

Life Class  
**WHAT WILL I DO WITH MY FAILURES?**  
Lesson 3

Quotes:

*“There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.” Colin Powell*

*“My imperfections and failures are as much a blessing from God as my successes and my talents and I lay them both at his feet.”*

*Ghandi*

*“The greatest barrier to success is the fear of failure.”*

*Goran Eriksson*

*J. Hampton Keathley, III – “The Wisdom To Deal With Failure”*

Everyone wants to be a success. I have never met anyone who purposely set out to be a failure. Undoubtedly, this is why so much has been written on the topic “How to be a Success” and why these books are so popular. I think it was Theodore Roosevelt who said, “The only man who never makes a mistake is the man who never does anything.” The simple reality is that failure is one of those ugly realities of life—a common experience to all of us to some degree. Thus, the ability to handle failure in its various forms and degrees is a vital part of the spiritual life and another sign of maturity. A careful study of the Bible reveals that most of the great figures of Scripture experienced failure at one time or another, yet those failures did not keep them from effective service for God. As a partial list, this was true of Abraham, Moses, Elijah, David, and Peter. Though they failed at some point, and often in significant ways, they not only recovered from their failure, but they used it as a tool of growth—they learned from their failure, confessed it to God, and were often able to be used in even mightier ways.

The fear of failure has many people in neutral or paralyzed or playing the game of cover up. We consciously or subconsciously ignore our sins and failures because to admit them is to admit failure and that’s a plague worse than death. People often refuse to tackle a job or take on a responsibility for fear of failure. People believe if they fail they are no good. They think failure means you are a bad person and *you are a failure*. But, as previously mentioned, most of the great leaders in Scripture at some time in their careers experienced some sort of failure.

## ACKNOWLEDGE

If failure is sin acknowledge

**James 5:16** Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed.  
The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

**James 4:10** Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

If failure is ability related acknowledge

**1Pet 4:10** As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Failure can be effort related -

**Proverbs 13:4** The soul of the lazy one craves and gets nothing, But the soul of the diligent is made prosperous.

If failure is others reaction acknowledge

**Acts 13:46** Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.

## LEARN

**Php 4:11** Not that I speak from want, for I have **learned** to be content in whatever circumstances I am.

12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

**Arise Prov. 24:16** For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, But the wicked stumble in time of calamity.

**ACT John 21:17** 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.**

## FAMOUS FAILURES

**Henry Ford:** Early businesses failed and left him broke five times before he founded the successful Ford Motor Company.

**R. H. Macy:** Macy started seven failed business before finally hitting big with his store in New York City.

**Soichiro Honda:** The billion-dollar business that is Honda began with a series of failures. Honda was turned down by Toyota Motor Corporation for a job after interviewing for a job as an engineer, leaving him jobless for quite some time. He started making scooters out of his home, and spurred on by his neighbors, finally started his own business.

**Harland David Sanders:** Perhaps better known as Colonel Sanders of Kentucky Fried Chicken fame, Sanders had a hard time selling his chicken at first. In fact, his famous secret chicken recipe was rejected 1,009 times before a restaurant accepted it.

**Walt Disney:** Today Disney rakes in billions from merchandise, movies and theme parks around the world, but Walt Disney himself had a bit of a rough start. He was fired by a newspaper editor because, "he lacked imagination and had no good ideas." After that, Disney started a number of businesses that didn't last too long and ended with bankruptcy and failure. He kept plugging along, however, and eventually found a recipe for success that worked.

**Sidney Poitier:** After his first audition, Poitier was told by the casting director, "Why don't you stop wasting people's time and go out and become a dishwasher or something?" Poitier vowed to show him that he could make it, going on to win an Oscar and become one of the most well-regarded actors in the business.

**Tom Landry:** As the coach of the Dallas Cowboys, Landry brought the team two Super Bowl victories, five NFC Championship victories and holds the records for the record for the most career wins. He also has the distinction of having one of the worst first seasons on record (winning no games) and winning five or fewer over the next four seasons.

**Isaac Newton:** Newton was undoubtedly a genius when it came to math, but he had some failings early on. He never did particularly well in school and when put in charge of running the family farm, he failed miserably, so poorly in fact that an uncle took charge and sent him off to Cambridge where he finally blossomed into the scholar we know today.

**Thomas Edison:** In his early years, teachers told Edison he was "too stupid to learn anything." Work was no better, as he was fired from his first two jobs for not being productive enough. Even as an inventor, Edison made 1,000 unsuccessful attempts at inventing the light bulb. Of course, all those unsuccessful attempts finally resulted in the design that worked.