



Life Principles Notes™

Facing Life's Obstacles Part 2: Facing Our Failures

Summary:

We all want to be successful in everything we do. When we fail despite our best efforts, God wants us to know that failing does not make us failures. What matters most is how we respond to our failure.

Joshua, the Israelite leader, felt like a failure when his army was defeated at the city of Ai. God said, "Rise up! Why is it that you have fallen on your face?" (Joshua 7:10)

At the root of Joshua's failure was the sin of Achan, the soldier whose sin was: "I saw; I coveted; I took." He never considered the consequences. God's Word shows us how to avoid the sin of Achan and Israel, and to transform your failure into fruitfulness.

Key Passage: [Joshua 7:1-10](#)

Supporting Scripture: [Joshua 1:3-8; 7:10-13](#)

Scriptural Principles:

1 We fail when we don't consult God for our plan.

Joshua took the counsel of his spies rather than waiting upon the Lord. We seek God's will by searching the Scriptures and asking, "Based upon the Word of God, what would He have me do?" Then we wait upon Him to confirm His counsel to avoid stepping ahead of Him. We must realize that God's timing is essential.

2 Godly people with the right motivation will often fail.

Joshua was a godly man, one whom the Lord had called to lead the Israelites to their rightful home and heritage—but he failed. You and I might long for that day when we become so wise and so Spirit-filled that we no longer experience failure. That day will never come. Throughout the Bible we observe godly men and women who fail, so we must never be deluded into thinking we can avoid that disappointment.

3 The failure of one person can often bring harmful results to many people.

When a father fails, his family may suffer. When a national leader such as Joshua fails, his nation will suffer. It's a mistake to think that your sin is simply a personal or private thing, because it is likely to have consequences that bring harm to others. We think, "I see, I covet, and I take," but we fail to consider the consequences.

4 The counsel of others is never a wise substitute for the counsel of God.

It makes no difference who we trust or how godly they may be. There is no substitute for the counsel of Almighty God. We must be reading and meditating upon the Scriptures to address all our problems. Your time of study then needs to be followed by a time of prayer so that you can seek God's guidance.

5 Past blessings do not guarantee tomorrow's blessings.

Christians often fall into the trap of relaxing in their prayer life because they have just received a great victory from God. Joshua had experienced a powerful victory at the walls of Jericho because he followed God's plan

precisely. At Ai, fresh from that miracle, he was inattentive to the Lord and therefore brought about a defeat for his people. We cannot be successful today based on the obedience of yesterday.

6 Daily meditation and prayer are essential in avoiding failure.

God told Joshua, “Be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you” (Joshua 1:7). We must be careful to do the will of God. In most major areas of life, we already know His will. As for difficult decisions, He is willing to guide us clearly if we seek His guidance.

7 When facing failure, never give God the blame.

In a weak moment, Joshua shifted the blame to God rather than taking responsibility as God’s servant and Israel’s leader. It is never right to blame God who has no flaw or imperfection, rather we should give Him the glory for guiding us as we follow His will.

8 When facing failure, first look within rather than without.

People may blame their parents, their environment, their nature or some other scapegoat. Whatever challenges we have faced, we alone are responsible for the actions we take. The world’s greatest achievers are those who rise above their limitations and focus on action rather than the “blame game.”

9 When facing failure, discover the will of God and correct your action.

What should you do when failure occurs? Instead of blaming the Almighty, other people, or your circumstances, seek the mind of God. Find out where you strayed from the path and make the appropriate changes. The longer you delay, the more damaging the consequences will be. Be careful not to put off what God is telling you to do!

10 When facing failure, never reinterpret the will of God.

While failure is fresh and we feel pain, we may also feel a temptation to reevaluate God’s call. We think, “Maybe I was wrong about what God was telling me to do.” God has not changed His mind or His call simply because we encountered an obstacle or made a mistake. Joshua failed at Ai, but God’s call for him to lead Israel to possess Canaan had not changed.

11 When facing failure, prayer is not a substitute for action.

Joshua was in prayer, but God rebuked Him: “Rise up!” (Joshua 7:10) Prayer is essential and irreplaceable, but so is action. There is never a substitute for obeying God. No matter how many good works we perform, disobedience is never an option.

12 Failure is a time for faith rather than fear.

When you stumble, will you give up and turn away from God, or will you turn to Him with even greater dedication? The right response is to thank God for His forgiveness and His guidance, and let Him build our faith. He will offer us a second chance when we have failed, and we will discover that what seemed like a devastating setback was really an opportunity for growth.

Conclusion:

The Lord God wants to give you a fresh new opportunity today. Why remain mired in disappointment? Our awesome God forgives us freely. He calls us out of our wallowing in self-pity toward repentance and victory.

The greatest failure of all is the failure to rely wholly and unconditionally on the perfect

and loving plan of Almighty God. Discover His will for your life and correct your actions. The Holy Spirit will provide the wisdom and power you need to leave those old obstacles behind. Move forward to a life that will glorify Him and provide you with all the joy your heart desires. 🌟

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