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# Agape Love Way Ministries

ADDRESSING THE SPIRITUAL GROWTH NEEDS OF THE MODERN CHRISTIAN, AND SECURING A FUTURE IN GODLY HOPE.

## Biblical perspectives on failure in our lives

by Keith R. Thompson

Success is one of the fundamental desires of every individual, whether they are studying in school, at work, or operating in their ministry. The same could be said for individuals seeking healing or personal fulfillment. Success is a desire that drives us all along; but what about failure? What are the reasons why some people fail where others succeed? Does the Bible provide any teachings to help us understand this interesting conundrum. The answer in a nutshell is yes.

Many people have read the story in the Gospel of St. John, chapter 5 of the sick man who for 38 years laid

by the pool of Bethesda (also known as Beth-zatha in some translations). The story goes that this individual had a major illness for many years and found himself by the pool—along with many other invalid and impotent individuals who were blind, lame, and paralyzed—seeking healing. At a certain time every season an angel would visit the pool and ‘troubled the water’. Whosoever was the first to step into the troubled water would be healed of whatever disease they were afflicted with. This particular individual, however, was at that spot in that same condition for 38 years

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### Editor's Note

Agape Love Way is a ministry devoted to the principles and practices of the First Century Church, and the Great Commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ, namely: Love the Lord with all your heart, mind, soul & strength, and Love your neighbor as yourself [Matt. 22-35-40; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 10:25-28].

# Biblical perspectives on Failure in our lives

and never got into the pool first to claim his healing. One day he was met by JESUS who simply asked him “Do you want to be healed?” Startlingly this sick man’s response was neither “Yes” nor “No” but instead proceeded to blame others for his failures by the pool. He said to JESUS “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me.” Of course JESUS had sympathy on the invalid man and healed him thus demonstrating his compassionate healing powers, but also signaling a bigger lesson to be learnt here.

Why was this invalid man in this sickening situation for so many years? And why did he start to blame others when JESUS offered to help him? To fully appreciate the answers to these questions we need to first understand what failure looks like.

The Bible shows us that after 38 years in the same condition this individual’s mindset started to get negative. One would think that someone in his condition would actively seek out JESUS for a healing, but instead it was JESUS who sought him out and asked the question “Do you want to be healed?” Next, lying on his cot—in the presence of the greatest healer the world has ever known—would cause anyone presented with the opportunity to be healed to instantly forget all of the bad trauma

they have experienced in their life and instead shout out “Yes Lord, I want to be healed.” Instead this sick man proceeded to blame every one for the reason he couldn’t enter the pool before when the waters were stirred up. Maybe he was thinking it was the blind folks’ fault, or maybe it was the paralyzed individuals’ who are to blame for his failure to get in the pool. Even in the presence of the great healer he could only see the negatives within his own life.

Before someone becomes a failure in life they first become failures in their own minds. They fail to see the positives in front of them or to embrace opportunities that come their way. And when opportunities do arise those individuals in that ‘failure attitude’ fail to embrace them, preferring to wallow in their quagmire of despair and blame others for their predicament.

## What are the stages that lead into failure?

Stage 1 is achieving a feeling of Weariness. Despite [Galatians 6:9](#) telling us to “... not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not,” this sick man gave up trying sometime during his 38 year struggle, ensuring he would not see any rewards later. Weariness causes us to reduce our effort while pursuing a goal, resulting in us not achieving any positive progress report and ultimately creating a perpetual downward spiral.

Stage 2 is Apathy. Apathy is a loss of hope where we no longer believe that anything positive will happen. [1 Corinthians 15:19](#) reminds us that “if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” Clearly once you lose hope you can only expect misery to follow, and that is all that the infirmed man had to look forward to after devolving into apathy.

After Apathy stage 3 in the slide into failure is Discouragement. In this mindset individuals now officially quit trying. These failed individuals also seek to discourage others from trying so that they themselves may not feel so bad about themselves. In the book of [Numbers 32:6-12](#) we read of the story where two tribes of Israel (Gad and Reuben) lost confidence in their ability to possess the Land of Canaan and therefore they discouraged the remaining tribes from possessing the land that God gave them, to his great disdain.

