

4 Ways to Get Over the Walls That Hinder Your Progress

What happens when you hit a brick wall going 60 miles per hour? Your car ends up in pieces, you end up battered and bruised, and it hurts.

How can you pick yourself back up when you've hit a wall?

Peter was going top speed with Jesus, ministering at every opportunity, dining with the Master and learning new things every day. Jesus even lifted him up to be one of the chosen three, one of Jesus' closest friends.

Then, right when Peter thought everything was going great, Jesus was arrested.

First, Peter tried fighting back—but Jesus told him not to. Instead, Peter followed from a distance, ready to run to Jesus' aid if the opportunity arose—but then the weirdest thing happened. People offered him an opportunity to speak up, and every time, he denied his calling in order to save his own skin. Peter denied he even knew Jesus. Peter truly hit a wall.

Peter's wall was two parts:

1. Jesus didn't do what Peter expected. Jesus died.
2. Peter didn't act the way he expected himself to. Peter failed to support his friend.

Have you ever hit that kind of a wall? God doesn't do what you expected, life doesn't turn out like you thought it would or, even worse, you don't act the way you thought you would.

Peter not only survived smashing into the brick wall, but just a short time later he came back strong, standing up and being the person God called him to be.

Let's look at Peter's recovery and see what we can learn.

1. Get some time alone. After Jesus rose from the dead, the angel told the women, "Go tell the disciples and Peter ... " It appears Peter was not with the others. He got away by himself—probably to lick his wounds and beat himself up for a while. Time alone is important. Just like time in the hospital after a real accident, time alone will help your brain adjust to your new reality and rest from the shock.

2. Forgive God. It feels like we should never need to forgive God—He is God, after all, right? Yet when He doesn't act like we think He should, we hold it in, afraid to let Him know we are disappointed and hurt. A real relationship is one where you can admit your hurt, your frustration and your anger. Let God know what you are thinking!

David and Jeremiah are particularly good at this. They wrote what we call laments—prayers that say, "God, You said You'd do this, or this is who You are, but this is my reality—they don't match. I need you to show up!"

As long as you keep it bottled up, you aren't able to let God fix the problem. Instead, talk to Him and let Him know your heart. Yes, God does know what is going on in your heart, but you need to say it.

Remember the last time you had a real fight with a loved one? Not the kind where you yell it out and get over it, but the kind where you get mad and then keep up appearances? That is what our fights with God look like. We pretend everything is all right, waiting for the anger to go away. God wants something more. He wants your heart. He wants you to share your anger, pain and frustration with Him. Then wait. He will meet you there.

3. Let God restore you. One day, while Peter was busy at his old job, fishing, Jesus showed up on the seashore. What a

delight! Peter jumped into the water and raced for Jesus. By this time, Peter understood that Jesus' death wasn't the end. Yet Peter needed Jesus to help him go deeper. Later, after breakfast, the real work happened: Jesus took Peter for a walk. In ways we don't fully understand, Jesus restored Peter to Himself. Peter had to forgive himself, and in the midst of that walk, the pain and anguish of failure fell away. Peter became again the person he was created to be.

4. Wait for new direction. When you hit a brick wall going 60 miles an hour, you have some questions. Was that wall an obstacle you need to get around? Was it caused by something you did wrong? Does that brick wall mean God is taking you in a new direction? All these questions will be answered in time. The important thing for you to do is to let the Healer do His work. Even if you ran into the wall because you were running from God, He put that wall there, and He will help you find what comes next.

A few weeks later, Peter was in the upper room when the Holy Spirit fell. Jerusalem was full that day. Many of the people who just 50 days before had cried, "Crucify Him," were back for another festival. When the 120 in the upper room spilled out into the street, a crowd formed.

This time, when the people in the crowd noticed something was different about Peter, he didn't shy away, hoping not to be noticed. The same man who had denied his calling 50 days earlier got up and preached the sermon of his life. Peter preached with power, knowledge and conviction. He stood in anointing of the Holy Spirit and proclaimed the saving power of Jesus to all who would listen. Three thousand people came to know Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit and the voice of one who knew the devastation of hitting a brick wall and finding God's restoration.

God knows where you are. If you've hit a brick wall, it is because God is at work and He has great things for you. Take

time to heal, tell God how you feel, let Him restore you and wait for new direction. It will be worth it!

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