, what is the one power that you have right now in this moment that can change everything? You have it, I have it, we all have it. This one singular individual power that can change anything in our life regardless of what's happened to us. And I know you know the answer - the answer is the power of choice. The one thing we have in this world is we can't control the events, but we can choose what to focus on, we can choose what things mean and we can choose what to do. Those three choices, those three decisions, really control our life. It's not so much the conditions of our life that control our destiny as much as the decisions of our life.*

The way to begin to cope with failure due to weakness is to make the choice to cope with it and rise above - do something different. If it is an area of continual weakness, just do not go there anymore. Set up roadblocks.

On April 24, 2017, we made a podcast called "Virtual Sex and Pornography - Does God Care," and for many people, this is a problem that cannot be controlled. It gets hold of you and ruins you. The answer is: SHUT THE DOOR. You are too weak to be able to cope with it. Close the door and walk the other way. This is a choice.





With the level of the world's human weaknesses so overwhelming, it may seem like God messed up.

## DID GOD'S PLAN GO WRONG?

**Back to the explanation for the Parable of the Sower - the third group:**

**Mark 4:18-19:** (NASB) <sup>18</sup>*And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word,* <sup>19</sup>*but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.*

First we had seeds stolen away by Satan, and then seeds that were choked out. Now we have seeds that grow among thorns. This gives people a place where they can find biblical answers to the dilemmas of their lives taking root but are just too weak to flourish - there is too much in the way! Failure due to weakness. This is what happens to so many people who hear the gospel. It sounds good, but they just do not have the strength to hold on and find the depth of the message.

*The worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches* - Those who are part of the "Prosperity Gospel" should read this carefully! If we earnestly pray to God, He will give us everything *He* wants for us, not everything we want.

*Failure should be our teacher, not our undertaker. Failure is delay, not defeat. It is a temporary detour, not a dead end. Failure is something we can avoid only by saying nothing, doing nothing, and being nothing.* — **Denis Waitley**



**Success and failure, Success, Failure and the Drive to Keep Creating, Elizabeth Gilbert, TED Talk**

- *So, think of it like this...for most of your life you live out your existence here in the middle of the chain of human experience where everything is normal and reassuring and regular, but failure catapults you abruptly way out over here into the blinding darkness of disappointment. Success catapults you just as abruptly but just as far, way out over here into the equally-blinding glare of fame and recognition and praise. One of the fates is objectively seen by the world as bad and the other one is objectively seen by the world as good, but your subconscious is completely incapable of discerning the difference between bad and good. The only thing that it is capable of feeling is the absolute value of this emotional equation - the exact distance that you have been flung from yourself, and there's a real equal danger in both cases of getting lost out there in the hinterlands of the psyche.*

We can easily fail when we get outside of our comfort zone.



**First, God's remedy was prepared ahead of time:**

**1 Peter 2:9-12:** (NASB) <sup>9</sup>*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup>for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

This gives an active description of what true Christians are called to do and to be. You are catapulted out of your normal realm of being and sometimes that



is uncomfortable. You have received a very powerful mercy. God's remedy for the world is going to come through true Christianity.

**Second, Christians are called *out of the world and up from the world* to be presently trained for a future work of ministering, encouraging and leading a weak and sinful world of men to God:**

<sup>11</sup>*Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.*

Fight against your weaknesses! This is a present-day challenge for every Christian. Our managing of our own failures now will help us guide the world later. We are learning how to be powerful guides for the sake of God through Christ. We have a world of miserable failures that need to be led to God after their resurrection. You, as a true Christian, will be helping in that mission!

<sup>12</sup>*Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

The people who are talking bad about you are the same people who will be glorifying God because of your example *in the day of visitation*, the Day of Judgment. This is in the kingdom Jesus taught us to pray for (*Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth...*). We are told in 2 Peter 3:8 (quoting from Psalms 90:4) that *a day with the Lord is like a thousand years*. In this day (time period) of visitation, God through Christ and the church (the faithful followers of Jesus) will help all humanity to understand what they need to do to have everlasting life.

The present experiences of a Christian are in contradiction to the world around them, which causes grief and persecution. If you are *not* contrary to the world around you, we would suggest you look in the mirror and ask, "How did I represent Christ today?" Not, "How did I represent the things I like about Christ so my friends wouldn't be offended today?" Our lives should be out of character with the world around us.

