TURNING YOUR SETBACKS INTO COMEBACKS

Prov 24:16 For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again:

Mic 7:8 Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise;

Listen to these verses…

John 15:18-19
18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. 19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

1 John 3:13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. This present world, for the time being, is under the sway of a spiritual enemy who not only hates God and everything He stands for but also hates everyone who loves and follows God.

This is why we can love the Lord with all our hearts and still have setbacks in our lives. We don't have to be in sin to see difficulties come our way. The fact that we know Christ and seek to serve Him faithfully is enough to guarantee that we will face trials.

Godly people in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible suffered great tribulations for no other reason than that they were living for God. Paul spoke from personal experience when he wrote to Timothy,

2 Tim 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Our enemy will come against us simply because of our faith in the Lord. It is discouraging enough to face trouble because of a mistake you made, but
what about the times when a storm hits you for no apparent reason? You have been praying, giving your tithe, and trying to live right and honor the Lord. Just when things are looking bright, the roof caves in. You get fired from your job or evicted from your house. Your spouse walks out on you or one of your children becomes addicted to drugs. You go through a serious health crisis that depletes your financial resources. Suddenly, your whole world has collapsed around you. In desperation you cry out, "Why, God? Why did You let this happen?"

So often it seems as though the devil attacks us the hardest when we are on the brink of a major breakthrough in our lives. Setbacks usually occur just outside the promised land. As the saying goes, it is always darkest right before dawn. Keep in mind that Satan is out to steal your future. So if he is attacking you, don't be discouraged. It just means that God is getting ready to bring a change in your life to lead you to a higher level.

We all have sinned, but by God's grace and through faith in Christ we can make a comeback. This promise is for everyone who believes, not just some. No matter who you are, when you trust in the Lord, your ultimate victory is assured:

1 Cor 15:57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible is full of people who fell short but had great comeback stories.

Moses - Don't forget about Moses who, although a murderer, fugitive, and obscure shepherd for forty years, came back to deliver his fellow Israelites from slavery in Egypt and lead them to the borders of the promised land. Moses gave to the people the Law, which he received from the hand of the Lord, and even became known as the friend of God. If Moses made a comeback, you can too.

David - David came back from lust, adultery, and murder to many more years of effective leadership as Israel's king. Through confession and
repentance of his sin, David was restored to the fellowship with God he had previously enjoyed, and he continued to be a man after God's own heart. If David made a comeback, you can too.

**Joseph** - Joseph's story is a little different. Through no sin or fault of his own, Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers and endured years of false imprisonment. At all times, Joseph maintained his integrity and his faith in God. Even while he was subjected to such injustice, God was preparing him for a great future. Eventually, God caused Joseph to rise to prominence as the most powerful official in Egypt, second only to Pharaoh himself. From this position, Joseph was instrumental in preserving the people of Egypt and the surrounding region, including his own family, through a time of great famine. When Joseph had the opportunity to take revenge on his brothers, he chose forgiveness and mercy instead, understanding that all that had happened to him was God's way of preparing him for his destiny. If Joseph made a comeback, you can too.

**Job** - The Book of Job relates what is certainly one of the greatest comeback stories in all of Scripture. Job lost everything. In one day he lost his wealth, his health, and his family. All he had left was his faith in God, and that proved to be enough. God had allowed Satan to test Job's faith and integrity to the very limit, and Job passed the test. What the devil meant for Job's destruction, God turned to Job's good. In the end, God gave Job double for his trouble. He restored to Job twice what he had lost: twice the wealth and twice as many children. God also fully restored Job's health. Through it all, Job steadfastly maintained his faith, even saying at one point,

**Job 13:15 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him:**

This was Job's way of saying, "I've lost a lot. I didn't know if I could make it, but with God's help I will bounce back." If Job made a comeback, you can too.
When you are in the wilderness trying to understand why God is letting you go through trials and difficulties, remember that He is preparing you for something greater. There are some things that God has for you that you will not be ready for until you have passed through the fire.


PLEASE OPEN YOUR BIBLES TO LUKE CHP 5.

One time Peter and his friends had been out fishing all night, but they had caught nothing. This was probably unusual, since Peter was a professional fisherman. He was definitely not a novice. He probably had the best nets, owned a good boat, and knew exactly where to catch the most fish. He had worked all night, as his income depended on a good catch. Still, Peter came up short. Even superstars strike out sometimes.

The next day, the fishermen were washing their nets on the seashore, feeling very tired and discouraged. At that moment Jesus came along and said, "Peter, I'd like to use your boat as a platform for a speech." So Peter let Jesus into his boat, and they launched out a little way from the shore. There Jesus could speak from the boat to the crowd standing on the shore.

