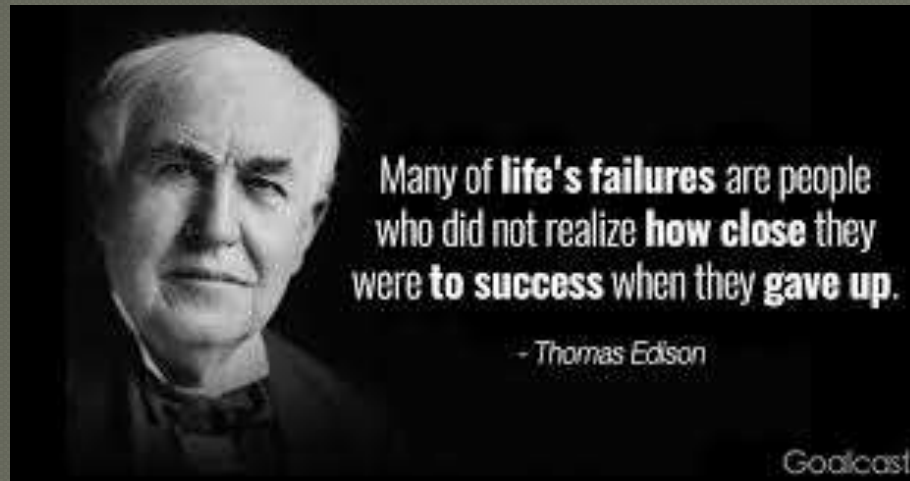


Please complete the famous saying.

If at first you don't succeed,



Perseverance

“Don’t quit before the blessing.”

Bryd Baggett

Perseverance Pays Off for Eagles Fans

- The Eagles won their first Super Bowl and fourth overall championship. It had been 57 years since the Eagles won their last title.



A Parade for the Underdog in All of Us

- “There is a parade headed up Broad Street in Philadelphia on Thursday. Technically, it's for the Super Bowl champion Eagles and their fans. But really, it's for everyone. ”
- Excerpts from the article:
- “Eagles Hosting a Super Bowl Parade for Underdogs Everywhere”
- “This parade is for those who were told to be patient and wait their turn as children, and then years passed, then decades, until their hair turned gray and they had kids of their own and yet were still being told to be patient and wait for a turn they despaired would never, ever come.”

Christian Perseverance

- ◉ Maintaining your faith in God.
- ◉ Doing the right thing when it is not the popular option.
- ◉ Not giving up on another person.

Persevering in Faith

● The Story of Job

- God's agreement with Satan.
- Job's children died.
- Job lost his wealth.
- Job became covered with sores and suffered physical pain.
- Job's wife and friends turned away from God and encouraged Job to do the same.



Defending His Faith

- Job's wife:

⁹ His wife said to him, "Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!" Job 2:9

- Eliphaz (One of the three friends who visited Job):

² "Can a man be of benefit to God? Can even a wise person benefit him?³ What pleasure would it give the Almighty if you were righteous? What would he gain if your ways were blameless? Job 22:2-3

- Job's Response:

¹⁰ He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" In all this, Job did not sin in what he said. Job 2:10

¹⁰ But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold.

¹¹ My feet have closely followed his steps; I have kept to his way without turning aside.

¹² I have not departed from the commands of his lips; I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread.

Job 23:10-12

How do we respond when our faith is challenged?

- Do we give up on God?
- Do we blame God?
- Do we put our faith in other things?
- Do we hold on to our faith and believe that God is with us and He has a plan for us?

- Job and God

⁷ After the LORD had said these things to Job he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken the truth about me, as my servant Job has. ⁸ So now take seven bulls and seven rams and go to my servant Job and sacrifice a burnt offering for yourselves. My servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer and not deal with you according to your folly. You have not spoken the truth about me, as my servant Job has. Job 42:7-8

¹⁰ After Job had prayed for his friends, the LORD restored his fortunes and gave him twice as much as he had before. Job 42:10

Doing the Right Thing

- “You must never be fearful about what you are doing when it is right.”

Rosa Parks

- “The truth of the matter is that you always know the right thing to do. The hard part is doing it.”

Norman Schwarzkopf

- “It is our choices that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities.”

J.K. Rowling

- “In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing. The worst thing you can do is nothing.”

Theodore Roosevelt



Jesus and the Sinful Woman

- 36 When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table.
37 A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. 38 As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. 39 When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner."
- 48 Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." 49 The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"
- 50 Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." Luke 7: 36-39, 48-50



Reflection

- Two people did the right thing in the story: Jesus and the woman.
- The woman showed her love for Jesus even though she was ridiculed.
- Jesus praised the woman for her faith even though she was a sinner.
- Do we have the courage of the woman in showing/sharing our faith even though we face obstacles?
- Do we commend or stand up for others who did the right thing?
- Do we have a person in our lives that is like the Pharisee who holds us back from living out our faith?

Your life may be the only Bible some people read.
~Author Unknown

- As Christians, we must do our best to make the right choice.
- People, who know we are Christians, are observing how we react in situations.
- If we fail to make the right choice, we lose an opportunity to be a witness for our faith.
- **¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.** James 2:17



Relationships with Others

- Have you ever given up on another person?
- What made you decide to give up?
- Did you feel there was no chance of reconciliation?
- Did you feel you were better off without them?



From Denier to Shepherd

- ³⁷ Peter asked, “Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.”
- ³⁸ Then Jesus answered, “Will you really lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times! John 13:37-38



“Peter, feed my sheep.”

- ¹⁵ When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”
- “Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”
- ¹⁶ Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”
- He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”
- Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”
- ¹⁷ The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”
- Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.” John 21: 15-17



Your Decision

- Pray: Ask God for guidance.
- Put yourself in their situation.
- Have you done something similar to them or another person?
- If you turn your back, are you giving up a chance to help God's kingdom?



Christian Perseverance: Not Easy, But Worth It!

- God expects us to maintain our faith through all times.
- God expects us to make the right choices even when there are obstacles.
- God perseveres with us through our sinfulness. That should effect how we view our relationships with others.

¹² Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. James 1:12

