

FOCUS ON FAITH

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PRESSING ON

I've always been fascinated by what motivates people in life. The commitment and desire; the willingness to strive against the odds; the passion to create something better in a whole host of different environments, be it business, politics, sport, education, social welfare and many other areas.

The dedication demonstrated by many people in their lifetimes has made our lives today richer and to be honest I often ask myself the question, *"Will I achieve my full potential?"*

Often it's easy to consider giving up. When we're criticised or people don't appreciate us; when our ambitions are blocked through lack of finances or a career hits the *"glass ceiling"*; when ill-health or a tragedy occurs, we tend to re-evaluate our circumstances and maybe the doubts set in.

I really admire those people who face head on the difficulties that life brings and who resolve that no matter what happens they will carry on. Their single-minded determination may in itself cause problems for people around them but the *"fire in their belly"* that drives them to pay the cost that their passion to succeed requires, inspires me to *"keep on keeping on"*.

There are numerous examples of people who pushed through the barrier of failure and went on to achieve success in life:

- Albert Einstein's grades were so poor that he left school aged 15 with the words of a teacher ringing in his ears, *"Einstein, you will never amount to anything!"* Yet he went on to become a Nobel Prize-winner and probably the most noted scientist of the 20th century.
- Thomas Edison's teacher told him he was *"too stupid to learn anything"* but after more than 9,000 unsuccessful experiments he eventually created the first successful light bulb and went on to become one of the world's most prolific inventors with more than 1,000 patents to his name.
- Marilyn Monroe was dropped by one of Hollywood's greatest film companies because a producer thought she was unattractive and couldn't act.
- Lance Armstrong was diagnosed with cancer that riddled his body – in his lungs he had cancer cells the size of golf balls! With incredible determination he not only

overcame the cancer but went on to win the Tour de France for 6 consecutive years.

- John Grisham's first manuscript was rejected by 16 agents and 12 publishers yet he is now one of the world's most successful authors with numerous No. 1 best-selling novels.

And there are so many others who defied the odds, broke through the barriers and achieved their life's purpose. They demonstrated the old adage that *"just because you fail at something, it doesn't make you a failure."* Even through the setbacks and the rejections, the experiments that backfired and the seemingly impossible stakes, they persevered to the end and succeeded.

So what about you and me?

Where do we fit in and how does faith help?

The Bible recounts many life stories where adversity is overcome though everything seems to have gone pear-shaped. All of the key

characters we read about faced opposition and battles. The apostle Paul describes how he was beaten numerous times, shipwrecked, faced starvation and dehydration, was ridiculed and falsely accused, arrested and imprisoned on 4 occasions.

Examples such as these give me inspiration and hope because no matter what comes my way, other people have faced similar situations and come through them. The apostle Paul wrote, ***"Endurance builds character, which gives us a hope that will never disappoint us"*** (Romans 5:4-5).

My hope and prayer is that you and I will have the endurance and patience, the determination and will to keep pressing on in our relationships and family lives as well as in our desire to make a positive difference to other people's lives.

And whatever we may be facing right now, the words of Jesus can sustain us. He declared, ***"Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God."***

"...just because you fail at something, it doesn't make you a failure"

To find out more about the Christian faith and resources available plus information on services at local Churches together with contact details, please log on to www.lifting-jesus-higher.org.uk.