

SEEK THE LORD

Fear of Failure

The fear of failure may be our most basic of fears. Everyone tries to escape the feeling of being a failure in life. Some try to flee it through drink and drugs. Others try to overcome it by accumulating material possessions or social popularity. We all want to give the appearance of being successful. The fear of failure is very powerful and will drive us to do some unusual things to try to succeed.

Take, for instance, the golfer in Shawnee-on-Delaware, Pennsylvania, who took 166 strokes over a 130-yard hole. During the qualifying Shawnee Invitational Gold Tournament, this unnamed duffer confidently approached the sixteenth hole for which four strokes were normally adequate. His first shot, however, sent the ball into the Binniekill River, an obstacle many would regard as final.

When he saw that the ball floated, he boarded a row boat, with his partner at the oars and himself at the prow, wielding a golf club. For one and a half miles his partner rowed and kept count of the occasions upon which he had cause to swipe at the ball. Eventually, he beached the thing and made his way back through a forest. Fellow competitors had given up hope of ever seeing him again, when they heard of cry of 'fore' and saw the ball fly onto the green from a totally unexpected direction. He completed the hole in just under two hours.

Or take the case of Mrs. Helen Ireland of Auburn, California, who must hold the record for being the quickest to fail a driver's test. She failed it in about the first second. She got into the car, said, "Good morning" to the examiner and started the engine. She mistook the accelerator for the brake, however and shot straight through the wall of the

Department of Motor Vehicles. The examiner was led home in a state of shock, still clutching his clipboard. It was her ninth time to fail the test. –from “The Incomplete Book of Failures”, by Stephen Pile and E. P. Dutton.

One of the great things about the Christian faith is the opportunity to begin again, to start over, to feel forgiven and find newness in life. That is why I like the verse found in 2 Corinthians 5:17, “If anyone is in Christ, that person is a new creation, the old has passed away, behold the new has come.”

Perhaps what faith does most for us is give us the courage to try even if we might fail. The fear of failure keeps many of us from attempting to do great things for God. In a seminar conducted by M.I.T., one of the things they found was: It is very rare to have a significant success without a failure first.

In faith, too, goals are never reached until we dare to fail.

Prayer: Our Lord, help us to accept failures, and learn from them, and grow through them. Amen

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