

Another Chance

If we humbly
confess our sins and failures, the Lord faithfully forgives us
and
immediately restores our fellowship with Him: “If we confess
our
sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to
cleanse
us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). But He doesn’t stop
there. He immediately schedules another chance for us to obey,
providentially arranging another situation spiritually similar
to the
one in which we failed.

Why? To punish us further by cruelly
reminding us of our failures? No, His kind purpose is just the
opposite. He wants us to be able to forget our failures
completely.
So He provides us with another chance that we might avenge our
spiritual defeats and live thereafter in the joy of overcoming
rather
than the frustration of failure. He wants us to be more than
forgiven; He wants us victorious! Joyful! Soaring!

Not
surprisingly, our Creator understands our deepest thoughts. He
knows
that even when we believe that we’re forgiven, the memories of
our
past failures tend to linger and vex us. Like David, we
sometimes
feel as if our sins are always before us (see Ps. 51:3).

In His mercy, therefore, our Father arranges “replacement
tests”
or “supplemental exams” for His discouraged students, so our

troublesome memories may be cleared and replaced forever with pleasant memories of tests overcome and victories won. As David also wrote, "For by thee have I run through a troop [of enemies]; and by my God have I leaped over a wall [of opposition]" (Ps. 18:29, KJV, brackets added).

Jesus' blood gives us the peace of forgiveness, but only our obedience in tests gives us the joy of overcoming. After redeeming our pasts with fresh victories, we can close the chapter on our season of trials, the agitation of regret gone, and "joy unspeakable and full of glory" abiding (1 Peter 1:8).

The ministry of second chances is one of God's ways taught throughout the Bible. Jonah and Peter exemplify it best.

Another chance for Jonah. When God first ordered Jonah to preach to Ninevah, he went in the opposite direction. He flatly rebelled and was unwilling to offer God's grace to the ungracious, ungodly, bullying nation of Assyria.

His rebellion brought swift, divine chastisement. After experiencing a terrifying storm and a three-day stay in a fish's stomach, Jonah cried out with genuine repentance. God faithfully forgave him, but the divine dealings did not end there.

The Lord promptly arranged for Jonah to be tested again as he had been

tested

before: "And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah a *second time*,

saying, Arise, go into Ninevah" (Jonah 3:1-2, emphasis added).

In this second call, Jonah clearly

recognized that he was being given another chance and had a perfect

opportunity to redeem his earlier failure. What followed was one of

history's greatest revivals.

Another chance for Peter. Under

severe testing in the high priest's courtyard, Peter broke down and

failed the Lord. He denied Him three times. Then Jesus turned and

looked at him. That one look inflicted more pain than a thousand

lashes.

Peter failed the Lord terribly at the

most crucial moment and he knew it—and could do nothing about it!

Or so he thought. But God graciously gave him "godly sorrow" (2

Cor. 7:10), and in the throes of his greatest personal defeat to

date, Peter wept his way through to repentance and confession.

After His death and resurrection, the

Lord personally commissioned Peter for his ministry. So when Jesus

ascended several days later, Peter was more than a forgiven man.

Thanks to his second chance, he was fully restored, recharged and

ready to lead!

Here is encouragement for every
Christian. If we fail God under trial, we need not succumb to
despair. Final defeat is not inevitable, nor is a lasting
victory out
of reach.

While expecting another chance, our
next trial may be identical to the one we just failed, a déjà-
vu
experience like Jonah's "second time." Or it may be
spiritually
similar yet visually different. Also remember your
supplemental exam
may come immediately or eventually days or years later. But
come it
will. God never misses a detail.

Whenever He sends you another chance,
seize it. Where you feared before, trust. Where you held back
earlier, give. Where you denied the Lord previously, confess.
Where
up until now you've been hardhearted, be kind and gentle.
Where you
formerly compromised Christ's righteousness stand unyielding.
Where
you stopped short in the past, press on to the finish. Then
you can
exchange the shame and frustration of defeat for the
irrepressible
joy of an enduring victory. As Isaiah said, the Father will
give
"them that mourn in Zion ... the oil of joy for mourning [and]
the
garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness" (Is. 61:3).

Adapted from *Spiritual Truths for
Overcoming Adversity* by Greg Hinnant, copyright 2010,
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Creation House. This book explores the deep mystery of adversity, revealing God's loving guidance, wisdom, and purpose in Christian difficulties. It will help you understand and cooperate with God so He can mature your faith and prepare you for full usefulness. To order a copy click on this link:



PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 5/21/2012

Thank God for another chance at redemption. Confess your shortcomings, fears, faults and failures and rely on his total forgiveness and restoration. Intercede for our nation and ask Him for yet another chance to spread the gospel and usher in revival. Pray for our young people and ask the Lord to release angels to war on their behalf and protect them from the seduction of the enemy. Pray that the body of Christ would stand firm on His Word, be united in passion and purpose for His will, and do things His way. Pray for the upcoming elections and the protection of Israel. Call America back to its biblical foundations, shatter deception with God's Truth, and bring His love and presence into

the dark corners of our communities. 2 Cor. 7:10; 1 John 1:9

To enrich your prayer

life and learn how to strategically pray with power by using appropriate

scriptures, we recommend the following sources by Apostle John Eckhardt: Prayers that Rout Demons, Prayers that Bring Healing, Prayers that Release Heaven on Earth and Prayers that Break

Curses. To order any or all of these [click here](#).