This text tells us that those in the world will at that future time be able to recognize and respond to the experiences of the future priesthood. This means the failures of weakness and blindness of this age will be wiped away from their lives. They will be able to overcome the weakness.



#### FAILURE DUE TO WEAKNESS:

YOU DO KNOW BETTER. YOU HAVE DONE BETTER.  
BUT YOU SIMPLY FORGOT ANYTHING.

LESSON LEARNED

#### Failure's lessons learned:

*The world's miserable failures due to their incredible weaknesses will be a thing of the past - they will be eradicated to such an extent that mankind will be all capable of recognizing righteousness and glorifying God as a result.*



When it comes to God's judgment upon the world, failure due to weakness will not preclude having an opportunity for life. How do they *glorify God in the day of visitation*? Because they are able to grow up into Christ and become more righteous and upstanding in their focus. God will not judge humanity based on weakness.

For us as Christians, we need to fight those weaknesses so we can be of help in the future. Go to the word of God and lean on His power so we can be lifted up. We want to learn to grow from failure due to weakness.

**There is one last pathway that failure gets us on -  
the pathway of choice - why did we save this one for last?**

Failure due to our personal choices is the most insidious kind of failure as it implies that there was ample knowledge of the situation, sufficient maturity to recognize the gravity of the situation and no inherent weakness that overwhelmed us in facing the situation. This level of failure (failure due to personal choices) acts against righteousness and godliness simply because it wants to. Deception can bring us failure on any of the first three paths, but NOT ON THIS ONE! Here failure is a choice!



**"If Loving You Is Wrong," (Partial verse) Luther Ingram**

Your mama and daddy say it's a shame  
It's a downright disgrace  
Long as I got you by my side  
I don't care what your people say  
Your friends tell you there's no future  
In loving a married man  
If I can't see you when I want to  
I'll see you when I can  
If loving you is wrong I don't wanna be right

That is an example of the idolatry of self-will. "The sacred covenant of marriage before God is something I want to violate, so I will just do it."

Sins of choice always have the most clear-cut final consequences if there is no intervention or reversal and here we have *many* scriptural examples we can examine. We will take a look at just one.





## The Apostle Paul back when he was known as Saul of Tarsus:

**Acts 26:9-15: (NASB)** <sup>9</sup>So then, I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. <sup>10</sup>And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them. <sup>11</sup>And as I punished them often in all the synagogues, I tried to force them to blaspheme; and being furiously enraged at them, I kept pursuing them even to foreign cities. <sup>12</sup>While so engaged as I was journeying to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests...

*I thought to myself that I had to do many things hostile - Such a degree of degradation! He was not just following orders; he took persecution to a whole new level.*

### WHAT WENT WRONG?

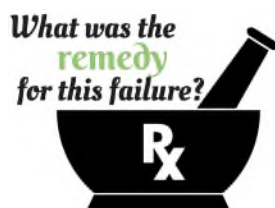
Saul was angry and passionate enough to rationalize his own breaking of the sacred Jewish Law that he so loved and upheld. He chose to escalate the unjust persecution.



**Decisions equal destiny, Best Motivational Video 2015, Power of Choice, Tony Robbins**

- *So, decisions equal destiny. It's not our conditions, it's our decisions. So, if we want a new life, if we want a new experience, we've got to make new choices. If you don't like the way your career is or your business is, change it. If you don't like your body, change it. If you don't like your relationship, change you first, because if you change it you'll bring "you" to the next one. Maybe it's time to change it, too, but change yourself first. If you want to change any of your life you have the choice, so there is no right or wrong. I just want to make you aware in this breakthrough session that everything in our life changes the moment we make a decision. I mean a real decision. A decision is when you cut off any other possibility and you commit to something with everything you've got and you take action.*

*It's not how far you fall, but how high you bounce that counts. — Zig Ziglar*



### The personal, powerful and dramatic intervening words and challenge of Jesus:

<sup>13</sup>at midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who were journeying with me. <sup>14</sup>And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads. <sup>15</sup>And I said, who are you, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.

