

PROTIPS

Successful Failures Part II (Biblical Characters) by Marlene Legaspi-Munar

Throughout the Bible we can read about men and women who were used by God mightily. But these people are not perfect. Ang totoo, marami sa kanila ang maituturing na mahina and if it were not for the grace and power of God they would not have accomplished much. The lives of these people reflect the reality that God chooses people who could be changed by His love, and that those who obey Him could be used by Him. At kahit na nga sa mata ng tao maituturing silang bigo, sa mata ng Diyos isa silang tagumpay.

One of these mighty men of God is Moses. Mababasa natin ang kasaysayan ni Moses sa aklat ng Exodus simula sa Chapter 2, ganoon din sa aklat ng Gawa o Acts 7:20-44 at Hebrews 11:24-28. By the world's standard, Moses could be considered a failure because of the following reasons:

First, **he turned his back on worldly riches, power and fame.** Lumaki si Moses sa palasyo ng Egipto at itinuring na anak ng prinsesa. He was privileged to have a lifestyle enjoyed by those belonging to the royal family. He also received excellent education, and certainly He enjoyed the power and authority of being one of the prince of Egypt. Pero tinalikuran niya ang lahat ng ito nang maunawaan niya na siya pala ay isang Hebreo at kalahi ng mga Israelitang inaapi ng mga namumuno mismo sa Egipto. According to Hebrews 11:24-26: "...when he grew up, (he) refused to be treated as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to share the oppression of God's people instead of enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin. He thought it was better to suffer for the Messiah than to own the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the great reward that God would give him." Sa mundong ito, kapag ang isang tao ay tumalikod sa kayamanan at kapangyarihan, sasabihin ng mga tao, nasisira na ang kanyang ulo. But instead of considering Moses as a failure, we must follow His example because in God's kingdom he was certainly successful. He was

successful in earning an eternal reward and while here on earth he was able to glorify God.

Secondly, by the world's standard, Moses could be considered a failure because **he was rejected several times by his own people**. Una siyang tinanggihan ng kapwa niya Israelita nang mamagitan siya sa dalawang Israelitang nag-aaway. Nang nasa ilang na ang mga Israelita at hirap na hirap, ilang beses nilang sinisi si Moses at pinagbalakan pa nilang bumalik ng Egipto. When we are rejected by people, especially those who are close to us, it's very easy to feel that we have failed. But in spite of this rejection, nagpatuloy pa rin si Moses sa pag-akay sa mga Israelita patungo sa lupang pangako. Jesus was also rejected by His own people but it doesn't mean he failed. Hanggang ngayon, maraming tao ang patuloy na naliligtas dahil sa sakripisyong ginawa Niya sa krus ng kalbaryo. In the midst of persecution and rejection, hang on and persevere. Gawin nyo lang ang pinagagawa sa inyo ng Panginoon and you will succeed. Remember, failure from the point of view of this world is actually success in the kingdom of God.

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Sa lahat ng mga disipulo ni Jesus, si Pedro ang pinakapopular. In fact, he was the recognized leader among Jesus' disciples--one of the three members of the inner circle made up of James, John, and Peter himself. Peter was a Galilean fisherman when Jesus called him to be "a fisher of men". What is so special with Peter that Jesus should call him? Ang totoo si Pedro at ang iba pang tinawag ni Cristo ay mga ordinaryong tao. And like ordinary men, they too have character flaws and failures. Yet Jesus saw their potential. Let's first take a look at some of the weaknesses and mistakes of Peter.

First, **Peter often spoke without thinking.** Madalas magsalita si Pedro nang hindi muna nag-iisip. Medyo impulsive, mabilis mag-init ang ulo at minsan ay medyo mayabang. Tulad ng sabihin ni Jesus na iiwan siya ng lahat dahil siya'y papatayin, sumagot si Pedro, "Kahit na po iwan kayo ng lahat, hindi ko kayo iiwan." But we know that just like the rest, he too left Jesus when he was arrested.

