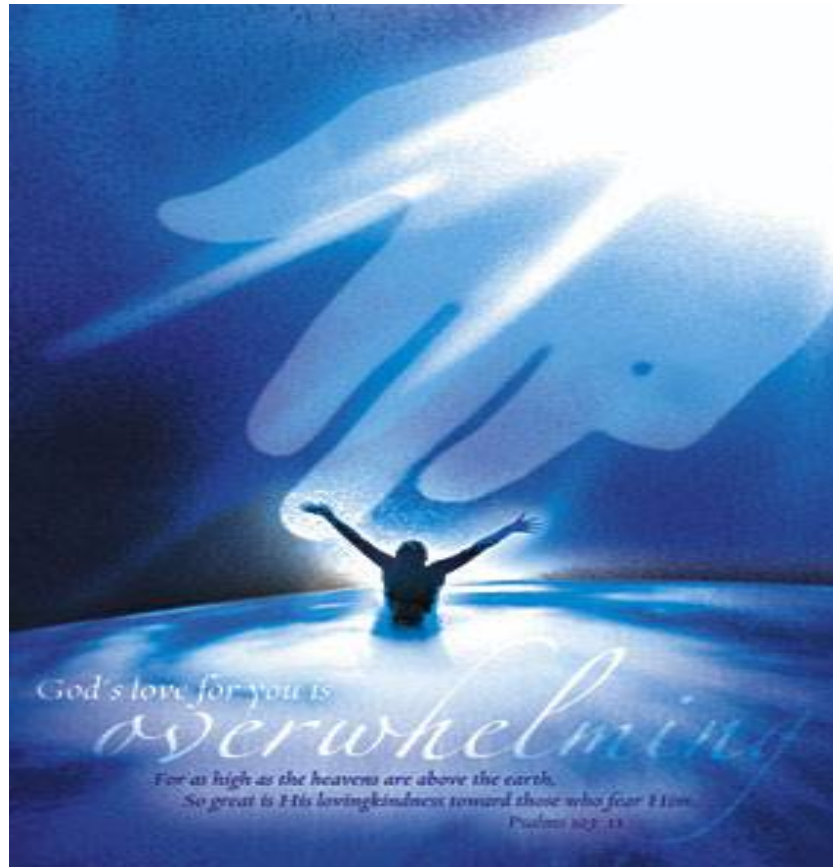


The Writer's Spirit

The Spirit of Creation Moving in You...



Welcome To Our October 2006 Edition!

Only a select few are highlighted in the Bible as wise artists. One such person is Bezalel. The name Bezalel in Hebrew means in the shadow or protection of God. In *Exodus 31: 1-5*, this is what the LORD said to Moses:

"Look, I have called by name Bezalel.....I have filled him with the Spirit of God, giving him great wisdom, intelligence, and skill in all kinds of crafts.... Yes, he is a master at every craft." (NASB)

God had singled out and given special skills to Bezalel and all the naturally talented craftsmen to do the important job of constructing the Tabernacle itself; the Ark of the Covenant; and the Ark's cover along with all of the furnishings and utensils,

accessories, garments, anointing oil and special incense for God's sanctuary in the wilderness.

In reading this, we could not help but draw correlations between God's sanctuary in the wilderness back then to God's sanctuary in the wilderness of today. In Moses' time, the sanctuary that was constructed was a physical structure in the wilderness of the Sinai Desert. Today God's sanctuary is in the heart of every believer and potential believer—that means everybody—in the wilderness of this world.

MyFirstChapter.com is striving to become one of the utensils that God uses to touch the hearts of all who wander through this wilderness called life on earth. Just as God called the people to contribute of their time, resources, talents and money in the construction of His tabernacle back then, His call still goes out today. Your contribution can take many forms as it did in Moses' day. Some utilized their talents as artists. Others contributed the goods, supplies and materials that it took to build this important structure.

We, at **MyFirstChapter.com**, are reminded that whatever task God calls us to do, He gives us not only the special skills but also detailed instructions on how to carry out His perfect will. Since He is the Creator of all, He *"gives us more than enough to complete the job that He has given us to do."* Now if that's not enough, He takes it one step further and blankets us in His divine protection.

The questions that we should all ponder are: Do I hear His call when He calls *me* by name? Am I listening for His detailed instructions? Am I willingly receiving the equipping that God is giving me? Am I giving my resources (time, money, talent, resources, etc.) to support God's Kingdom work? What is God calling me to do?

If you are unable to answer any of these questions, you should then be asking yourself the big, "Why?" or "Why not?"

One likely answer is that from time to time, we all fall prey to fear. Not the kind of fear that we are called to have for our Creator. For God calls us to "fear" or hold Him in reverence—to stand in awe of Him, recognizing Him for His unequalled power and position—and to submit to Him as our Master and Creator.