We see the same principle we saw with Peter - Jesus knew the heart of Saul of Tarsus and knew that if he could show Saul what was right and challenge him towards what was right, he could get him on the right path.



This was a wakeup call for Saul, and I had a wakeup call after eight years. It was not an easy experience. The woman I married (we were only married for six months) was a party girl, she cheated on me and left our home. My world came crashing down...thank God! I say that because this is the turning point when I did a lot of soul-searching. I did not know who I was, where I was going and I needed answers. My prayer on bended knee for three months was, "Lord, I know you are out there. I need direction. Give me direction. Help me. I need you now." By God's grace, He answered my prayer and directed me to



someone I could appreciate, respect and start learning about God's word. From there I found my purpose and the direction I had asked for. But it took an earth-shattering experience to get me out of that funk.

Often with great failures come a great crashing and burning, and then comes the great salvation if we are ready for it in heart and mind. It is not always dramatic; it can be a slow and steady process. Jonathan did not wake up one day and suddenly he was Super Jonathan, impervious to all the previous difficulties.

No, I went through all the stages of failure.

That is the beauty of it. He went *through* the stages of failure. In other words, each stage was another stepping stone to finding real meaning in life. That is what failure is supposed to do for us as Christians. That is what we have to focus on.



**Find home, Success, Failure and the Drive to Keep Creating, Elizabeth Gilbert, TED Talk**

- *And if you're wondering what your home is, here's a hint: your home is whatever in this world you love more than you love yourself. So that might be creativity, might be family, might be invention, adventure, faith, service, might be raising Corgis, I don't know. Your home is that thing to which you can dedicate your energies with such singular devotion that the ultimate results become inconsequential. For me, that home has always been writing.*

For Jonathan, that home was Christ and serving the Lord. Finding "home" helped him to get through all those stages of failure.

Saul was now confronted with the enemy and it was not Jesus, it was *himself*. He saw the enemy, saw his choices and chose yet again - but this time to follow godliness and righteousness. He chose to defeat the true enemy and changed his life entirely.

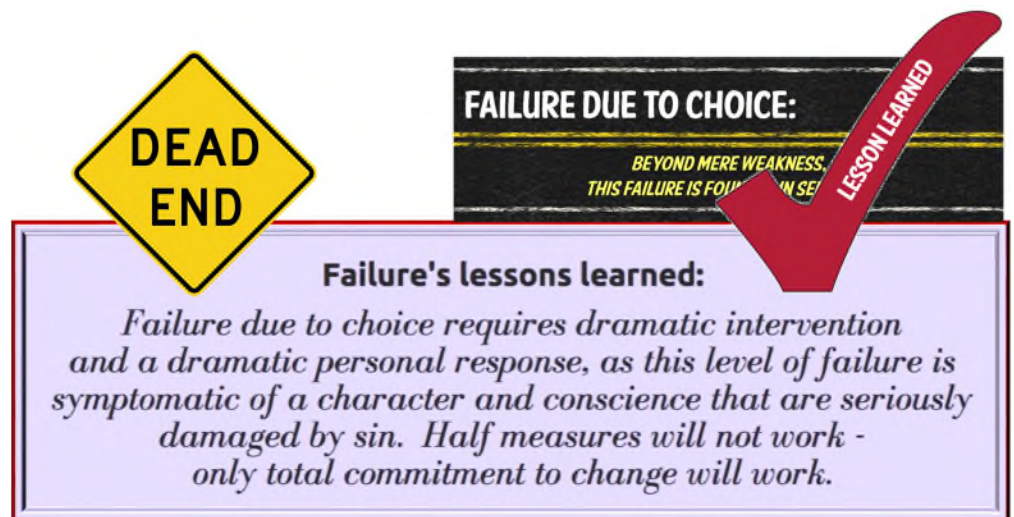
**Acts 26:19-21:** (NASB)<sup>19</sup>So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision,<sup>20</sup>but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance. <sup>21</sup>For this reason some Jews seized me in the temple and tried to put me to death.

*I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision* - All the other "visions" in his head were earthly, diabolical, evil visions that were distorted pictures of truth. He did not understand until now what was truth.

Saul became Paul and LIVED THE CHANGE THAT HE CHOSE TO MAKE!

Even though his failures were as a result of choice, his overcoming was the result of a monumental, spiritual choice to change his life.

