



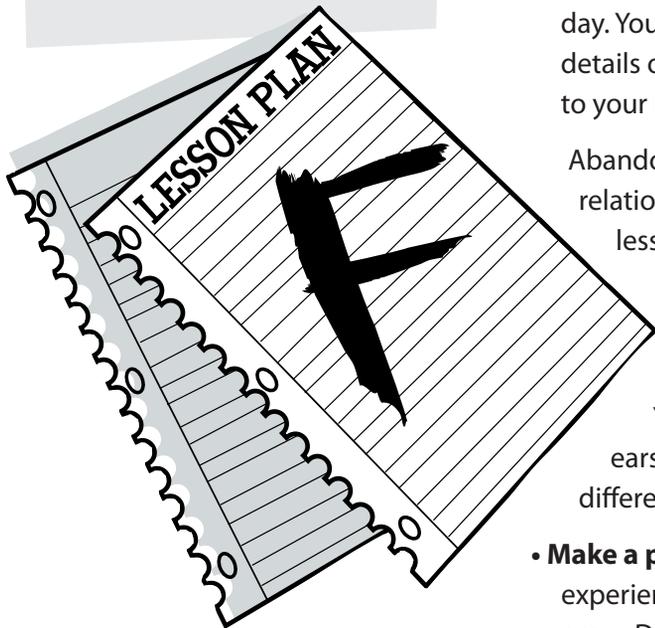
# It's Not Whether or Not You'll Fail



“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8–9).

• Why do we need God's grace in our teaching?

• How should we treat failures in our teaching?



## ▼ Training Session

Lessons will fail. You'll fail.

Don't beat yourself up. God extends his grace in our failures—do your best to do the same for yourself.

The good news: You'll succeed lots more than you'll fail!

But when you do fail, you can learn a lot from what went wrong.

- **Ask yourself questions.** When you ask questions, you'll find the root of the failure—and you won't repeat it next time. Ask: Why didn't that work? What got in the way? What can I learn from that flop?

Unless you identify what it was that failed, you might end up doing it again. You may also identify the failure with the whole lesson—and forget about all the amazing strengths of the lesson and your teaching.

- **Respond in gentle love.** There are times where your whole plan—your lesson, your hopes for the day—will fall flat on its face. It's the nature of teaching. How you respond will end up being the real lesson that day. You're modeling Christ's love and character for children. The details of lesson plans—in success or failure—will pale in comparison to your love and gentleness.

Abandon your plan when the lesson collapses, and spend time on relationships. Play with the kids. Talk to them. You can revisit your lesson another time.

- **Talk about it.** Talk your feelings of failure over with another teacher or your ministry leader. It'll help you to hear that other people experience similar feelings of failure. You'll be able to run what happened by an objective set of ears. And you may gain some valuable insight into what to do differently.

- **Make a plan for change.** God handed you this little learning experience for a reason. Praise him for the opportunity to grow. Then grow. Do you need to prepare a little more? Or less? Do you need more of a variety of activities? Are your kids begging for a different routine? Could you handle a situation better next time?

In the end, realize it's really OK. Failure now sets you up for success later!



Take this training deeper as you think over these questions:

- When something doesn't go as planned, how can you let go of that frustration?
- How can you seek the gems of learning in the mud of failure?

## ▼ Journal

*Lord, help me to forgive myself...*

The ministry you're doing as a teacher isn't easy—and it's a job that'll send you curveballs almost every week. Children are more impacted by the time you spend with them than the perfect lesson, perfectly executed.

## ▼ Application

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Create an emergency response plan to help you deal with failure. List steps you'll follow when a lesson or an attitude or a behavior flops.

For example, step one might be to take a deep breath. Step two could be asking God for guidance in the moment and taking action. Step three could be reflecting on what went wrong. Step four might be talking to a specific person about the problem. And step five could be an action plan to make the appropriate change.

Keep your emergency response plan handy for the next failure. Then turn failure into success.