

EAST CAROLINA TEACHERS TRAINING SCHOOL
GREENVILLE, N. C.
Robert H. Wright, Chapel

CHAIRMAN
APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE
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I want to talk to you this morning about *turning a Failure*
into a Success. You know some of the world's greatest leaders have
made very poor beginnings. Now, I would not recommend to you that you
try to make a poor beginning in order that you may be a great world
leader. But when Stonewall Jackson was taking his military training he
made the nickname for himself of -----^{how}Fool Jackson -- a fool,
and some of those who called him "Fool" as a student later had to fight
him as a general and they got whipped time after time. He changed the
name from "Fool" to "Stonewall". He started out as a failure. Edison,
the world's wizard in some respects, certainly a genius, at least for
hard work, was classified by one of his teachers as a dunce. You know
we teachers make mistakes sometimes, but he wasn't brilliant at all. It
did not look like there was any promise in him. There was, but it wasn't
found until later, and he has done more perhaps in an electrical way than
any person living or who has ever lived.

I have made a failure on this particular task, on this particular
subject, or this particular whatever it may be, and I want to know how to
turn that failure into success. "It wasn't my fault, they didn't teach
me the thing in the right way." I begin to find fault and complain of
everything there is in the world, and sometimes I have even heard people
say, "you can't hold that against me, if God did not give me any more sense
than He gave me". In other words, they hold it against every human being
they can find, and when they can't find a human being to blame, they blame
God Almighty. They are determined to justify themselves with being a
failure. A person with that determination is going to succeed admirably
and become a perfect failure, graded 100 per cent no good. Fault finding

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does not get you any where. If a teacher begins to find fault with a pupil she won't get anywhere with them. It does not do the child any good, and it puts you in the wrong attitude. You won't turn a failure into success by trying to put the blame on some one else. "I worked just as hard as I could on that, and I know I am worth more than that five." He or she, whichever may be the teacher, did not grade me right. I wonder if you really think that any person with a heart and soul in him that will lead him to teach school is so little as to have it in for you and to try to fail you. Why it is absolutely preposterous. When you go to teaching you are going to find, if you have put the blame on your teacher, they are going to begin putting the blame on you, because what you sow you are very likely going to reap. It isn't true, you are just dodging the issue.

{ At this point a noise was created by snow sliding off the roof adjacent to the auditorium. The noise was so great the speaker had to pause for a moment.

Why, that kind of person would say that it was this hot speech I am making that made the snow melt and fall off the roof of the house. It isn't so, my speech is not that hot. In other words, they take anything that happens at the moment as an excuse. That does not get a person anywhere in the world except down hill.

But how am I to act, if I want to turn my failure to success, let it be failure in school work or failure in some other job, it does not make any difference what the failure is, there is a pretty general rule as to what should be my attitude. First, I should search myself, not place the blame on any ~~other~~ one, not including myself, but to give my individual self a thorough raking over,, just lay myself down and analyze my attitude and be honest. You know there are a lot of folks in this world who won't be honest with themselves -- just look at my own individual way of reacting toward that particular job, whatever it is I failed on. If it is a subject in college or if it is a task out in the world, it is all the same,

analyze the task and analyze myself, see what I did, find out where I did the thing wrong, find out just what I could have done to have made the failure turn out a success, give my individual attitude a real searching. I wonder if you ever saw yourself. I am not talking about in the mirror, I know you do that.

(I will pick this up tomorrow right here and go on.)