Persecuting the church drove him to serve the Lord all the more because of how bad he was. He now had to overcome the skepticism of all the brotherhood, because they knew who he was.



When we are engaged in failures due to choices, dramatic intervention is required along with humility to change.

Lamentations 3:22: (NASB) *The LORD'S loving kindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail.*

**We can see how failure due to choice can be devastating.  
How will God judge these types of failures?**

Failure as a result of a choice is the most dangerous and debilitating kind of failure. Coming back from it is difficult, because that requires a complete overhaul in approach. God *does* deal with this kind of failure in a different way than the other three kinds, and the difference in His dealings is important.

God will not hold the world accountable for lack of knowledge - He will fix that. God will not hold the world accountable for being immature - He will help them grow up. God will not hold the world accountable for weakness - He will show them how to find strength. What about choice?

*The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing. — Henry Ford*



### SOME 'FAILURE DUE TO CHOICE' SYMPTOMS

- IGNORING WHAT WE BROKE
- JUSTIFYING OUR ACTIONS WITH PASSION
- BLAMING ANOTHER





### Failure ID question:



"Was I ignorant,  
immature, weak or  
did I follow my ego?"

 **Change personal history, *Best Motivational Video 2015, Power of Choice, Tony Robbins***

- I think in life there's three things: there's our ability to choose what we're focused on, to commit, to get a result, to put all our intention and focus into something. There's our ability to do the right things, to have the right strategy, to execute. And there's some grace, there's what some people call luck, some people call grace. There is if you do the right things over and over again and with total focus sometimes you get good fortune that comes your way. You tend to have more good fortune when you're totally focused and decisive and you take lots of action, then if you just sit around and accept things like you don't have a future. We forget that you don't have to be famous to have the ability to change at least your own personal history.*

For a Christian, if you have faith in God through Christ, grace and the power of God's overruling are life-changing elements that you have to look for and hold onto, especially when we have had failure due to choice.

How does failure from choice fit into God's judgment? The kind of choices our human race makes now can make belief in God look pretty foolish. Our world does not resemble godliness on any level.

**Back to the explanation for the Parable of the Sower - the fourth group of seeds:**

Mark 4:20: (NASB) *And those are the ones on whom seed was sown on the good soil; and they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.*

**DID GOD'S PLAN  
GO WRONG?**

There was no failure in this seed. This shows the results of good choice. This good choice is because the "ground" (character of that person) is ready to receive God's word so it can flourish. This is a dramatic contrast to the three previous conditions.

1. Satan's influence keeping it away = lack of knowledge.
2. The rocky ground of immaturity.
3. The thorny ground of weakness.

**TAKE THESE THREE THINGS AWAY AND CHOICES BECOME CLEAR!**



**Build your home, *Success, Failure and the Drive to Keep Creating*, Elizabeth Gilbert, TED**

- Look, I don't know where you rightfully live, but I know that there is something in this world that you love more than you love yourself. Something worthy, by the way, so addiction and infatuation don't count because we all know that those aren't safe places to live, right? The only trick is that you've got to identify the best, most worthwhile thing that you love most and then build your house right on top of it and don't budge from it. And if you should someday, somehow get vaulted out of your home by either great failure or great success, then your job is to fight your way back to that home the only way that has ever been done - by putting your head down and performing with diligence, and devotion, and respect and reverence, whatever the task is that love is calling forth from you next.*

Find that which is bigger than you. Find that which drives you in your life. For us, it is the Gospel of the kingdom of Christ. That is so important that everything else becomes secondary. If you can find that dedication to Christ, that should be your "home." When we find ourselves acting out of accordance with what our home dictates, we have to fight our way back to it.

Great peace is found by living a life of integrity. Being honest, caring and vulnerable, trying to help others - what a way to live!



What is God's future remedy for failure due to choice? First, God will wipe away all of the other excuses so all that is left is choice.

God will grant full disclosure in the Day of Judgment.

