

# Be Encouraged

## You Don't Have To Fail

Reading: [Romans 8:37-39](#)

Text: [2 Corinthians 1:12-2:17](#)

Introduction:

### A. Failure: what a bad word!

1. We don't like it. We don't like those who do it!
2. Does the name Roy Wiggle Mean anything to you?<sup>1</sup>
3. That's just a game. Failure comes in all shapes and sizes.
4. Financial failure, Marital Failure, Academic Failure.
5. Today we need to know that we don't have to fail!

### B. "We despaired even of life!"

1. How could they go on?
2. Because he knew the Lord and lived for Him.

## 1. A Clear Conscience

### A. Live in the hope of Jesus' return [v. 14](#)

1. "in the Day of the Lord Jesus"
2. [v. 8-10](#)
3. Remember Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego?
4. [Daniel 3:16-18](#)—"But if not, ..."

### B. Be serious about God's will [v. 17-18](#)

1. "God is faithful"
2. Even BEFORE Paul was baptized into Christ in Damascus, he wanted only to do the will of God. He tried to stop Christians because He thought it was right!
3. Afterward, he was even more zealous for God through Jesus!

### C. Glorify Jesus Christ [v. 19-20](#)

1. "We preached Jesus Christ, the Son of God!"
2. Everything is in Him!
3. [1 John 5:11-12](#)—And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

### D. Be on good terms with the Spirit of God [v. 21-22](#)

1. "Sealed by the Holy Spirit"
2. Only those who have obeyed the Gospel. [Acts 2:38](#)
3. He will only live in the hearts of those with clear consciences.

## 2. A Compassionate Heart

### A. Love puts others first

1. [2 Corinthians 1:23-2:4](#)
2. He was concerned about them and their well being spiritually.
3. As an apostle having the right to command, but instead pleading in love.

### B. Love helps others to grow [v. 5-6](#)

1. Love requires discipline: but not abuse, and not neglect!
2. "Peace at any price" is not Biblical
3. There cannot be spiritual peace without purity!
4. Love disciplines because discipline saves!

### C. Love also forgives and encourages [v. 7-11](#)

1. They forgave him for his own sake.
2. They forgave him for the Lord's sake
3. They forgave him for the church's sake
4. Satan uses all opportunities: If the church or any person in the church carries an unforgiving spirit, Satan will use that attitude as a beachhead for new assaults against the church.

## 3. A Conquering Faith

### A. Let God lead [v. 12-13](#)

1. An open door? Where? [Acts 16:8-10](#)—where he met Lydia
2. It may be someone you know or don't know.
3. It may be at a moment of discomfort or enjoyment.
4. It may be in a place you've always known, or never seen.
5. Be prepared!
6. [Galatians 6:10](#)—Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.
7. [1 Peter 3:15](#)—But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

### B. Be sure of God's victory [v. 14-17](#)

1. Contrary to popular thought, God will never let us down!
2. [v. 14](#)—Now thanks *be* to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ
3. Be sure that victory is always in Christ!
4. If you are not in Christ, believe and be baptized into Him today!

<sup>1</sup>Probably one of the most famous football stories of all time is the story about Wrong-Way Wriggles. New Years Day, 1929, Georgia Tech and UCLA square off against each other in the Rose Bowl. In the First half of that game Roy Wriggles recovered a Tech fumble and he somehow got confused and disoriented and got up and started running in the wrong direction. He ran 65 yards in the wrong direction only to be tackled by one of his teammates just before reaching the goal line. There, unable to move the ball, UCLA lined up to punt and Georgia Tech blocked the kick and scored a safety and that turned out to be margin of victory for Georgia Tech in the game that day.

At half-time everybody was wondering what coach Price was going to say to Roy Wriggles. The players left the field and they filed into the locker room. The UCLA locker room was pretty glum. All of the players were seated on sweaty rows and toweling off, all of them, that is, except for Roy Wriggles. Wriggles was in the farthest corner of the locker room and he had draped a blanket over his head, sobbing like a baby.

Coaches typically have a lot to say at halftime. They sometimes peel paint off the walls with the heat of their voices. They sometimes try to pick up the motivational level. It turns out that Coach Price hardly said anything. There was just an eerie silence in the locker room. Finally, someone pounded on the locker room door and yelled "Three minutes until the start of the second half!" At that point the coach stood up and said, "Guys, the same eleven guys that started the first half will start the second. Let's go out and play football."

The players got and started to the field except for Roy Wriggles. He didn't move. He simply stayed where he was with his head still covered by the blanket, still absorbed in his self-pity. When the locker room was finally empty of everyone except for Price and Wriggles, the coach called his name and there was no answer. He walked over to him and he threw the blanket back and he grabbed him by the shoulders and said, "Roy didn't you hear me? I said, 'The same team that started the first half is starting the second.'"

Wriggles looked up with big tears running down his cheeks and said, "Coach, I can't go into that stadium to save my life. I've disgraced UCLA. I've disgraced you. I've disgraced myself. I can't go back."

Coach Price said, "Roy, the game's only half over. We're going upstairs."

Roy Wriggles went back to that game. And by all accounts, the people who saw that game particularly the Georgia Tech players who were on the field against him said they never saw a man play a half in football like the second half of that game; that Roy Wriggles played like a man possessed.

(This story is told by Rubel Shelly in a sermon he called, "How to Overcome Failure.")