

Learning From Failure

Getting Started

What are some of your goals? Have you ever had a goal you couldn't achieve? Have you ever tried something and failed?

Everyone wants to be a success.

We encourage students to get good grades and be the best students in their class. Many adults work hard to gain as much money and respect as they can. We admire successful people, so when somebody fails at something, we sometimes look down on them. But everyone will fail sometimes because nobody is perfect. So how can we accept our failures and learn from them?

Improving Your Vocabulary

achieve (v) – to perform well or carry out with success

respect (n) – honor or a high opinion from others

admire (v) – to respect someone or have a high opinion of them

look down on (v phr) – to look at someone without respect; to consider them not as good

scatter (v) – to be separated or go in different directions

deny (v) – to declare untrue; to refuse to acknowledge

swear (v) – to make a promise or declaration in a very serious manner

break down (v phr) – to lose control of your emotions; to cry

Reading God's Word

Introduction to the Bible reading

There are many examples in the Bible of people who failed. In fact, God seems to like failures! He often chose failures to work for him, and he would do great things through them. Peter was a good friend of Jesus, and he was a brave leader and teacher. But he failed sometimes too. Find out more in the Bible reading.

Mark 14:27-31

27 Jesus said to them, "All of you will run away and leave me, for the scripture says, "God will kill the shepherd, and the sheep will all be scattered. **28** But after I am raised to life, I will go to Galilee ahead of you." **29** Peter answered, "I will never leave you, even though all the rest do!" **30** Jesus said to Peter, "I tell you that before the rooster crows two times tonight, you will say three times that you do not know me." **31** Peter answered even more strongly, "I will never say that, even if I have to die with you!"

Mark 14:66-72

66 Peter was still down in the courtyard when one of the High Priest's servant women came by. **67** When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked straight at him and said, "You, too, were with Jesus of Nazareth." **68** But he denied it. "I don't know . . . I don't understand what you are talking about," he answered, and went out into the passageway. Just then a rooster crowed. **69** The servant woman saw him there and began to repeat to the bystanders, "He is one of them!" **70** But Peter denied it again.

A little while later the bystanders accused Peter again, "You can't deny that you are one of them, because you, too, are from Galilee." **71** Then Peter said, "I swear that I am telling the truth! May God punish me if I am not! I do not know the man you are talking about!"

72 Just then a rooster crowed a second time, and Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows two times, you will say three times that you do not know me." And he broke down and cried.

Matthew 16:18

18 And so I tell you, Peter: you are a rock, and on this rock foundation I will build my church, and not even death will ever be able to overcome it.

Taking a Closer Look

1. What did Peter promise Jesus?

2. What did Jesus say Peter would do? How did he respond?

3. When Peter said, "I would even die with you!" how do you think he was feeling?

4. After Peter had denied Jesus three times, how did he feel?

5. What does Jesus say he will use Peter for?

6. What is stronger than death?

7. What do you think Peter learned from his failure?

8. What will God do for us when we fail?

Taking Action

1. God says he will use our failures for good; that his "power is greatest when we are weak." Have you ever seen anything good come out of a failure? How can we turn our failures around and learn from them?
2. Make a list of your goals for the future. Then think about the Bible reading. Are you trying to be successful by a human standard or by God's standard? What are some steps we can take to be successful by God's standard?

Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 12:9

"My grace is all you need, for my power is greatest when you are weak."

Reviewing the Vocabulary

Share your answers with a classmate. Be sure to use the new vocabulary word in your response.

1. What is something you want to **achieve** in the future?

2. Who do you **respect** and **admire**?

3. What kind of person is often **looked down on**?

4. What do we **swear** in a court of law?

5. What is something you would **deny**?

For further study, see 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Proverbs 16:1-4;
Joshua 1:7-9; 2 Corinthians 4:5-7.



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