**Full Disclosure - this will solve the lack of knowledge failure:**

1 Timothy 2:4: (NASB) *who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*



Notice, **FIRST** all men are saved and **THEN** they will come to the knowledge of the truth. Isn't that backwards? People always say you learn about the Gospel and then you are "saved." This is backwards because it is not talking about Christians. It is talking about the "everybody else." They will be saved - they are given a resurrection and judgment according to John 5:28,29 (NASB). **THEN** they will come to a knowledge of the truth. The Greek word for knowledge here means "full disclosure." They will understand everything, clearly. There will be no way to say, "I didn't get it." In dealing with humanity after the resurrection, God will say a lack of knowledge is no longer an excuse. His mercy will not allow a lack of knowledge to get in their way.

**Complete Accountability - this will solve the immaturity failure:**

Matthew 12:34-36: (NASB) <sup>34</sup>*You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.* <sup>35</sup>*The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil.* <sup>36</sup>*But I*



*tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment.*

Carelessness is often a result of immaturity. Jesus was specifically focusing on the Pharisees at this point, who were not on a pathway to heaven. They were on the road to resurrection in the next age, being bought by the sacrifice of Jesus. He died for even his enemies - the ones who put him on the cross.

*You brood of vipers - that would have gotten their attention!*

*They shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment - They will be accountable for their actions.*

God will put all of the world in a situation where they will be able to grow up.

**Lots of room to learn - this will solve the weakness failure:**

Isaiah 35:8: (Leeser) *And there shall be a highway and a way, and the holy way, shall it be called; no unclean one shall pass over it; but it shall be only theirs; the wayfaring man, and those unacquainted therewith, shall not go astray.*

Again, those on this highway are the "everybody else," not the true Christians. Conversely, the Christian walk is referred to as *straight, difficult and narrow*. This is a large highway. Even if they are not sure of themselves, there will be plenty of room to learn. God will take away the weakness failures because they will have time and opportunity to learn.

Once all these other things have gone away, we are left with failure due to choice.

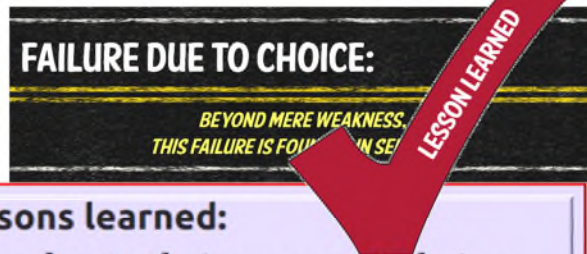
**Full personal responsibility for each person's decisions and actions - this leaves only free, educated, experienced and mature choice for man's ultimate individual judgment:**

Jeremiah 31:29-30: (NASB) *<sup>29</sup>In those days they will not say again, the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. <sup>30</sup>But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge.*

The Adversary will be removed. In the kingdom, Satan's influence will not be allowed to hinder humanity to become reconciled back to God. Revelation 20:2,3 tells us Satan will be bound for 1,000 years. He and the fallen angels will have no part in this rehabilitation process for mankind. What a weight off humanity's shoulders to have pure truth and education!







**Failure's lessons learned:**

*The world's miserable failures due to their personal choices will be weighed carefully and justly, and each man will be given ample opportunity for correction and growth. God's plan assures all men complete understanding so they can make complete choices.*

Psalm 22:27-28: (NASB) <sup>27</sup>All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will worship before You. <sup>28</sup>For the kingdom is the LORD'S and He rules over the nations.

This gives us a sense of the great power of God's justice and mercy. Mercy does not work without justice - both are needed in the kingdom. Failure will be only as a result of absolute educated personal choice and nothing else.

Failure is part of our lives, but hopefully you now have a sense of how to deal with failure in a more practical way in your life. Make failure a stepping stone!

*So, how do you manage failure?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about...  
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*

A few thought questions as you go through your life and will inevitably face failure:

- How do you see yourself?
- What is your personal condition?
- What are the circumstances you face?
- How do you label what you have done - where do you place blame?
- What must be done or can be done to right the wrong?
- How can we label what we have done to feed our best future experience?



