

The Success of Failure

Lk. 22: 31-32

It is interesting to notice the success that many times comes out of what we term failure. It is also of interest to see the good that comes out of apparent evil.

An editorial in yesterday's commercial spoke of the poison gases used by the Germans during the world war and went on to show that scientists working with that gas discovered that many diseases may be cured with it.

When the crisis in Peter's life came, Jesus said, when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren. He might have said when you have fallen and returned again strengthen thy brethren.

Jesus knew that Peter would fall and that he would come again and be the rock man. Here was a seeming failure through which phenomenal success was to come.

The success of failure. How many are the examples!

1. Saul son of Kish - went to hunt his father's asses and failed but found a kingdom.
2. Saul of Tarsus, St. Paul's persecutor, is persecuting the Christians. He failed in that but found the Saviour.
3. Lincoln ran for legislature and was defeated.

went in business and failed. It took 179
 to pay my debts made by ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~business~~
 He was in love with a young woman at
 the died. His afterword ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~word~~ ^{word} ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~that~~ ^{that}
 was a constant burden to him. But he he
 came one of the country's greatest men.

Paul's victory was built on top of ill health, unpopularity, imprisonment and death.

In 1660 a man was placed in old Bedford jail. who was he? He had been a wicked tinker but whilst in there no one noticed him but when he was converted and found the Bible a wonderful book a tyrannical government threw him in jail. Now he was to be a failure in a dungeon. whilst there he wrote Pilgrims Progress. He later was freed.

At Bedford to-day you can not find
the jail for the tooth of time has eaten it up.
you will be shown the big oak door
behind which Bunyan wrote.

Calculus failed to find a back door to India but discovered America.

what do you mean by success?
is it the one who rises to highest point
in society or the one who has him-
self or himself or much position in order
to build the Kingdom of Christ?

Many a poor family is occupied
of means but true noble men and
women.

If we are doing God's will, then our unachieved purposes, even our "failures," are not wasted, even in this world; they are realized by others whom we have helped; others who had, as we perhaps had not, the required ability and strength.

We need to realize that the whole course of the world's history has been redeemed by its "failures," not by its "successes." The witnesses to the light, most of them, have been persecuted and exiled, and have missed nearly all the so-called prizes of life. Dante was sentenced to be burned alive if he ever entered again the city of Florence, which he loved so passionately. John Milton lived to see all that he had labored for go down in the mad orgy of the Restoration; but out of the desolation of his life rose the "Paradise Lost" and the "Paradise Regained." And what was the most triumphant moment in the world's history? Was it not that moment when all seemed lost? Was it not when human malice had done its worst and when Divine goodness and mercy seemed forsaken on the Cross? And is not Jesus, crucified and scoffed at, set between two thieves, yet in that moment of agony redeeming a lost world and receiving a Kingdom from His Father, is not Jesus at that moment the supreme symbol and proof that in God's reckoning "failure" may mean success, "loss" may be gain and "death" may be life? Not infrequently the greatest victories have been seeming defeats.

The Divine Uses of Failure.

The steel that has endured the most is the best steel; it has been in the furnace again and again; it has been on the anvil, it has been tight in the jaws of the vise; it has felt the teeth of the rasp; it has been ground by the emery; it has been heated and hammered and filed until it does not know itself; but it comes out a costly knife or valuable spring. And if men only knew it, what they call their misfortunes are oftentimes in reality God's best blessings, for they are the molding influences which give them strength and edge, durability and power. If through your "failure" you have

gained in humility, in patience, in trust, in love for God and His work, then you and your "failure" illustrate our theme, "The Success of Failure."

My fellow Christian, you are guaranteed against real failure. "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "The Lord shall guide thee continually." "He will perfect that which concerneth thee." "No evil shall befall thee." "Being confident of this very thing, that He Who hath begun a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ."