

Learning from Failure

At a recent breakfast meeting of Life Care's leadership on the Executive Staff, I asked if there was anyone in the room who had ever made a mistake. Hands went up all around the table, of course, for all of us have committed errors of one sort or another in our lives. I then reminded them that they were in good company.

An example from the Bible is the Apostle Peter. In the twenty-sixth chapter of Matthew is the account of how Peter denied Jesus three times before the rooster crowed, just as Christ had predicted. Peter's response to his failure? "He went out and wept bitterly," Scripture says.

Compare that evening, however, to the Day of Pentecost, when 120 believers were assembled in an upper room and the Holy Spirit came to empower them. Peter went boldly into the street, into a crowd that must have contained men and women who had shouted, "Crucify Him," (Jesus) in Pilate's hall. There, he preached and 3,000 souls were added to the church.

Peter had learned from his mistake.

Everybody fails, errs and makes mistakes. The old saying, "To err is human, to forgive divine," was written by Alexander Pope more than 250 years ago. He was only paraphrasing an ancient saying that was common during the time of the Romans. Recently, I read in John C. Maxwell's book, *Leadership Promises for Every Day*, an article entitled *Rules for Being Human*. Here they are:

- Rule No. 1: You will learn lessons.
- Rule No. 2: There are no mistakes – only lessons.
- Rule No. 3: A lesson is repeated until it is learned.
- Rule No. 4: If you don't learn the easy lessons, they get harder.
- Rule No. 5: You'll know you've learned a lesson when your actions change.

Failure, you see, is simply the price we pay to achieve success. When we get knocked down by our blunders, the key is to pick ourselves up, brush ourselves off, and get ready to go again, having gained important knowledge in the process.

--Beecher Hunter