

The Bible teaches us that failure is not a flaw

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In the evolving landscape of our modern world, one concern continues to echo across conversations with young adults: the fear of failure.

It is not a new fear, but it takes on a new shape in this generation. Underneath the polished images of success on social media and the pressure to “arrive” early in life, many young people quietly wrestle with the deep anxiety of not measuring up.

What if I try and it does not work? What if I speak up and I am wrong? What if I start something and cannot finish it?

Yet, amid this pressure, there is something quietly remarkable about today’s young adults.

They are emotionally attuned, deeply self-aware, and unusually willing to ask difficult questions.

They want their lives to mean something. They are asking about identity, purpose, wholeness, and healing, questions previous generations often avoided or delayed.

We are witnessing a generation that is growing up with a high EQ (emotional intelligence), committed not just to doing well, but to being well.

Still, this self-awareness can sometimes become a double-edged sword.

Young adults are not only attuned to their own emotions; they are hyper-aware of others’ expectations.

With every choice broadcast online and every misstep potentially public, the fear of “failing out loud” can be crippling.

As a result, many opt to delay action, avoid commitment, or stick to what is safe. The logic is understandable: if I do not try, I cannot fail.

But that’s not how character is built.

Here is the truth we need to keep repeating: failure is not a flaw.

Failure is a forge. It is not the opposite of success; it is often the doorway to it.

In Scripture and in life, failure is the classroom in which maturity is formed, not the courtroom where character is condemned.

Consider Moses, who failed in impulse and identity before leading a nation.

Or Peter, who denied Jesus but became the rock on which the early church was built.

Even Jesus, in human form, experienced rejection, misunderstanding, and betrayal; things the world often equates with failure.

Yet none of these stories ends in shame. They end in strength. Not because of perfection, but because of perseverance.

One of the greatest gifts the church can offer this generation is a redefinition of failure.

We must move from a culture of judgment to a culture of formation.

Mistakes are not disqualifications; they are invitations, opportunities to discover what really matters, to lean into grace, and to grow in resilience.

The Bible reminds us in Romans 5:3–4 (NIV): “Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.”

That progression; perseverance, character, hope often begins with what feels like failure. The missed job, the broken relationship, the failed exam, the anxious leap that did not land as planned.

But none of these need to be final. In fact, they might be the turning point where purpose begins to grow.

For those of us who disciple, parent, or mentor young adults, the task is not to shield them from failure but to stand with them through it.

We must resist the urge to offer quick fixes or shallow encouragements.

Instead, we walk with them, helping them mine meaning from mistakes and recover identity not from performance, but from Christ.

Let us teach them that failing does not mean they are foolish.

It means they are brave.

It means they had the courage to risk. And in risking, they open themselves to discovering their calling, their strength, and their God.

In Jesus’ parable of the talents (Matthew 25), the servant who buried his talent out of fear was not commended for playing it safe.

The others, who risked and multiplied what they were given, even without a guarantee, were called “good and faithful.”

That story does not glorify recklessness, but it does affirm risk. Progress in the kingdom of God is not measured by perfection, but by participation.

So to every young adult reading this: your failures do not define you, your response to them does.

Do not let fear stop you from trying.

Make mistakes.

Ask the hard questions.

Learn as you go.

And when you fall, fall forward, into grace, into growth, and into the arms of a God who sees beyond the stumble.

To the Church: let us be the kind of community that does not just celebrate victory but values vulnerability.

Let us honour the process, not just the product.

Let us tell more stories of grace after the fall than glamour without struggle.

Because in the end, failure is not a flaw.

It is the fertile ground where faith, courage, and character take root.

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