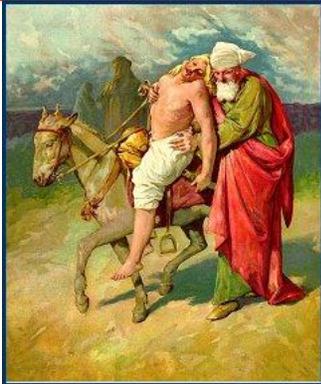


New Horizons Newsletter



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"May the Lord show you His favor and give you peace."

(Nu. 6:26)

IF YOU ARE NOT MAKING BLUNDERS, YOU ARE NOT MAKING HEADWAY!

By Dr. Pierre J. Samaan



Recently, a friend said to me: *If you are not making blunders, you are not making headway!* The phrase seemed to stand out in my mind as I thought about my blunders over a lifetime. *BLUNDERING*¹ is when we make mistakes and/or sin through stupidity, ignorance, carelessness, confusion, or thoughtlessness. I often hear myself saying, "Oops, I messed up again!" Linda, my wife, wanted a Christian sticker on our Caravan. I do not want a sticker identifies me as a Christian because my "blundering"

generally occurs while driving. . .moving along now!

It is never our intention to blunder. Blundering does happen to everyone, unless they happen to be in denial, in which case, they will not take responsibility for their actions by blaming everyone else for their blunder.

Many times you can tell when you have blundered by the critical internal statements such as you foul-up, fumbler, goof-up, mess-up, stumbler, ignorant, stupid, idiot, pathetic, foolish, disloyal, condemner, and the list goes on. . .

Since we all fall into this distinction at some point in our day or life, it is helpful to know that we can learn from our mistakes. To learn from our stumbles is to remember them so as to not repeat our thoughtlessness during those recurring events, such as when you become triggered into snapping back with a thoughtless comment. To help the Hebrews to remember how to be obedient, the Lord had them first orally, and later in writing, hand down the stories of their history and agreements with God. *"In view of all this, we are*

¹

Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/blunder>

making a binding agreement, putting it in writing, and our leaders, our Levites and our priests are affixing their seals to it." (Nehemiah 9:38 NIV)

There are places in the Bible where you read long summaries of history. This was a reminder to the Hebrews of not only their Godly heritage, but also a reminder of God's promises. So often, we make careless decisions not remembering the promises of God. This impedes our spiritual growth and then we wonder where is God in the midst of the results of our blundering. Why is the Lord not fixing the problem as fast as He did when we were new Christians? So, as we get older, we try to not make the same thoughtless decisions. But, invariably, because of our older, wiser, and more mature mind/soul, instead of using four letter expletives (*#!x), we feel like we have grown by replacing those expletives with "Oops, I've done it again!"

To have fewer mistakes is to learn that spiritual growth comes out of being obedient to



God's instructions. "Moses continued speaking to the people of Israel and said, 'Listen carefully now to all these laws God has given you; learn them, and be sure to obey them!'" (Deuteronomy 5:1, TLB)

God spoke to Moses to tell the people to hear, learn, and follow the Lord's oral and written lessons. Through Abram (Abraham) the Hebrews had entered into a contract with God to obey Him.

Through Jesus Christ, Christians have also entered into a contract with God. As part of the grace (free gift) offering of His life, Jesus Christ asks of us to obey God through hearing (absorbing and accepting the Scripture), learning (making a concerted effort to understand the meanings and implications), and following (behaving in a manner that displays lessons learned and understood).²

Of course, learning sometimes entails risk taking or stepping out on faith. There is no risk when exercising our faith based upon the promises of God. However, we may not always know how God's promises may apply to our unique situations (e.g. Is it time to trade in the old car, change jobs or churches, or go to a dinner party, etc.). If someone criticized you last week at work or church, what should your measured response be? We do not always say or give the right response, and out of that comes suffering. We may not feel like we are making headway with those far-from-perfect decisions, but we can know that God will turn it into a learning experience to benefit our future. "*Punish a mocker and others will learn from his example. Reprove a wise man and he will be the wiser.*" (Proverbs 19:25, TLB)

To blunder once in a while is probably a good reminder to stay humble. In fact, our carelessness, at times, will more often than not, develop our humility. In Lamentations 3:27-29, we read: *It is good for a young man to be under discipline, for it causes him to sit*

² Wilson, N., et.al., Editor. (1992) *The Handbook of Bible Application*, p 380, Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, IL

apart in silence beneath the Lord's demands, to lie face downward in the dust; then at last there is hope for him." (TLB)



In reading this passage my thoughts immediately went to the memory of a young pastoral couple. Over ten years ago, the wife walked into the counseling office. She said, she had just separated from her husband who was pastoring an inner city church. Friends who lived in this area had offered their home as a safe house, knowing about the situation. As I listened, she gave a history of being emotionally and physically abused by her pastor husband. After receiving written permission from her, I telephoned her husband to hear his side and to confirm the history. I was disappointed to find out that he was very proud and arrogant. He justified his behavior by saying because she was not acting like the Proverbs 31 woman. How sad that he could only see the speck in his wife's eye and not the plank in his own (Matthew 7:3-5).

J. I. Packer, once said: *Our God is a God who not merely restores, but takes up our mistakes and follies into His plan for us and brings good out of them. This is part of the wonder of His gracious sovereignty.*³

The founder of *Gospel Recordings, Inc.*, Joy Ridderholf, wrote: *Count it all joy - even when you feel stupid.* Someone had written her asking, "Can a person rejoice in his own blunders?" Ms. Ridderholf answered: "Being notoriously absentminded, I have made some bad ones! But I do not mean to, and each time I hope to do better. However, I immediately begin to rejoice in it. Furthermore, I thank God for permitting me to make the mistake."

She continued by stating that during one event there was a speaking engagement that she had completely forgotten to attend. In realizing what she had forgotten, she was beside herself, feeling very stupid. She realized there was nothing she could do to change what happened, so she began rejoicing and praising God. It was all she could think to do to be comforted. She believed that God would somehow turn it into something good. She learned later that an inexperienced young man had to take her place. In doing so, this young man found a Gifting that he did not realize God had given to him and a new ministry was born out of that last minute change of speakers.

Ms. Ridderholf said: "Some people say the only good they get out of such mistakes is to learn not to do it again. Very well, but most of us find that we still are apt to forget things and make mistakes, even though we have tried hard to improve. No rejoicing Christian is purposely careless. So why not turn it to something that will delight God's heart? Rejoice! When we, by rejoicing, place the case in His hands, Jesus takes the 'tangled strands that we have spun in vain,' and by the skill of His dear hands, only beauty shall remain. Remember - even when you feel stupid, count it all joy."⁴

³ J. I. Packer, (1973), *Knowing God*, p 219, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL.

⁴ Morgan, R., Editor. (2000), *Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations, & Quotes*, p 570, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN.

Pray About Being a Prayer Partner & Financial Supporter

Too Many One-Dollar Bills



Among the CNN headlines for April 6, 1999, was this one: *Armed Robber Holds Up Church During Easter Service.* It happened in a Louisiana church of about one hundred worshipers. A gunman wearing a ski mask entered a suburban New Orleans church fifteen minutes into the morning service. Holding a gun to one member's head, he ordered most of the members to lie on the floor while the remaining handful were forced to walk through the room taking the "offering."

But he was disappointed with the results. He left grumbling that there were *too many one-dollar bills.*⁵

Please Pray For . . .

- Josh McKeown: "I just got the results back from the research nurse. Everything looks good it was a good report. She said that everything is looking good for 3 months of treatment. They didn't get enough marrow to get all the tests done that they wanted so she is mailing me a kit that I will take to my local lab. They will do the additional testing and I will mail the samples back to MD Anderson. Overall everything is going well and I am responding to the treatments nicely. Thanks for all the prayers keep them coming."
- Please pray for all the Christian Counseling clients. God is good, all the time!
- Pray for your church Pastors.
- Pray for Federal, state, and local governments (they need all the help they can get).
- Pray for your children and family.
- Pray for your spouse.

