

THE BULWARK

THE NECESSITY OF FAILURE

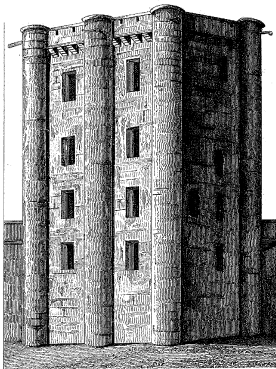
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*“Mark well her bulwarks,
consider her palaces, that
you may tell it to the
generation following”
Psalms 48:13*

“Oh, we don’t keep score. There are no losers. Everybody wins!” He knew that he should restrain his tongue, but sadly it was to no avail. “That is perhaps the most ridiculous statement of pure drivel I have ever heard.” His response to what had been said brought silence, but the look he received from the woman who had proudly touted “no losers”, spoke volumes. One of which certainly would have included his being lumped with a “knuckle dragger”. How dare anyone even postulate that in life some win while others suffer loss. One would almost begin to think that losing is the great American taboo, and society will do everything to try and dispel the notion of failure.

Jonathan Haidt, PhD from the University of Virginia in an article dealing with failure, argues the benefits of adversity, set backs and failure. He asserts that people need to fail in order to be happy, successful and fulfilled. The key centers around learning from the failure. J.K. Rowling, the author of the Harry Potter books, stated before a grad class at Harvard, “Failure stripped away everything inessential, it taught me things about myself I could have learned no other way.” Michael Jordan, the much heralded basketball star stated, “I have failed over and over again, and that is why I succeed.” For the vast majority of people, learning is driven by error. The bottom line, is that it is good for us to “compete” and to either win or lose, and learn to deal with each accordingly. In life you will win some, you will lose some and some you will get “rained out”. Deal with

it and learn from it. Michel de Montaigne came to this conclusion, “there are some defeats more triumphant than victories.”

“O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to Gd, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1Corinthians 15:55-57)

We are reminded throughout the Scriptures, that from time to time we come up short of the mark; but also that we should learn from such and redirect the focus on the prize. *“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.” (1Corinthians 9:24-27)* Note as well what is found in Philippians 3:13, *“forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead.”* The prize ahead. The author of Hebrews challenges all to learn from the mistakes of others and pressing on to the race set before us (see Hebrews 12:1-3) At the risk of sounding overly redundant, isn’t it time we grow from our mistakes as well as the short comings of others, and with renewed vigor press on to the goal that awaits victors in Christ? (wbe)