

## What does God do with failure?



### God is the God of second chances.

People may tell us that we have ruined our life and destroyed hope for anything good. That is not true. When we are in despair and think our lives are shattered, it is at that very point where God can finally enter in and roll up His sleeves

to do something wonderful! When we ask God to take control of the situation, He will walk us through that situation into the next one, and we'll begin to realize that He is always able to do more than we can imagine!

David was God's choice for Israel's king and one whom God declared to be "a man after His own heart." But David seduced Bathsheba, wife of one of his most loyal army officers. David had her husband killed in battle and married the "grieving widow." God sent Nathan the prophet to confront David and David repented (see Psalm 51). God forgave their sin. Even though the child born to David and Bathsheba died, God restored the couple and made them parents of the great King Solomon, whose descendant was Jesus Christ. (See 2 Samuel 11, 12.)

1. No matter what you have done, **God loves you and is eager to forgive you.** All you have to do is ask. Nothing is too big for God to forgive.

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*  
1 John 1:9

2. **God will restore a humble heart.** Accept the consequences of doing wrong. You might need to pay back some money, apologize to someone, pay a fine or penalty, regain another person's trust, or correct a problem that you helped to create. Even if it means admitting you were wrong and feeling embarrassed, these important steps must be taken to fully obey God and learn to live in peaceful obedience.

*He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.*  
Psalm 25:9  
*The Lord hates two things. He hates it when the guilty are set free. He also hates it when those who aren't guilty are punished.*  
Proverbs 17:15 (NIRV)

3. Even if you have given up on yourself, **God does not give up on you.** Throughout Scripture, the Lord begs his people to turn away from wrong and come back to him. If we choose not to obey God and go our own way, he pursues us. But He never gives up on us—even when we foolishly insist on doing things our own way and choose to disobey him. He may allow us to deal with the fallout of our disobedience, but He stays nearby, waiting to hear us call! When we finally stop fighting, acknowledge our sin and call out to Him, He comes with open arms to give us what we need most—Himself. He's a good Father!

*Don't just tear your clothes to show how sad you are. Let your hearts be broken. Return to the Lord your God. He is gracious. He is tender and kind. He is slow to get angry. He is full of love. He takes pity on you. He won't destroy you.*  
Joel 2:13 (NIRV)

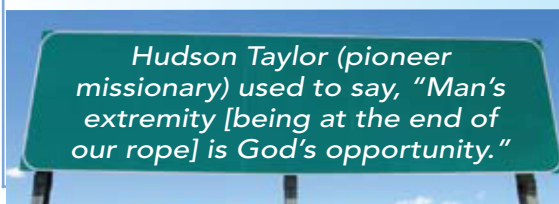


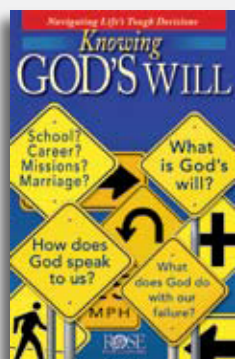
4. God may change a painful situation quickly; however, **His goal for you is to sanctify you—to make you like Jesus**—developing you into a loving, giving, mature person. These lifelong changes take time. The Christian life is much more like running a marathon than it is like sprinting a short distance. This life is the process that prepares us for the next one! So settle in for the long haul—when you fall down, don't give up! Get back up and keep running—even if you limp for a while!

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith . . .*  
Hebrews 12:1, 2

5. **God invests time and effort to find lost people.** If you have lost your way in life and have gone in the wrong direction, there is good news—God is looking for you! He considers you too valuable to lose. Don't push him away when he calls to you.

*If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.*  
Matthew 18:12-14





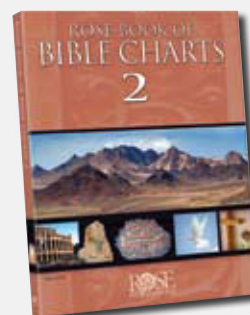
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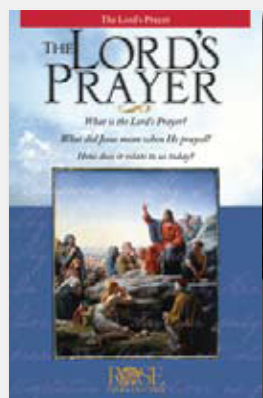
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