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⁵

Ibid

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"Seeking True Recovery to Replace Pain With Healing Peace."

Clinical Christian Counseling/Clinical Pastoral Counseling is crisis intervention and strengthening of Christian character and values, which is Discipleship. Our Ordained and Professional Clinical Christian Counselors are committed to the welfare of the Christian. Clients are encouraged to take advantage of their own church programs as part of their Christian Counseling Treatment Plan. We are credentialed professionals who must follow state confidentiality guidelines. This is not church Lay Counseling in which your confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

*Professional Clinical Christian Counseling will help the client, couple, or family move beyond tolerable existence into genuine inner healing, renewal, and wholeness through the work of God's Holy Spirit in the counseling.**

Tolerable recovery is the process of getting better. True recovery says, "I made it!" This is when I can look at the source of my pain - which has become a stronghold - and realize it has been replaced with God's healing peace - Replacing the source pain with God's Truth.

*Clinical Christian Counselors are exempt from Florida State Licensing, Statute 491.014. All Christian counselors at New Horizons Institute of Counseling are Ordained Clergy, Board Certified & Licensed by the National Board of Examiners of the National Christian Counselors Association. We serve under the authorities of our licensing boards and the Pastor and Board of the UB church.

NEW RESEARCH FINDINGS

Teen Role Models: Who They Are And Why They Matter

A study conducted by Barna Group among a national sample of teenagers gives new insight into whom teens select as their role models and why those individuals captured their attention. Read article at: <http://www.barna.org/teens-next-gen-articles/467-teen-role-models>

Study Reveals Teens Thoughts on Sex and Spirituality

One Hope Christian Ministry released a new study on the thinking of youth regarding sexuality and spirituality. Read article at:

<http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/us/2011/February/Study-Reveals-Teens-Thoughts-on-Sexuality-Spirituality/>

Chronically Ill Children Are 88% More Likely To Suffer Physical Abuse

Children with chronic health conditions are 88% more likely to suffer physical abuse than healthy children, according to research in the March issue of Acta Paediatrica. They are also 154% more likely to suffer a combination of physical abuse and exposure to intimate partner violence than their healthy school friends. Read article at:

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/216841.php>

Study Identifies Risks For Quitting College

College students who consider dropping out are particularly sensitive to a handful of critical events including depression and loss of financial aid, according to a study led by

Michigan State University scholars. Read article at:

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/216787.php>

Depression Symptoms Increase Over Time For Addiction-Prone Women

Unlike alcohol problems and antisocial behavior, depression doesn't decline with age in addiction-prone women in their 30s and 40s it continues to increase, a new study led by University of Michigan Health System researchers found. Read article at:

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/216971.php>

Interactive Game Helps Autistic Children Recognize Emotions

Children with autism spectrum disorders are better able to recognize faces, facial expressions and emotions with the help of an interactive computer program called FaceSay, according to newly published research from psychologists at the University of Alabama at Birmingham: Read article

at: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/218013.php>

Be Positive And Live Longer

A review of more than 160 studies of human and animal subjects has found "clear and compelling evidence" that - all else being equal - happy people tend to live longer and experience better health than their unhappy peers. Read article at:

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/217955.php>

Christian Couple Wins Right to be Foster Parents

Owen and Eunice Johns of Derby, England, have been married thirty-nine years, have four adult children, have cared for nearly twenty foster children over a four-year period, and they are committed Christians. They say that their Christian beliefs almost put an end to their foster parenting. Read article at: <http://www.equip.org/articles/christian-couple-wins-right-to-be-foster-parents>

Cannabis Use Precedes The Onset of Psychotic Symptoms In Young People

Cannabis use during adolescence and young adulthood increases the risk of psychotic symptoms, while continued cannabis use may increase the risk for psychotic disorder in later life, concludes a new study published on bmj. Read article at:

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/217728.php>

*To read the full article, click or copy and paste the URL. The articles are for informational & educational use only. The released studies are not necessarily a reflection of beliefs of this ministry.