No, this is the kind of fear that brings with it dread, fright and, sometimes even terror. Let's be even more specific with this fear. It is the Fear of Failure and Rejection. It can render us ineffective, helpless and/or immobile. It can cause us to retreat or surrender when we know we are being called to take a stand, fight or push forward. At some point in our lives, this rascal called "Fear of Failure and Rejection" has held each of us in its grips.

Our featured writer for this month has words to help us all combat this unproductive spirit of fear.

Vincent T. Williams, Empowerment/Motivational Facilitator, is no stranger to fear. During his lifetime, he has battled it many times and has now been called to share with you tough lessons he's learned to combat this formidable opponent. Here's one of his lessons that can be found in his upcoming book, *"How Do I Reach My True Destiny?"*:

"FAILING FORWARD"

Failure: the condition or fact of not achieving the desired end.

Abraham Lincoln is one of our best-known and accomplished presidents. However, President Lincoln knew more about failure than most. He failed as a businessman and a farmer. He failed in his first attempt to run for the Illinois legislature. When he sought the office of speaker he failed. He failed in his first attempt at the U.S. House of Representatives. He failed in his pursuit to be appointed to the United States Land Office. He also failed in his race for the United States Senate twice. Believe it or not, he even failed in his nomination for the Vice-Presidency in 1856. How is it a man who knew so much failure could go on to become President of the United States? Lincoln was not just any President, but one of the greatest in our nation's history. In addition, he courageously changed the face of a nation by abolishing slavery, the greatest atrocity in American history. President Lincoln did not recognize failure. Instead he insisted failure recognize him.

Most people believe if you fail at something, it somehow diminishes who you are as a person. And many of us see failure as some type of fatal result. Some see failure as a form of death, a point of no return or a kind of permanent state. Mr. Copland, a mature business executive, once told me, "Failure is only temporary. Giving up is what makes it permanent." Many of us are so afraid of what others may think if we fail, that we never try to pursue our passions. What stops us from taking action? Fear! What's the number 1 fear most of us have? Failure, right? Wrong, it's not the fear of failure. It's actually the perceived by-product of failure. We have the assumed fear that failure will lead to rejection from our friends and family. If I fail, they won't love me anymore. They'll judge me. They'll be hurt and embarrassed.

Yet everybody experiences failure at one time or another. It's the only true way to grow and prosper. A baseball player who hits .300 is considered to be at the top of his game. Yet he gets a hit only three out of every ten at-bats. In other words he fails to get a hit 70% of the time! Statistics say most professional salespeople's "close ratio" is between 10-30% depending upon the product they sell. Yet selling is reported to be the highest paid profession in the world. So learn to view failure as a necessary stop on your journey to success. If the truth were told, you cannot fail if you do not try! In other words, if you're not failing, you're not trying.

Failure can be a great teacher. In sports, coaches employ this perspective every time they call "time out." They stop the game to show the athletes in real time exactly how they are failing. During half time, the coach again guides the athlete through the process of failure and corrective action. Watching films of the game is another strategy for discovering the tendencies and failures of the opponent, your teammates, and yourself. In practice, during the game, after the game, over and over again the athlete goes through this routine of development. During this process, the athlete learns success through failure.

So, as we experience mistakes and failure in our everyday lives, we have to learn how to stop, take time, study and review our actions. If you try to do something and it doesn't work, you must learn all you can from the experience. Solicit the advice of an expert or a knowledgeable and supportive acquaintance, regroup and move forward. When you learn how to employ these strategies in your life, failure becomes success.

Mastering the principle of Handling Failure and Disappointment can be the greatest of all attributes for life survival. Champions, peak performers and high achievers use the acquired knowledge of their failed attempts to increase their odds of succeeding the next time. If you fall short, remember that with each effort, you will attain a new understanding of what it takes to accomplish your goal. You have to keep trying until you get the odds in your favor.

Throughout the history of mankind, civilization has progressed more through failure than success. Learn to handle failure because it will separate you from the crowd. Once your heart is set on doing something special, you will become an individual incapable of allowing setbacks to stand in your way. You will begin to view them as a minor detour on the road to your heart's desires.

Your ability to handle failure and disappointment also plays a major role in the attitude you'll take toward life. When you put your whole heart into a project and things don't work out, you'll be disappointed. It's only natural to feel some sense of frustration at the outcome. Those who pretend nothing bothers them become a walking powder keg, because at some point they will explode. But those who walk around glum and despondent "Woe is me" are only making matters worse. It's important not to keep things bottled up in you, but equally important not to wallow in your misery. You must devise a strategy to quickly release feelings of helplessness, failure, and any other non-productive emotion.

