

“Can You Be Called Again?”

You and I are programmed to fail at some point. Fail miserably and fail often. It is written in the fibers of who we are. That is no secret. So, the question really is not *how many* times you will fail but how many times you will fail and *keep getting up*. Amazingly, we fail or fall short at the very thing that we are dead set on not failing at or falling short at. I can recall many times in personal fitness training when a client would determine to diet, exercise, and commit to losing a certain amount of weight in a certain amount of time. Their desire and determination was laser focused and sincere. They had seen what fit people look like and wanted to be like them. They even had cut out pictures of the body they wanted for further visual affirmation. These clients also were aware of the health benefits of exercise. Many were there because their doctors recommended they get involved in a fitness program because of their poor health. These clients knew and were convinced that this was the right thing to do and had all the reasons not to fail. You could not be more determined than they were. Yet within three months most would fail miserably by not showing up to the gym or going on eating and drinking binges. Sadly, many would not return and simply quit.

This example illustrates a fitness scenario but could we not also speak of the alcoholic, the workaholic, the thief, adulterer, the porn addict, the drug user, the average person, or even a follower of Jesus Christ, etc.? Of course we can! Many who determine to change their lifestyle or adjust their ways are committed not to fail or fall short, yet often find themselves failing miserably. What happened to that person who was exposed to the benefits of change and had seen the power of right living, had sampled victory, was convinced of the truth yet failed along the way? Could they have tried a little harder? Yes. Should they have stayed a little longer? Sure. Might they have studied longer? Met with counselors more often? Prayed a little harder? Of course. However, ultimately, there is nothing more that the person could have done. Why? Simple, because we are programmed to fail and mess things up at some point along the way. By the way, does it happen intentionally? I believe that in most cases probably not.

Interestingly enough, God knows this truth all too well yet He has a message for us with regards to this situation. We can see this highlighted in the story of the apostle Peter and his denial of knowing Jesus on the eve of His crucifixion. Now Peter knew Jesus and spent three years with Him. Peter saw wonders, miracles, healings and even saw Elijah and Moses talking with Jesus (Luke 9:32-33). Peter even declared Jesus to be the Son of God (Matthew 16:16). I mean, Peter had the *VIP* pass. He got to see it all! He went as far as declaring that he would be willing to die for Jesus. These are words of a convinced and convicted man whose life had been changed. He had been with the Son of God. Yet, the Bible tells us that even Jesus knew that Peter would let Him down (Luke 22:34). And, of course, we know that Peter denied knowing the Lord, not once or twice but three times. Peter had three chances to get it right yet he still failed miserably.

I believe that God knows that about us as well. God knew that Peter would fail even though his intentions were good when he declared dying for Christ. Peter, much like us, never planned to fail Christ. I believe that when Jesus told Him that he would deny him three times Peter probably thought...”not me”. Yet that is exactly what he did. God knows that we will fail. It is not a matter of *if* but only a matter of *when* and how many times. God wanted to illustrate that with Peter by his three denials. God wants to show us that we too will fail multiple times as we go on. God knows we are going to fail because that is our programming. However, He is looking for those who are willing to get back up after failing or falling short to be used again by Him, just like Peter. Can *you* be called again?

By Jesús Maymi