

PERMITTED TO FAIL

Often people ask, “As God has All-Power, and as he is a loving Father, why does he not use it more often to prevent us from failing and falling?”

The answer lies partly in the fact that God is not simply interested in getting things accomplished, but rather *in getting things accomplished in a particular way and under particular circumstances*. A mother and father wish to teach their child how to walk. The mother gets on the floor on one side of the room and the father likewise gets on the floor on the other side of the room. The mother lovingly tries to hold the child upright and encourages the infant to place its weight on its own legs. Meanwhile, the father on the other side of the room is clapping his hands, motioning to the child to come forward, and the room is filled with a clamor of enthusiastic encouragement. The moment comes when the mother slowly removes her hands and the infant wavers and weaves to and fro and just before it falls, takes a step or two forward. Neither parent rushes forward to pick the infant up. Instead, they lovingly assure the baby that it’s all right to fall, that it’s doing fine, and to come to daddy. The baby bolstered by this confidence and love, without crying gets up and makes it over to daddy.

If the objective were simply to get the child from one side of the room to the other, it would have been much simpler for the mother to have picked up the infant and carried it over there. The parents were interested in getting the child to the other side *in a particular way, and under particular circumstances*. This takes longer, and is harder on the child, but since the objective is to develop skills in the child, the parent is willing to take the time for the good of the child.

The winner in a football game is the team that gets the football across the goal line the greater number of times. If the objective were simply to do this, the sensible thing would be for a team to arrive on the field a day before a scheduled game and carry the football across a goal line 2 dozen times and go home,....but no, the objective is more that. The objective is to cross the goal line *in a particular way and under a particular set of circumstances*.

God could have created us perfect beings that never make choices. However, He elects to give us a will. We are not endowed with a natural desire to choose the highest way of doing things. We **learn** experientially and by living that it is best to choose a way that is within God’s will to do things. That is, some learn that. Some people seem to never learn that. We are permitted to make wrong choices, to fail and to fall. We are also permitted to learn from the wisdom of others, to profit from mistakes made, and to cherish that which is best. Many decisions fall into either of 7 categories shown below:

Iniquitous/Evil/Bad [Neutral] Good\ Better\ Best (the Father’s Will)

Yes, I think that many decisions fall into the ‘Neutral’ category. Shall you eat a gumdrop or not? Eating one will not constitute overindulgence and not eating one will not constitute a diet. So far, so good, but eating a pound of them in 30 minutes gets sort of borderline. Decisions that involve choosing invariably fall into one of the 7 categories. We **learn** to choose wisely by living and by experiences. Look at some scripture and see what is said about this:

Genesis:30:27 And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry: for **I have learned by experience** that the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake.

Psalms:119:7 I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, **when I shall have learned** thy righteous judgments.

John:6:45 It is written in the prophets, And they **shall be all taught** of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, **and hath learned** of the Father, cometh unto me.

Phillip:4:11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for **I have learned**, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

Hebrews:5:8 Though he were a Son, **yet learned he obedience** by the things which he suffered;
Learning

Proverbs:1:5 A wise man will hear, and **will increase learning**; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

Proverbs:9:9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and **he will increase in learning**.

Proverbs:16:23 The heart of the wise **teacheth** his mouth, and **addeth learning** to his lips.

2Timothy:3:14 But continue thou in the things which thou **hast learned** and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou **hast learned** them;

The spiritual attributes that we are to acquire are obtained through decision making on our part as we choose between alternatives. This is the '*particular way and particular circumstances*' under which we grow.

Courage comes from decisions while dealing with disappointments and hardships.

Hope is exercised as we are confronted with insecurities and uncertainties.

Love of truth is maintained in a world filled with error and falsehood.

Loyalty is exercised when default, betrayal, and desertion are options.

Unselfishness is exercised by ignoring the demands of self.

We are permitted to fail and fall because we are permitted to choose. We choose to **learn** from our own mistakes and the mistakes of others. We choose to embrace those ideals that enhance our right relationship with God and man. As we choose wisely, God, our parent is able to keep us on course with maintaining our resolves. Examine the scriptures below:

2Timothy:3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, **which are able to make thee wise** unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

2Timothy:3:16 **All scripture** is given by inspiration of God, and **is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness**:

2Timothy:3:17 That the man of God may be perfect, **thoroughly furnished unto all good works**.

Jude:1:24 **Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling**, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

Jude:1:25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Proverbs:3:5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

Proverbs:3:6 **In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths**.

Psalms:116:8 **For thou hast delivered** my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and **my feet from falling**.

Psalms:119:104 Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.

Psalms:119:105 **Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path**.

God, as a loving Father lets us weave to and fro as we attempt to walk as He does. We fail and fall down. He permits that and gives loving encouragement, but does not just suddenly endow us with a robot type will which unerringly and automatically wishes to do good. No, rather he permits us to have a choice, a free will, with full knowledge that with it we will fall. Nevertheless, he knows that we may exercise that will....and with practice.....learn to walk as

He walks. How unthinking and unfeeling is any parent which denies its child opportunity to grow.

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October 20, 2003