Second, **Peter denied, not just once but thrice, that he knew Jesus.** Seryoso naman si Pedro sa kanyang intensyon na hindi iwan ang Panginoong Jesus sa panahon ng kagipitan, ngunit nang dumating na ang panahong iyon, nanghina si Pedro at ipinagkanulo niya ang Panginoong Jesus nang tatlong beses.

Third, **Peter at times was still afraid of what other people would say.** According to Galatians 2:12, Peter ate with Gentile Christians who were not circumcised. But when some circumcised Jewish people came, Peter would not eat with these Gentiles anymore because he was afraid of what the legalists would say.

Sa kabila ng mga naging kahinaan at pagkakamali ni Pedro, pinatawad pa rin siya at tinanggap ng Panginoong Jesus. He was given a second chance, and he used that second chance to love and serve the Lord more fervently and faithfully. He preached the Good News at Pentecost where about three thousand people turned away from their sins and turned to God. He also healed the lame man at the temple. At kahit na pinapatahimik na sila ng Sanhedrin, patuloy pa rin sa pangangaral si Pedro. It was also Peter who reached out to Cornelius who was a Gentile. And he wrote the books First and Second Peter.

The story of the Apostle Peter shows that even when we are unfaithful, God is still faithful. He can restore us and use us again as His instruments to bring more people to Christ. We should not only be enthusiastic, but we should

follow through what we have promised. And lastly, it is better to be a follower who sometimes fails than one who fails to follow. Mas mainam maging tagasunod na minsan ay nagkakamali, kaysa tawaging tagasunod pero hindi naman talaga sumusunod.

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Failures are actually opportunities for us to change and grow, and mistakes can be effective teachers. Given time and encouragement, we can all grow and be successfully used by God. Ganito ang nangyari kay John Mark, or Mark, na siyang sumulat ng Gospel of Mark. Mark's life story is mentioned in Acts 12:25-13:13 and Acts 15:36-39. He is also mentioned in Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11; and 1 Peter 5:13.

The early church gathered in his mother's large house in Jerusalem, the same house kung saan nagprayer meeting ang mga believers when Peter was imprisoned under Herod Agrippa I. Mark became an assistant and traveling companion to the three of the greatest early missionaries, namely Barnabas, Paul and Peter. Dahil nakasama niya si Peter, he had the rare opportunity to observe closely the apostle, at mula sa kanya paulit-ulit din niyang narinig ang mga kuwento tungkol sa Panginoong Jesus. That's why he was able to write the Gospel according to Mark, which is considered to be the first gospel written among the four.

But these accomplishments of Mark, or John Mark, are not often highlighted. Ang madalas nating maalala about Mark were his failures. According to some Bible scholars, he was probably the young man described in Mark 14:51-52 na tumakas nang hulihin si Jesus, tuloy naiwan niya ang kanyang balabal. Pero ang mas nakakahiyang karanasan ni Mark ay nang iwan niya sina Barnabas at Paul sa kanilang unang missionary journey. On their second missionary journey, Barnabas suggested that they take in Mark again as a companion but Paul

refused. Dahil dito, nagkaroon ng mainit na pagtatalo sina Barnabas and Paul and that led to their separation. But Barnabas decided to take Mark under his wings. He stood beside the young Mark despite his failure. He encouraged Mark and eventually Mark learned from his mistakes. Later on, mababasa natin in Paul's epistles, that Mark has become helpful to Paul, and that Peter considered him as a son.

What can we learn from Mark's story? First, **maturity often comes as a result of time and mistakes.** You will mature if you will learn from your mistakes. Hindi rin natin mapupwersa ang isang tao na magmature overnight. It takes time for a person to change and grow. Secondly, **encouragement can change a person's life.** Hindi pinabayaang ni Barnabas si Mark. He trusted him and built him up until he was able and confident to minister again.

If you made a mistake, ask forgiveness from those people who were affected by your mistakes. Forgive yourself and learn from your mistakes. Look for someone who can encourage you and mentor you. If you have a "Barnabas" or an "encourager" take time to thank that person, and be an encourager yourself to others. Your encouragement can turn a person's failure into success.