



## Designing Life: Failure | February 20, 2019

### Discussion Guide

#### The Scoop

Most of the time, it's hard to admit that failure is a gift. And sometimes, we believe that if we say it out loud, something bad will happen. But what if failure is the key to a strong faith? Hear more about this below.

#### Key Verses

##### Acts 2:22-24 (NIV)

*"Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him."*

#### Discussion

It's almost a universal fact that people love rags to riches stories. We see them all the time on television and in movies. We celebrate and look up to people we've seen live them out in real life. J.K. Rowling, Thomas Edison, Steve Jobs, Abe Lincoln... they are all examples of people who failed (more than once), but who celebrate their failures as the necessary steps needed to get where they were going. The problem is, however, that because they are famous, we tend to treat them as outliers. We neglect to believe that our own failures are just what we need to get where we want to go ourselves.

1. What rags to riches story is your favorite? Why?
2. Why do you think it's so hard for us to relate to "famous" people when it comes to our own failures?

The interesting thing about design thinking is that it embraces failure. It makes the assumption that each time we fail, we learn. And that learning is invaluable to the process, no matter how big the failure may look. We need to figure out the things that don't work, just as much as we need to find the perfect solution. When you think about great products, the chances are high that those products went through at least several stages (if not many) of failure before they made it to you. But when we think about our own failures, especially if we are in the midst of recovering from one, it's hard to see them as a gift, let alone necessary for our journey.

3. When is a time (reflecting on your life), where you experienced failure but it led to an even greater solution?
4. Why do you think we run from failure when we find ourselves deep within it? What are some of the fears we have about failure and the way it impacts our lives?

In Acts 2:22-24, Peter addresses the early church with somewhat of a confession. He failed Jesus, the son of God, even while Jesus was on earth performing miracles right in front of him. Peter denied Jesus not once, but three times. He failed over and over again, but God still chooses to use him. And he uses him in a *big* way! Peter is the foundation on which the entire movement that we now know as Christianity was built. God chose him for a really special role, in spite of his great failures.

5. Can you relate to Peter? Explain.
6. Why might God have chosen a man like Peter to use in such a significant way? How does he give us all hope?

#### What's Next?

When we finally learn to let go of the fear of failure, and refuse to let circumstantial things get in the way, we deepen both our faith as well as our reliance on God. We welcome failure as a gift and start to think about it as essential to our own journey. In the Bible, we read about great and influential people who, at the same time, failed over and over again. These people are in the Bible to remind us that even though we fail, God always has the bigger picture in mind.

This week, as you live out your faith, apply design thinking to your life to look for recent failures. If you're in a spot where you're recovering from a really big failure, lean into your relationship with God instead of running away. When you're at the end of your rope, sometimes your dependence on God becomes really clear. Take advantage of that perspective during times of big disappointment, but also in the little moments of failure you experience day-to-day to grow in your faith.