After finishing his message, Jesus said to the fishermen, "Now let's go fishing. Launch out into the deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." Peter replied, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I'll let down the nets." When the disciples obeyed, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break.

**When Our Best Is Not Enough**
What does this story teach us about failure? Jesus never performed a miracle without a purpose. He always used his miracles to illustrate principles. This incident teaches us what to do when our best is not good enough.
Sometimes we give something our best shot but still come up ten feet short. We study diligently for a test and only get a "C," or we work hard to make our marriage better but still don't see any progress. Life can be tough at times, and it's tempting to give up. We feel like saying, "What's the use? I just set myself up for more failure. Can anything make a difference?"

The interesting part of the Bible story is the comparison between the two catches. The disciples had worked all night and caught nothing, but later they went out again for ten minutes and caught more than they ever had before. It was the same lake, the same boat, the same nets, and the same people fishing. So what made the difference?

There are actually three differences between the two fishing expeditions, and these differences give us principles to follow when our best attempts end in failure. I believe any person who applies these principles will be a genuine success in life. God intended them to be easy to understand, so that everybody could get in on the benefit.

**Principle #1 – Appropriate God’s Presence in Your Life**

A clue to the first principle of success is found in Luke 5:3: Jesus was in the boat with the disciples. Christ's presence made a big difference! This time the disciples weren't fishing by themselves; God was with them. The first principle for successful living is this: *You must appropriate God's presence in your life.*

In other words, you have to get Jesus into your boat. That's the starting point. Nothing has greater influence on your personal success than whether or not you are living with Christ in your life. For Peter, his boat represented his livelihood. When you're a fisherman, that boat is your business! It's significant that Peter made his boat available for Jesus to use. *Christ used Peter's business as a platform for ministry.*

Does God have access to your job? Is your business available for him to use at any time? Is he able to minister to people through your job?
Too often we try to separate the secular and the spiritual; we have our Christian life nicely partitioned off from our career. But this prevents God from blessing your business or job. And the truth is, God will bless anything you give him. If you give him all your life, he will bless all of it. But if you give him just a part of it, he will bless just that one part.

I recently read about the president of a large corporation who invites God to every board meeting. He reports that as a result, the board members make fewer mistakes and have more peace of mind about difficult decisions.

There is something about having Jesus in your boat that eliminates the fear of failure and reduces your worries about the results. When Peter made Christ his fishing partner, the results were incredible: he caught more fish than he had ever caught on his own. Don't miss the sequence, though.

- First Peter used his boat for Christ’s purposes. Jesus took the boat and preached from it to reach people.
- Then, after Christ had used the boat for his own purposes, God took care of Peter's needs.

God promises us that if ..Matt 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Does this mean that if I give my whole life to Christ, putting him first in every area, then he will bless it all? Yes, that is God's promise to you.

Principle #2 - Cooperate With God's Plan
The second principle is found in Luke 5:4. The second time the disciples went fishing, they fished under the direction of Christ, obediently following his instructions. We must not only appropriate God's presence in our lives, but also cooperate with God’s plan in our lives. Jesus told the disciples where to fish, when to fish, and how to fish. When God is
guiding your life, you cannot fail. As the late gospel singer Ethel Waters used to say, "God doesn't sponsor flops."

Peter's reaction to Christ's guidance was beautiful. **First, he didn't argue.** He didn't say, "Wait a minute, Jesus! I'm the premier professional fisherman on this lake. I own the record. Who are you to tell me how to fish?" He didn't ask, "Lord, are you sure?" He didn't ask any questions, and he also didn't hesitate. Peter might have been thinking that if he didn't catch anything at night, then he certainly wasn't going to catch anything in the middle of the day when the sun was glaring down on the water. But Peter didn't ask any questions; he just obeyed.

**He also didn't listen to his feelings.** I'm sure he was dog-tired from working all night, but he didn't ask, "What's the use? Why should I keep on going?" Peter's attitude was perfect. He was eager to cooperate with God's plan.

**Deep Vs. Shallow Christians**

Why do you think Jesus said to Peter, "Launch out into the deep"? I think it was because it's in the deep water that the big fish are located. You only catch minnows in shallow water. Most people live in the shallow waters of life. They simply exist on a superficial level. There's little depth to their lives because they're content to just play around the edge, never getting out into deeper water. Why? Because it's safer in shallow water. They think, "If I get out into the deep water, there might be some waves. They might rock my boat, and it might overturn. So I'll just stay back here where it's safe and comfortable and fiddle around."

