



Failure To Launch!
Hebrews 5:12-14

There was a failure to launch in the early church. Instead of maturing into spiritual parents who teach others, many remained babes in Christ.

Hebrews 5:12-14

12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

NKJV

One of the causes of failure to launch in the church was they coveted the things of this world. As a result, they were assembling with the church to hear God's Word but their hearts were set on seeking the pleasures and treasures of the world. The solution to this problem was to change what they coveted. Instead of coveting the pleasures and treasures of this world, they needed covet that which is eternal; the souls of men.

Today we are going to learn another cause of failure to launch; Self-doubt.

Self-doubt is lack of confidence in oneself and one's abilities to do something you have been assigned to do.

In discipleship there is...

- God's part
- My part
- Their part

In winning the lost to Christ...

- God must convict and give faith (God's part)
- I must share the gospel (My part)
- They must repent of their sin and trust in Christ (Their part)

Self-doubt causes a lack of confidence in oneself and one's abilities to share the gospel.

Today our story is about someone who overcame his problems with self-doubt; Paul the Apostle. We are going to learn from his life and words how he overcame this problem.



The following story occurs during Paul's first missionary journey between 48 and 49 Ad. It occurred in the city of Lystra.

Paul and Barnabas experienced incredible success and incredible opposition on their first missionary journey. At both Antioch and Iconium many were converted. In both cities the Jews rose up against them and inspired a mob to threaten their lives and drive them out of town. So they traveled to Lystra. At Lystra a man who was a cripple from birth is healed and the whole city is ripe to be converted.

Acts 14:19-23

19 Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. 20 However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

NKJV

What does this story tell us about Paul?

He was committed to disciple others. He was bold. He was courageous. He was willing to suffer to make disciples.

What does this story fail to tell us about Paul?

What enabled Paul to be this way?

We have to look at what Paul wrote in his letters to discover Paul's secret.

Phil. 4:11-13

11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

NKJV

1 Cor. 15:10

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

NKJV

2 Cor. 3:4-5

4 And we have such trust through Christ toward God. 5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, 6 who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

NKJV

Gal. 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

NKJV

According to what Paul wrote, Paul was able to disciple others because Jesus Christ enabled him to do it. He was committed, he was bold, he was courageous, and he could suffer to disciple others because Christ was sufficient.

One of the spiritual problems that causes a failure to launch in discipleship is self-doubt and feelings that we are insufficient.

Having these feelings is not a sin. Having these feelings is the result of our fallen sinful state and it is a normal response to any assignment that you believe you do not have the ability to complete.

We see it in Abraham when God called him to be the father of a great nation.

We see it in Moses when God called him to be the deliverer of Israel.

We see it in Gideon when God called him to be the deliverer of Israel.

We see it in Jeremiah when God called him to be a prophet.

Abraham, Moses, Gideon, and Jeremiah suffered from feelings of being insufficient and struggled with self-doubt.

But in each one of these men's lives they overcame their feelings by faith in God's ability. By depending on God, they overcame their feelings and their self-doubt and fulfilled the mission they were called to do.

We are not any more capable to disciple others than we are saving ourselves from sin. We are not any more capable to disciple others than Moses could split the red sea; then Joshua could make the sun stand still; then Elijah could cause an iron axe head to float; then Elisha's bones could raise a man from the dead; then Daniel could shut the mouth of a lion; then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego could protect themselves from the fiery furnace; then Peter could walk on water; then Peter could convert 300 people at Pentecost; then Paul could convert most of Asia minor, Macedonia, and Greece to Christianity.

To overcome self-doubt and our feelings of insufficiency and launch ourselves into discipleship, we must depend upon Christ's ability and not our own.

To receive the gospel of Jesus Christ and be saved, we must first learn the gospel.

To disciple others, we must learn to how to disciple others.

But even if we are educated and trained, to overcome self-doubt our feelings that we are insufficient to disciple others, we must depend upon Jesus Christ and His ability.

God will not have it any other way.

First of all, God will not share the glory of Jesus Christ with another. If we could disciple others in our own ability, we would receive the glory.

Second of all, God wants a certain type of relationship with us.

For many people when they hear the gospel of Jesus Christ and they are convicted by the Holy Spirit and they receive Jesus, they receive what they feel they need, assurance of salvation from sin and the peace of God. They are satisfied!

But this is only the beginning of the relationship that God wants to have with us.

The relationship or connection or bond or alliance or association that God the Father desires to have with us is unlike any other relationship that we can have with others.

It is a King to citizen relationship but it is more than that. It is a Lord to servant relationship but it is more than that. It is a Father to Child relationship but it is more than that. It is a Friend to Friend relationship but it is more than that.

The relationship that God the Father wants with us is to be one with us!

John 14:20

20 At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.
NKJV

John 15:4-5

4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

NKJV

1 Cor. 1:30-31

30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God — and righteousness and sanctification and redemption — 31 that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord."

NKJV

Col. 1:27-28

27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

NKJV

Because God wants to be one with us He sends the Spirit of Christ to dwell in us when we receive Jesus.

We can be in a state of oneness and not experience the blessing of oneness. I see it all the time in marriage.

God has done His part to be one with us. We have to do our part to experience that oneness with Him.

Our part is to depend upon the sufficiency of Jesus Christ and trust Him to meet our every need!

In the same way that you trust in Jesus Christ to save you from sin, God wants you to trust in Jesus Christ for your life.

Paul said it this way.

Romans 5:10

10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

NKJV

Col 2:6-7

6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,

NKJV

This became the chief ambition of Paul's life. This is the way He expressed it in Phil. 3.
Phil. 3:7-8

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.
NKJV

Will you receive Jesus Christ to save you from sin?

Will you repent for relying upon your own ability to live the Christian life and will you rely upon the sufficiency of Christ?

For the Kingdom of God to grow through our church, we must add more small group leaders and new groups who are committed to follow the strategy for discipleship that we are using in small group.

For the Kingdom of God to grow through our church, the members of our small groups must actively participate in outreach by inviting people in our community to join their small group.

For the Kingdom of God to grow through our church, the members of our small groups must actively participate in the discipleship process that occurs in group.

For the Kingdom of God to grow through our church, the members of our small groups must begin the discipleship process by sharing the gospel with the lost.

Will you depend upon the Spirit of Jesus and surrender to what God is calling you to do?

We choose to depend upon Christ for salvation.

We choose to depend upon Christ for financial provision.

We choose to depend upon Christ when we suffer a loss.

Right now, we need to depend upon Christ to help us disciple others.