

COMMENTARY

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Father, May I ... ?

Hello from Beautiful Bennington Vermont!

I'm writing to you today on my laptop, from a recliner in my living room, with a beautiful Spring sunrise! My trusty German Shepherd, Ivy, is sitting at my right side.

Describing where I am and what I am doing probably developed a picture of that scene in your mind. Our minds draw from our past experiences and things that we have seen or heard about. We have seen a German Shepherd before, so our minds go to the memory bank and retrieve that information. You can picture the computer resting easily in my lap as I write. These memories allow us to operate more efficiently, because once we learn something, it becomes part of our memory-store, and then we can use it to learn other things.

As of the last few months, Holy Spirit has been teaching me many new things that I was not prepared to learn before - I wasn't ready.

How am I able to learn these things now? Through practice. My piano teacher always said, "Aaron, practice makes perfect." At that time I was nine years old, and I didn't learn that fully then, because I was not in a position to fully absorb it. But I started to learn it.

There's also other ways to learn, like through failure and success. I find I don't pay as much attention to getting better or learning as much when I'm "Winning Life". Failure is a more effective teacher.

That is what I wanted to speak to you about in this letter, the failure I see in the Body of Christ. And not only about the

failure, but what we do with it after it has happened. Solomon tells us, "For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, but the wicked stumble in time of disaster and collapse." (*Proverbs 24:16*)

God says here, that those that are righteous because of Christ Jesus are enabled to keep getting back up. This brings up a memory in my mind, that I draw from now: June 22, 1984 was the date the movie "Karate Kid" came out.

The entire movie is about getting back up when you fail and continuing to do what you know is right.

Why am I speaking of a movie that came out 40 years ago? It was in my memory bank.

I'm not sure how the human brain works but here it is.

If you have seen the movie you can picture Ralph Macchio standing with one leg hurt with his hands in the air, ready to strike with the Crane kick. Our memories can be funny and obscure but God is speaking to me through it - He says, "Get back up."

We are to be practicing our faith; our practice brings us ever closer to perfect Jesus! His perfection is what our perfection is molded upon. This next scripture hit me so hard that my eyes have opened to His truth. The NLT starts it off with this section title, "Growing in Faith." Peter tells us,
"3

By his divine power,
God has given us everything we need
for living a godly life.
We have received all of this
by coming to know him,
the one who called us to himself
by means of
his marvelous glory
and excellence.

Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.
See, I am doing a new thing!

Isaiah 43:18-19

One day or day one.
You decide.

Unknown

The caterpillar does all the work,
but the butterfly
gets all the publicity.

George Carlin

Beware of harking back
to what you once were
when God wants you to be
something you have never been.

Oswald Chambers

I hate how hard spiritual
transformation is and how long it
takes. I hate thinking about how
many people have gone to church
for decades and remain joyless or
judgmental or bitter or superior.

John Ortberg

Atheism, nine times out of ten,
is born from the womb
of a bad conscience.

Disbelief is born of sin,
not of reason.

Fulton J. Sheen

God desires to reveal to us
that His capacity to forgive
is bigger than our capacity to sin.

AW Tozer



“That’s not who I am anymore!”

“4

And because of his glory
and excellence,
he has given us great and
precious promises.
These are the promises
that enable you to
share his divine nature
and escape the world’s corruption
caused by human desires.”

(2 Peter 1:3-4)

Think, ponder, go over that
scripture again and again.

God has given us promises (like
Holy Spirit, the Bible, and testimonies
around us ...) so we can share in God’s
divine nature. What is God’s divine
nature? What is our natural nature?

Our nature came upon the Earth
because of Adam’s sin. Our nature
originated in sin. Our natural selves
cannot please God: our sin nature
keeps us from fellowship with God,
keeps us in bondage to sin, and leads
eventually to spiritual death.

When we believe in the Lord Jesus
Christ, we are saved (Acts 16:31) and
we undergo a radical spiritual
transformation. This is what Peter
means when he says we are made
partakers of the divine nature. We are
made new creations in Christ (2
Corinthians 5:17). We are born
again!

That is exactly what God is
speaking to me today, live out the born
again life. Shed the old life, and with
that shedding, there must come a
renewal, a renewal of the mind. As new
creatures we must be entirely new
including the past picture of ourselves
in our memory bank. The old
memories don’t leave us but they
become something different, they lose
their sting and become guides. When
we come to a place in the road of life
where we often fell before, I like to say,
“That’s not who I am anymore!”

Does it always work? No, but I now
have the sight of Jesus in my new memory
bank, sitting at the right hand of the Father
praying and interceding on my behalf.

Do you have a scar on your body? If so,
it doesn’t hurt anymore like it once did,
but the scar is a reminder of the pain so
that you can avoid it in the future.

The past can be a healed scar in your
memory bank: it doesn’t (shouldn’t) hurt
you anymore. Rather, it provides a
reminder and empowerment of what not to
do! God forgets your sin and your past, so
why do we keep bringing it up to Him? If
the sting remains, it’s usually because it
hasn’t been fully dealt with. This is what
we can pray: “Father, thank You for the
new nature You’ve given me, I’m asking in
the name of Jesus that You would heal my
mind and my memories, let them be
changed into good guides, into guardrails
between me and danger.”

This is the new maturity God wants us
to walk in. Our enemy the devil is an
accuser, that’s what he does. Every time
we hear the accusations we must combat it
with, “That’s not who I am anymore, I’ve
been made new because of Jesus!”

Father, may I be like Jesus ...

Thank you for reading my heart today,
I love you, this ministry loves you,

- *Aaron*

Start where you are.
Use what you have.
Do what you can.

Arthur Ashe

We were not saved from our sin simply
so that we would qualify for heaven.
God delivered us so we would have a
relationship with Him through which
He could carry out His mission
to redeem a lost world.

Henry Blackaby

Life is not about
waiting for the storms to pass.
It’s about learning
how to dance in the rain.

Vivian Greene

There are some things you learn
best in calm, and some in storm.

Willa Cather

Educating the mind without educating
the heart is no education at all.

Aristotle

The greatest glory in living
lies not in never falling,
but in rising every time we fall.

Nelson Mandela

Learning is a treasure
that will follow its owner everywhere.

Chinese proverb

The Bible was not given for our
information but for our transformation.

Dwight L. Moody

You will never glory in God till first of all
God has killed your glorying in yourself.

Charles Spurgeon

Making mistakes simply means
you are learning faster.

Weston H. Agor