One good strategy is to form or join a support team of like-minded individuals who are committed to higher levels of achievement. They will lend an attentive ear when you need to vent your anger. They will build you up when you are torn down. Most importantly they'll remind you of your greatness and importance of accomplishing your goals.

Additionally, regular exercise will help you cope with life challenges and stress management. Exercise will keep you physically balanced and less prone to illness during stressful times. Realize that your mind and body are totally connected, and the thoughts you think can affect your physical well-being. Exercise has the remarkable capacity to help you change the thoughts that dominate your mind. After a good workout, you'll feel revitalized and ready to tackle the problem once more.

Another great way to handle disappointment is to go out and do something nice for someone else. It will take your mind off your own problem and give you the warm glow of satisfaction from helping someone. Please know that no good deed goes un-rewarded. The values you practice in your everyday walk of life create a karma that will eventually make its way back to you.

So, do not wither when you suffer temporary defeat in your life. It will happen. Acknowledge how you feel to yourself and others who support you. And don't let pride prevent you from exercising this strategy. Acknowledging your failure is healthy if you reposition yourself back into a productive state of mind.

Even when you fail, you gain experience and knowledge you didn't possess beforehand. This knowledge increases your ability to accomplish your goal. Be persistent in your efforts to succeed. Study the lesson in your letdowns. And you will triumph over every hurdle as you learn how to handle disappointment and failure. There is nothing wrong with failing as long as you are failing forward!

To help you develop the principle of Failing Forward, apply the exercise below:

- *Don't ask, "Why is this happening to me?" Begin by asking yourself, "What is happening? How is this going to change or affect my life? How do I respond?"*
- *Sit down with a note pad and write down the lessons you've gleaned from the experience. This will allow you to turn the alleged failures into success.*
- *Find or form a group of people who will be your sounding board, your support system, a team who will be there to get you through the tough times and remind you of your worth.*
- *Develop a "Failure Fallback Plan." The next time you fail at something, have a plan for what you'll do to tackle the demons of frustration and disappointment. Choose something whether it's exercise or playing a musical instrument or cooking that will restore your sense of accomplishment and remind you that one failure does not define you.*

MyFirstChapter.com is proud to introduce more excerpts from Vincent's new book, "[How Do I Reach My True Destiny.](#)" Please click on the title to begin reading. Or if you wish to read it later, it can be found in the **Non-fiction section of The Reading Room**. To learn more about Vincent Williams, please [click here](#) for his bio.

(Adobe Acrobat required to read this file. Click Adobe icon to download).



While you're in the Reading Room, please linger to read new works added this month for your delight:

- "Gullah Gurls"** by Christine Taylor
- "The Island of Porshanna"** by Porshanna Bennett
- "Fiction Painted Fact"** by Christyn Stallworth
- "My Precious MeMa"** by Terri Ward

"Father and Son Healing" by Dennis Belkofer
"Prophet, Priest and King" by Shelia Benskin
"How Do I Reach My True Destiny" by Vincent T. Williams

To be taken to our Reading Room, click on this link
<http://www.myfirstchapter.net/3.html>.

MyFirstChapter.com has added streaming audio files as a new feature on our menu entitled the **"Spirit's Voice."** **Dr. Conway Edwards**, Pastoral Assistant to **Dr. Tony Evans** of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church, is our featured guest this month. Please click into this area and listen to his inspirational message **"Shift Don't Settle."**

As always, MyFirstChapter.com welcomes the opportunity to showcase your work in its Reading Room and/or highlight your accomplishments as one of God's creative artists in a future newsletter. To be considered for these opportunities, please contact Shelia Benskin at sheliaannb@myfirstchapter.net.

In closing, whisper this prayer in the coming days:

My Loving Protector,

Thank You for calling me out by name to create for Your Kingdom's purpose. Fill me with Your Spirit in wisdom, understanding, knowledge and all kinds of craftsmanship. Father, make me a "master" of my craft in Your eyes. Thank You for already providing more than I need to do the work for which You've called me to do.

Jehovah-sabaoth, My Powerful and Almighty LORD of Hosts, I call upon Your Mighty Spirit to blanket me in the shadow of Your Protection. Wipe away any and all remnants of fear that prevent me from walking in Your full promises.

Walk boldly in His promises and produce abundantly! Please be our ambassadors and spread the word about <http://www.myfirstchapter.com/>.

Blessings in great abundance,

Shelia & Al Benskin

REMINDER TO READERS:

MyFirstChapter.com is a foundation supporting up and coming literary talents. Your generous support toward their future success would be greatly appreciated.

"Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return." Luke 6:38

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