

the best *you can be*

Lesson

11



A VICTORIOUS *woman*

"But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. We have confidence in the Lord.... May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance."

2 Thessalonians 3:3-5



THE BIBLE IS FULL OF STORIES of apparent defeat which often turn into victory. History is also replete with such stories from every nation. Your family may have its own stories to tell of discouragement and what seemed like failure that turned into happiness and victory. Perhaps your own life will testify to similar events with happy endings. God has promised us victory. And we can look forward to that glorious, victorious day when Jesus comes to take us to our heavenly home.

This promise gives us confidence and can help lead us to victory. “But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will do the things we command. May the Lord direct your hearts into God’s love and Christ’s perseverance” (2 Thessalonians 3:3-5).

When we look back on our lives, we can see how God has led and blessed us. At various times in our experience, we may not see the way ahead. Disappointments and sorrows may overwhelm us. But it is our reaction to failure and the bad times that can help make us victorious and courageous women. Through bad times we can learn lessons of dependence upon God, the power of prayer, and the strength of love. The bad times can make us bitter or better people.

SAYINGS THAT CAN HELP US

- “Success is the flip side of failure.”
- “Success is failure turned inside out, the silver tint to the clouds of doubt.”



- “Don’t give up. Learn from each failure, and you will have success. God has not called you to failure, but to success.”
- “When the going gets tough, the tough get going.”
- “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again. ‘Tis a lesson all should heed, try again.”
- “Anything worth doing is worth doing well.”
- “There’s no shame in failing. The shame is in not learning from your failures.”

WHAT TO DO WITH FAILURE

1. **Acknowledge it.** Stop trying to excuse it. Because of sin, all human beings experience failure. No one is perfect. Confession of our failures allows for the grace of forgiveness and the opportunity for change.
2. **Thank God for it.** Defeat often shows us our inability to do the will of God without His aid. When we let go and let God, He can often work miracles for change. Then we can look back and say “Thank you, Lord, for the miracle you wrought.”

3. Learn from it. We learn by the things we suffer. We gain experience from failure and learn how to avoid it in the future. Be open to new ideas or suggestions.

4. Use it as a stepping stone to success.

Sometimes we weep and pray over apparent failures, but they can be times of learning and improvement if we hold onto our confidence in the way God has led us. God will make the way clear. Success will come.

5. Overcome it. All failure is not sin, but all sin is failure. If sin is our problem, then by the grace of God we can overcome. The methods are:

- **SCRIPTURE** - 'It is written,' said Jesus.
- **HOLY SPIRIT** - Jesus gives us the Spirit for the battle against sin
- **PRAYER** - True prayer takes hold of God and gives us the victory.
- **SINGING** - It is one of the methods Jesus used, and it is a powerful tool for women today.
- **MINISTRY OF ANGELS** - We should not overlook the ministry of angels.

6. Transform it. It is possible to turn a defeat into victory. Sometimes all that is necessary is just a change of the way we look at things. The successful Christian woman will see a possibility in every failure. She will seek, by God's power, to transform that failure into success.

Many stories abound which testify to what women have done when failure occurred in their lives. Success and good came from their apparent defeats. Share your story. You can be a victorious woman by God's grace and your constant dependence on Him.

RATE YOURSELF

On a scale of 1 to 5, rate yourself in the way you deal with failure and disappointment. Five is the best.

1. I acknowledge my mistakes and take full responsibility for my failures. I confess my sins.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I am able to learn from my failures.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I consistently thank God for my disappointments and failures.

1 2 3 4 5

4. I use each failure as a stepping-stone to success.

1 2 3 4 5

5. I am using all the agencies God has provided to overcome sin in my life.

1 2 3 4 5

6. I have transformed each failure of my life into an opportunity.

1 2 3 4 5

PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES

1. Divide a sheet of paper into two columns. In the first column make a list of three major failures or disappointments in your life. In the second column write down at least one thing you have learned from each experience.
2. Look up the following texts. What does each one tell you about what to do with failure? Jude 24; 1 John 1:9; Philippians 3:13,14; 4:13; Proverbs 28:13; 1 Corinthians 15:57; Isaiah 61:3; Romans 8:28.
3. "As the world's Redeemer, Christ was constantly confronted with apparent failure," writes Ellen G. White. How did He deal with these discouraging circumstances? Read pages 678, 679 of *The Desire of Ages*. Find four ways Jesus dealt with failure.
4. Collect biographies of people who have taken failure and turned it into an opportunity for success. An example is *Think Big* by Ben Carson, M.D.

SUCCESS PRINCIPLE

With God's help every failure can become a stepping-stone to success.

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Dear Father and Friend, You are the One who understands. You are the One who guards and guides and gives us victory. It is only by Your grace and power that I can possibly hope to succeed in this life. Thank You for being my provider for everything. Thank You for giving me victory in all circumstances. When I fail and am discouraged, help me to always trust You and to remember Your promises to always be with me.



WOMEN'S MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD
20904 USA | Ph: 1-301-680-6636
www.adventistwomensministries.org