## The Apostle Paul and another great failure through weakness example: Notice how the Apostle resolves the failure experience with faith in God's overwhelming grace:

**Romans 7:14-25: (NASB)** <sup>14</sup>For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. <sup>15</sup>For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. <sup>16</sup>But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. <sup>17</sup>So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. <sup>18</sup>For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. <sup>19</sup>For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. <sup>20</sup>But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. <sup>21</sup>I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. <sup>22</sup>For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, <sup>23</sup>but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. <sup>24</sup>Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? <sup>25</sup>Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

Failures as a result of choice examples: There are lots of these in Scripture which shows the honesty of the Bible in not hiding the sin of those who were to serve God... Here are just a few:

### EXAMPLE

Lucifer falls "as lightning" from heaven and continues to fall to his eventual death.

Notice in this example how his mind is firmly set upon his own glory:

**Isaiah 14:12-15: (NASB)** <sup>12</sup>How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! <sup>13</sup>But you said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. <sup>14</sup>I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High. <sup>15</sup>Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit.

### EXAMPLE

King Saul and Samuel: Samuel tried to intervene but Saul was not looking for any help - he was king and was going to do what he wanted to do.

Notice in this example how King Saul tries to blame others for his own choices:

**1 Samuel 15:10-28: (NASB)** <sup>10</sup>Then the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying, <sup>11</sup>I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not carried out My commands. And Samuel was distressed and cried out to the LORD all night. <sup>12</sup>Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul; and it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a monument for himself, then turned and proceeded on down to Gilgal. <sup>13</sup>Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, blessed are you of the LORD! I have carried out the command of the LORD. <sup>14</sup>But Samuel said, what then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? <sup>15</sup>Saul said, they have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen, to sacrifice to the LORD your God; but the rest we have utterly destroyed. <sup>16</sup>Then Samuel said to Saul, Wait, and let me tell you what the LORD said to me last night. And he said to him, Speak! <sup>17</sup>Samuel said, is it not true, though you were little in your own eyes, you were made the head of the tribes of Israel? And the LORD anointed you king over Israel, <sup>18</sup>and the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are exterminated. <sup>19</sup>Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD, but rushed upon the spoil and did what was evil in the sight of the LORD? <sup>20</sup>Then Saul said to Samuel, I did obey the voice of the LORD, and went on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and have brought back Agag



the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. <sup>21</sup>But the people took some of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the choicest of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God at Gilgal. <sup>22</sup>Samuel said, has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. <sup>23</sup>For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king. <sup>24</sup>Then Saul said to Samuel, I have sinned; I have indeed transgressed the command of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and listened to their voice. <sup>25</sup>Now therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me, that I may worship the LORD. <sup>26</sup>But Samuel said to Saul, I will not return with you; for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel. <sup>27</sup>As Samuel turned to go, Saul seized the edge of his robe, and it tore. <sup>28</sup>So Samuel said to him, the LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to your neighbor, who is better than you.

David with Bathsheba - Nathan intervened.

**Notice in this example that once David is shown his sin he accepts full responsibility:**

2 Samuel 12:1-15: (NASB) <sup>1</sup>Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said, there were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. <sup>2</sup>The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. <sup>3</sup>But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb which he bought and nourished; And it grew up together with him and his children. It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom, and was like a daughter to him. <sup>4</sup>Now a traveler came to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; Rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him. <sup>5</sup>Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, as the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. <sup>6</sup>He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion. <sup>7</sup>Nathan then said to David, you are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel, It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul. <sup>8</sup>I also gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added to you many more things like these! <sup>9</sup>Why have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. <sup>10</sup>Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. <sup>11</sup>Thus says the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. <sup>12</sup>Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun. <sup>13</sup>Then David said to Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die. <sup>14</sup>However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die. <sup>15</sup>So Nathan went to his house. Then the LORD struck the child that Uriah's widow bore to David, so that he was very sick.





## Autobiography in Five Short Chapters

I.

I walk down the street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk  
I fall in.  
I am lost...I am helpless.  
It isn't my fault.  
It takes forever to find a way out.

II.

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I pretend I don't see it.  
I fall in again.  
I can't believe I'm in the same place.  
But, it isn't my fault.  
It still takes a long time to get out.

III.

I walk down the street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I see it is there.  
I still fall in...I see it is there.  
My eyes are open.  
I know where I am.  
It is my fault.  
I get out immediately.

IV.

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I walk around it.

V.

I walk down another street.



*By Portia Nelson from There's a Hole in My Sidewalk: The Romance of Self-Discovery. Beyond Words Publishing Company, 1994  
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