When God works in your life, it always involves risks, because God wants you to live by faith. Many Christians barely get their feet wet because they're afraid of getting in over their heads. They think, "If I really get serious about my commitment to the Lord, he may make me a fanatic. My
family might get really upset. What will my friends think?" So they're content to live in the shallows of life — and they miss out on so much. God's plan for your life is a good plan, one that will work for your benefit. God says, "Let me get into your boat. Let my presence be with you wherever you go—in your business, in your family, in your marriage, in every area. Let me direct you. Cooperate with my plan."

Principle #3 -Anticipate God's Promises

The third principle is found in Luke 5:5: “Nevertheless at thy Word” or "Because you say so." To rebound from failure, you must anticipate God's promises in your life. In the second fishing attempt, the disciples were acting on the basis of God's promise to them. They went fishing again because they believed God would provide the fish. Now, Jesus didn't specifically say, "Peter, if you go fishing with me, I promise you'll make a big catch." He didn't need to say that, because Peter realized that when Christ told him to go fishing and also got into the boat and also told him exactly where to put down the net, it wasn't going to come up empty! Peter expected God to act. He expected God to keep his promise. Peter wasn't depending on his own fishing ability, so he wasn't afraid of failure. He believed in the promises of God.

When you get God's presence in your boat, and when you get God's plan in your head, and when you get God's promises in your heart, you cannot fail. Start expecting some wonderful results.

Look at the results when the disciples did what Jesus told them to do.

6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

God blessed them with more than they could handle. That is always the case when you appropriate God's presence, cooperate with God's plan, and anticipate God's promises—you will be blessed with more than you can handle. In fact, verse 7 points out that the disciples had to share the results
with fishermen in another boat in order to keep from sinking. That's a great way to live!

**It Can Work In Your Life**

The point is this: God not only wants to bless your life, but he wants to bless you so much that you have to share your blessing with others in order to keep yourself from sinking. He not only wants to bless you, but wants to bless other people through you—people whose nets are empty. God blessed the disciples with more than they could use for themselves.

The miracle so astounded Peter that he cried out, "Lord, I don't deserve this! I'm a sinner. This is too good for me." Jesus then said to Peter, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men" (v. 10). So the disciples beached their boats and left everything to follow Jesus. The incident became a turning point in Peter's life and in the lives of the other disciples.

Think about what happened when the fishing party got to land. The disciples left their greatest catch ever sitting right there on the shore and went after Jesus! They realized that if Jesus could perform a miracle like that, he could do anything he wanted to. The disciples knew that as long as they followed him, their needs would be more than satisfied. Christ would take care of them no matter what happened. They wanted a relationship with him that was more than a one-time miracle. Then Christ invited them to become part of the greatest task in the world: "I'm going to make you fishers of men. You are going to share my Good News with other people."

**Try It Again With Christ**

How does this story relate to your life? Maybe you feel like the disciples before Christ came along: "I've worked all night and come up with an empty net." Does that describe your attitude toward your marriage, your job, or another personal problem? You feel that you haven't made any progress so you've said to yourself, "What's the use? Why keep on trying?
Why put forth the effort? Perhaps you have become a little cynical about life.

Peter didn't get cynical. He didn't say, "Lord, I've worked ten hours and didn't catch anything. That must mean there are no more fish in this lake." He knew that the fish were there—he just hadn't caught them yet.

Just because you haven't solved your problem doesn't mean a solution doesn't exist. It is often through failure that we learn the lessons that help us succeed. Remember that what matters is not what happens to you, but how you respond. It doesn't matter how far you have fallen as long as you are determined with God's help to bounce back. Remember when a basketball player misses a shot, he tries to get the rebound so he can make another shot. Life is the same way. Sometimes you miss your goals, but you have to keep trying for the rebound until you make it. This means never quitting, never giving up, and never losing confidence that ultimately you will prevail.

**Closing**

Despite what the devil would have you believe, life is not over just because you have had some setbacks and have not achieved your goals. Although God's plan is for you to bounce back, it will never happen until you make up your mind to do it. God will not force His way on you; He will let you continue in the same self-defeating attitude and lifestyle if you so choose.

Anybody can quit once they have missed the mark, but God looking for people who will exercise their faith and be determined bounce back. He seeks those who will repent of their sins, set minds to overcome their past, and believe Him for a fresh start.

**Prov 24:16 For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again:**
Mic 7:8 Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise;

Once you make up your mind to bounce back, nothing can stop you. After all, if God is for you, who can be against you? Even devil himself is not strong enough to hold you down because He that is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

Get ready to bounce back. It's time to turn your setbacks comebacks and move into a new day.

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.