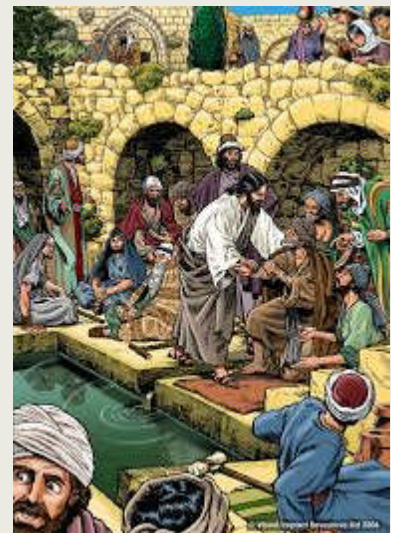
The fourth and final step on the road to becoming a failure is the step of Despair. This ultimately leads to feeling depressed, and with that blaming others for

those failures. As [2 Corinthians 4:8](#) indicates “we are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair.” This is the lowest mental state that one can sink into, which causes us to no longer see ourselves and our own role in our failings but rather see others as the source of our failures in life.

For many years numerous preachers have seen the story of the invalid man by the pool as a story of JESUS’ healing prowess, without much regard for that other man in the story. However the story is as much about him, and what a mindset of failure really looks like. The lesson is also that failure comes from procrastination, putting off important things that need to be done today. Overcome failure in your spiritual, personal and professional lives by avoiding the four steps outlined above, and defeat the virus of procrastination otherwise you too could be like that infirmed man spending 38 years in the same situation, seemingly with no way out.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair.

[2 Corinthians 4:8](#)





By Lauren Ramakrishna

Source: <http://shine.yahoo.com/>

Photo by Getty Images

Whether you recently said "I do" or just celebrated a double-digit anniversary, you can probably spout off a lot of info about your husband—his middle name, where he was born, his favorite food. But knowing these 10 other things can bring you closer than ever. Find out why, and try these relationship strategies to ensure your husband is anything but a mystery.

**1. When He Needs Space**  
Sharing office news, the kids' schedules and the latest neighborhood drama as soon as your husband walks in the door each night can backfire. "Most women want to immediately connect at the end of the day. For a lot of guys, they need their space more than ever then," says Les Parrott III, PhD, a psychology professor and co-author (with wife and marriage therapist Leslie Parrott, EdD) of *The Good Fight: How Conflict Can Bring You Closer*. Give your hubby a few minutes to unwind when he comes home. You're more likely to get his undivided attention if you wait.

## 2. When He's Really Listening

If it seems like your husband

constantly tunes you out, consider this: Men may look at other areas of the room while still paying attention, according to Deborah Tannen, author of *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*, who reviewed videotapes of same-sex best friends talking. Rather than focus on where your husband's gaze lands during conversations,

note how he responds to you. If your words are truly falling on deaf ears, Rachel A. Sussman, a relationship specialist and author of *The Breakup Bible*, suggests gently telling him you feel he isn't listening; then, let him respond. "Don't accuse or blame him," she advises.

## 3. The Most Productive Way to Fight...

Arguments happen in any good marriage. But there's a wrong and right way to fight. Through a study conducted to predict how long couples would stay married, researchers discovered, not surprisingly, that yelling during fights often led to divorce—but so did approaching arguments differently from one's spouse (say, one spoke calmly and the other avoided the conversation). "Ask yourself, 'When would I want to have this conversation?'" suggests Sussman. "Then, think about what might work best for your husband." Assessing both your moods can help you pinpoint the best time for a constructive argument.

# 10 Surprising Things All Wives Should Know About Their Husbands

## 4. ...And When an Argument is Going Nowhere

For some disagreements, there's just no productive way to fight it out. To find out if you're gearing up for a purposeful fight, rate the importance of the topic. If it's a core value—like how to raise your children or which city to live in—rank it highly. If it's not—like the color of a new bedspread or what to have for dinner

—it may not be worth an argument. Next, determine if you and your husband are ready for the discussion. If either of you are "tired, hungry or distracted, don't get into a conversation about something important," Dr. Leslie Parrott advises.

## 5. Which Topics Set Him Off

Maybe it's talking about his mom's flavorless cooking—or his late nights at work. Dr. Les Parrott says it's important to "know where the emotional landmines are. If you step on one, you can expect an explosion," he says. But you can't avoid all "hot topics." "Find the right space and time to talk about these issues," he suggests. Plus, try to understand your husband's side, and then approach him in a non-threatening way. You might say, "I'm not looking to upset you; I'm just looking for a solution to an issue that's causing me a lot of pain," Sussman offers.

## 6. How (and When) to Be His Support System

Couples who say they have strong spousal support and face daily stress have 50% higher rates of marriage satisfaction, according to a 2012 study. While wives equate affection and warmth with support, husbands feel supported when they're appreciated, needed and receiving offers to help with errands. Not sure if your hubby needs you? Ask him. "Mindreading is outlawed," says Jackie Black, PhD, a board-certified couples' coach and author of *Meeting Your Match: Cracking the Code to Successful Relationships*. Volunteer to tackle some tasks on his list so he can recharge. And tell him how much you appreciate him as a partner to give him a boost.

