

Surviving the Summer

A series on surviving...and even thriving!

"I know how to survive..." Philippians 4:12a Voice

"Surviving Your Past Failures"

"The godly may trip seven times, but they will get up again.

But one disaster is enough to overthrow the wicked."

Proverbs 24:16

A. Failure can bring...

1. Discouragement.

"Now, however, it is time to forgive and comfort him. Otherwise he may be overcome by discouragement." 2 Corinthians 2:7

2. Laziness.

"So come on, let's leave the preschool fingerpainting exercises on Christ and get on with the grand work of art. Grow up in Christ." Hebrews 6:1 The Message

3. Sin and the weights that slow us down.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us." Hebrews 12:1

4. A lack of joy.

"Those who have been ransomed by the LORD will return. They will enter Jerusalem singing, crowned with everlasting joy. Sorrow and mourning will disappear, and they will be filled with joy and gladness." Isaiah 51:11

B. Failure is a better teacher than success...

"We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed." 2 Corinthians 4:9

1. Failure teaches us determination.

"The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives. Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the LORD holds them by the hand." Psalm 37:23-24

2. Failure teaches us character.

"And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation." Romans 5:4

3. Failure teaches us strength.

"The LORD helps the fallen and lifts those bent beneath their loads." Psalm 145:14

4. Failure teaches us perseverance.

"In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of... patient endurance (perseverance), and patient endurance (perseverance) with godliness," 2 Peter 1:5-6

5. Failure teaches us humility.

"If we claim that we're free of sin, we're only fooling ourselves. A claim like that is errant nonsense. On the other hand, if we admit our sins—make a clean breast of them—he won't let us down; he'll be true to himself. He'll forgive our sins and purge us of all wrongdoing." 1 John 1:9 The Message

6. Failure teaches us compassion.

"Summing up: Be agreeable, be sympathetic, be loving, be compassionate, be humble. That goes for all of you, no exceptions. No retaliation. No sharp-tongued sarcasm. Instead, bless—that's your job, to bless. You'll be a blessing and also get a blessing." 1 Peter 3:8a The Message

7. Failure teaches us understanding.

"Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom." James 3:13 NIV

C. When I fail...

"I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength to do his work. He considered me trustworthy and appointed me to serve him, even though I used to blaspheme the name of Christ. In my insolence, I persecuted his people. But God had mercy on me because I did it in ignorance and unbelief. Oh, how generous and gracious our Lord was! He filled me with the faith and love that come from Christ Jesus. This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it: 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners'—and I am the worst of them all. But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life. All honor and glory to God forever and ever! He is the eternal King, the unseen one who never dies; he alone is God. Amen." 1 Timothy 1:12-17

1. I recognize that everyone fails.

"For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard." Romans 3:23

2. I remember that God still loves me and His forgiveness is not dependent on my success.

"But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners." Romans 5:8

3. I learn and grow from my failure.

"This is what the LORD says: 'When people fall down, don't they get up again? When they discover they're on the wrong road, don't they turn back?'" Jeremiah 8:4

4. I must put failure behind me.

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past." Isaiah 43:18

D. To find triumph in failure...

"I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us." Philippians 3:12-14

1. I must acknowledge and admit my failure.

"Many people look at their past failures and fear the risk of pursuing a vision. Their motto is, 'If at first you don't succeed, destroy all the evidence that you've tried.'" -John Maxwell

2. I must forgive myself. Just because I have failed in the past does not mean I have to give up on the future.

3. I must keep my focus on the future and not my past failure. God remembers my faith not my failure.

4. I need to ask, "What is God teaching me through this failure?"

"When you go through failures what are your first questions? 'Why are people doing this to me?' 'Why is God allowing this to happen to me?' Or you may think: 'I have been keeping my prayer life up to date and I have been walking with the Lord and obedient to His Word so why should this happen to me now?'

Better questions to ask might be: 'What can I learn through this experience?' 'What is God teaching me through this failure?'"

5. I may face consequences from my failure, but these can be a reminder to me that God will always be with me.

6. I only fail when I stop trying.

"Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising each time we fall."

- Oliver Goldsmith

7. God has ultimate victory for me as I trust Him and as I rely on His work through me. God only sees our efforts, not our successes.

"For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13

Next in the series:

August 28 – Surviving Conflict

"Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will grant you his blessing." 1 Peter 3:8-9