



CEO Devotional July 7, 2014
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Stumbling but Still Upright

Like you my trust in God has been tested. My business partner and I were weeks away from launching a very promising business venture when unexpectedly he abandoned me to take a high profile job in New York. The result – the business failed and never launched and I began a business drought that lasted for years. My loss was severe. But through the pain, betrayal and financial loss, I began to experience the truth of Psalm 37:24: "*Though he stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand.*" Here is what He has been teaching me as He has upheld me.

1. Know truth. Never let your ego get so close to your career that your identity depends on your success. Who you are is not what you do. And truth doesn't depend on your circumstances. When emotions overpower reason, it's easy to forget that truth is on your side. Christ's victory allows you to live above your circumstances. Don't believe your doubts. Believe your beliefs! "*For this reason I was born that I should bear witness to the truth*" (John 18:37).

2. Quit trying to figure it all out. Things will go wrong and people will let you down. It's what you do with these feelings that cause lasting problems. Many times you won't know the true motivations behind a bad situation, just like I couldn't figure out why my business partner abandoned our dream project. Don't lose your heart. Sometimes the greatest freedom is found in the graceful act of forgiving others. "*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways my ways*" (Isaiah 55:8).

3. Living in the land of God's promises beats living in the wilderness. I hate the wilderness, apart from God. It's scary. The good news is God allows me to choose where I live. All but two of the Hebrews delivered out of captivity in Egypt remained and died in the wilderness "*because of their unbelief*" (Hebrews 3:1). God loves us and calls us to the land of His promises: "*Be strong, and go in and possess the land which you cross over to possess*" (Deuteronomy 11:8). God gives us the choice: "*I am setting before you a blessing and a curse, will you obey or not obey?*"

4. Be realistic. James says to consider it pure joy whenever you face trials. It's part of the journey. But we get to walk without fear, because we also know how the story ends. We come home safely, in glory! "*The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life*" (John 10:10).

5. You can't be both joyful and stressed out. One steals from the other, so choose joy! In Philippians 4:6, Paul says stop being anxious. It's stated in the imperative form, as if Paul is saying, "Stop worrying. I'm not kidding, quit freaking out!" Joy is not determined by people or circumstance, but by who God is. Paul says stop this (v. 6 worrying) and do this (v. 6 pray with thanksgiving) and receive this (v. 7 peace).

6. Focus on what's important vs. today's problems. Most of the problems going on today won't matter a year from now. Know what's important, which will stop you from worrying about the other stuff. (Matthew 6:34)

7. Do what your mom taught you. Help others, give thanks, and do the right thing. It takes the focus off you.

8. Refocus from failure to that thing you love to do. Focus on the one thing that is your heart's desire, the one thing that will make a difference. That "why" is your source of passion; it allows you to be genuine to who you are. God says, "*I have this against you, that you have left your first love*" (Revelation 2:4, NKJV).

That failure was so tough that it forced me to focus on my faith, purpose, and passion. Faith has always been important to me. And my number one passion is helping entrepreneurs build remarkable companies. That's why I combined the two to start Faith Driven Business. I wanted to help entrepreneurs who were facing the same struggles I had endured, and to pass on what I had learned along the way. Sometimes it's a hard journey. Sometimes you'll cry out to God in desperation and ask what happened to your dream. But don't confuse one failed business idea with a failed life. Find your passion again and use it.