## 7. When He's Not Loving Your Love Life

If your man isn't showing signs he wants to have sex—perhaps he usually kisses your neck or gives you a telltale look—then it's time to rekindle the fire. Dr. Leslie Parrott says couples reconnect when they try out-of-the-box activities together. "Women experience intimacy through communication, so we often underplay sharing something novel," she says. Plan a date that'll get you both in the mood. Some ideas: Sign up for a race, head to the museum or take a cooking class to, ahem, turn up the heat.

## 8. How He Views His Role as Husband and Father

Whether it's just you two or you plus kids, you and your husband have equally important family roles. And it's vital that you recognize how he views his part and respect it. "Of course that's a two-way street, but it's even more important for men," says Dr. Les Parrott, who adds that respecting his role helps him feel close to you.

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## 10 Things Wives should know...

Fight the urge to cast your husband into specific parts without his input. And keep in mind that you don't always have to be in sync with parenting. "Differences in temperament and style are key to parents' success and the enjoyment of parenting," Dr. Black says.

### 9. What His Dream Job (or Vacation or Car) Is

It's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of day-to-day life, but happy couples discuss "each other's hopes and dreams to build and sustain intimacy," says Dr. Black. Make it a point to regularly talk to your husband about, well, him. Find out his career goals for the next few years—or just hear about his favorite book, TV show or food of the moment. Then, reciprocate by telling him more about you. Communication helps you grow with each other instead of apart.

### 10. That You Don't Know Everything About Him

No matter how much you communicate with your husband, you can never completely know him, and that's OK. "It's never good to believe you know anything about your partner for sure and therefore not ask," says Dr. Black. "It's vital that you and your husband continually get to know each other," adds Sussman. "If you're growing, you have to continue to catch up with each other." That means there's at least one enjoyable thing you can do each week: get to know—and fall in love with—your husband all over again.

#### Editorial comment:

(Wives don't worry, in the coming months your husbands will get their list too...)

## More About Agape Love Way Ministries

Agape Love Way is a non-profit organization established to promote charity care initiatives within a religious context, and according to the Holy Scriptures. It emphasizes the underlying precept of the Great Commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ, namely "Love the Lord with all your heart, mind, soul & strength, and Love your neighbor as yourself."

Agape Love Way engages in services that support the homeless and those in need of basic food sustenance. As such we aim to help individuals in all areas of accommodation needs, food aid, and basic social services, all the while promoting the Word and the work of the Lord. We also provide financial, organizational and administrative support to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are engaged in such services. To learn more about who we are and what we do send us an email at:

[info@agapeloveway.org](mailto:info@agapeloveway.org)

Agape Love Way is led by its Executive Director, Keith Thompson, who is also a Professor of Business, Economics and Finance at a local NJ college. Professor Keith Thompson is a man anointed and inspired to teach the Word of God through Love. Email him at:

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If you have an article or a recipe or even a testimony that you believe the Body of Christ will benefit from or be blessed by then submit it to us for consideration in this newsletter at: [newsletter@agapeloveway.org](mailto:newsletter@agapeloveway.org)

If you like something about this Christian newsletter, or even if you just have a comment to share then we look forward to hearing from you so email us at:

[contact@agapeloveway.org](mailto:contact@agapeloveway.org)

To help the Agape Love Way fulfill its mandate and support our various ministries please consider donating to the cause. We accept cash and in-kind donations such as food items, lightly-worn clothing and household appliances that are no longer needed. 100% of ALL donations will go to our various charities. To learn more about how to donate to us please send us an email at:

[donations@agapeloveway.org](mailto:donations@agapeloveway.org)

**Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.** Matthew 25:40

**SPOTLIGHT ON  
ONE OF OUR  
MISSIONS:**

**Homeless  
Solutions**  
A HAND UP  
NOT A HAND OUT

In May of 1983 Morris Shelter, Inc. was created as a private, not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization providing beds and meals to the homeless in the region around Morristown. The organization changed its name in the mid-nineties to reflect its expanded mission that included the development of affordable housing for working poor families.

Today, Homeless Solutions, Inc. provides shelter for 25 homeless men, 10 homeless women, 10 families and 20 Safe Haven guests. Their guests receive services including case management, transportation to work and necessary appointments, money management and employment assistance, housing search assistance and daily living skills training. Referral services for counseling, substance abuse intervention, and prevention are also provided.

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