

Fathers' Studies: Personal Growth

"...that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

LESSON 12 OF 52

WHAT IF I'VE ALREADY FAILED?

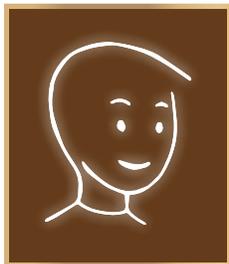
LESSON AIM: To learn that it is never too late to start living right.

KEY VERSE:

1. **ISAIAH 61:3** God does not want you to keep living with feelings of despair and sadness caused by failure. He wants to give _____ instead of sorrow.
2. **1 CORINTHIANS 15:9** In the past, Paul had made serious mistakes. What does he say he did? _____
3. **GALATIANS 1:23** In spite of his past mistakes, what was Paul now doing? _____
4. **EZEKIEL 18:21-23** The Lord says that when a man turns away from his wrong ways of living and does what is right, he will _____.
5. **1 JOHN 1:9** When a man confesses his sins to God, he can depend on God to _____ and to _____.

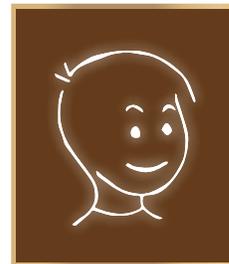
PERSONAL NOTES:

For You To Do



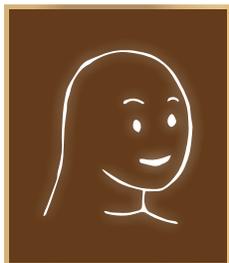
By Yourself

Did you feel like a failure when you read your children's answers in Lesson 4? Write some goals (see Lesson 3) that will help you start living right in these areas of life.



With Your Children

Children fail sometimes, too—in school courses, in games, in friendships. Talk to your children about their feelings of failure. Share with them what you have learned from your own failures.



With Your Wife

Ask her to tell you what you were like when you were first married and why she loved you.

WHAT IF I'VE ALREADY FAILED?

LESSON 12 OF 52

Many fathers feel bad when they think back on the past and see their personal failures and mistakes. They feel hopeless because they think it is too late to do anything about the problem.

Is it ever too late? No, it is never too late if you are willing to go back and correct the mistakes you have made. If a mistake cannot be corrected, it must not remain the centre of thoughts and speech. Instead, think and talk about your success.

WHAT IS A FAILURE?

A person who fails is not a failure. A failure is someone who:

- Blames others and does not admit that he has done anything wrong
- Gives up and decides that he cannot change anything

REBUILDING PAST FAMILY FAILURES.

If a father has failed with his family, he must first admit that he has failed and ask God for forgiveness. Then with God's help he can go to his wife and children and explain that he has failed them. He can ask their forgiveness and make any corrections that may be necessary or possible. This time of confessing his faults and making corrections also serves as a teaching lesson for his children. It can help them not to fail in the same thing.

A father must try to rebuild any damage that has been done by his past failures. A father's sins are often repeated in the lives of his children. They may not be expressed in the same way, but the same basic failures will often be there. Children follow their father's example. By talking about his failure and asking forgiveness, he makes your family aware of the same sin they may have in their lives. Then they can correct it. This helps to rebuild the damage done by past failures. The Apostle Paul is an example of how God wants you to build up what you have destroyed in the past. Paul failed God by persecuting Christians. After he turned from his sin, he spent his life rebuilding the Christian church.

JEREMIAH 30:17A, EZEKIEL 18:31-32, PSALM 23:3, PSALM 51:10-13

...I WILL GIVE THEM A CROWN OF BEAUTY INSTEAD OF ASHES...A SPIRIT OF PRAISE INSTEAD OF A SPIRIT OF NO HOPE. (ISAIAH 61:3)

Failures can be corrected.

Failure is:

- blaming others
- giving up

Rebuilding is:

- admitting the failure
- asking for forgiveness
- making corrections

Paul built up the Christian church he had once attacked.

WINDOW TO LIFE

Clarence had a fifteen-year-old daughter named Charlotte. One day they got into a very bad argument. Clarence finally told Charlotte to get out of the house and stay out. He was tired of arguing with his daughter. Charlotte left home and went to live with her boyfriend. After Clarence's anger passed, he was heartbroken at what had happened. He went without food and spent time in prayer. As he prayed to God, God showed him some things that he had done wrong with his daughter. Clarence went to Charlotte and confessed his wrong. Charlotte forgave him. In less than a month Charlotte left the man with whom she was living and gave her life back to God.

