

“An Address to our 2024 Graduates”

Those who are wise don't stop learning when their time in a classroom comes to an end. We should all be life-long learners. Here are three simple truths from the Bible about *how you can make it in this world*. **First** of all, to make it in this world we need to **face our fears**. Every person is afraid, from time to time; but we must never allow fear to control or paralyze us. 2 Timothy 1:7 says, “*For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*” When we trust God to be in control of our lives we can face our fears, with God by our side. New seasons can be overwhelming and fretful. But since God has not given us a “*spirit of fear,*” allow Him to move you from fear to confidence. **Secondly**, in order to make it in this world we need to **forget our failures**. We all have a long list of failures, and none of our lists is complete, yet. But please know that your failures don't have to be fatal. We should keep pressing on and view our failures as stepping-stones to success. The Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 3:12-14: *I fall short, “...but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.”¹³ ... One thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*” Don't allow failure to destroy you or best your journey toward God's goals for your life. Learn from your failures, and then put them behind you. Don't ever allow your failures to make you quit trying or give up. **Third**, to make it in this world we need to **follow our faith**. Hebrews 12:1-2 says, “*Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*” As believers, in order to fulfill our life-mission successfully we must fix our eyes on Jesus. For Christians, our reference point is Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures. We can be flexible and adaptable on many things in life, but when it comes to Jesus Christ and the truth of Scripture we cannot budge. Through all of life's journeys we must let our faith lead the way as we stay focused on Jesus and the teachings in the Bible.

Discussion Guide/Action Steps

1. What are you afraid of as you face this new season in your life? Are you asking God to move you from fear to confidence?
2. What are some lessons you have learned from your failures?
3. How are you keeping your eyes fixed on Jesus and on the teachings in the Holy Bible?