

"FAILURE"

I guess you could call him a "failure." He lived an abbreviated life here on this planet, and for most of those years we know nothing of him. His father was a builder, and his mother was a housewife, giving birth to numerous other children through the years. Some would say that this young man's "pedigree" was doubtful, at best, but he was a sober, studious child, who never seemed to cause any trouble. Well, except for that time he got lost for a couple of days in the Capitol City. After that episode, he seems to have lived a quiet, uneventful life for almost twenty years. We suspect that he learned his father's trade and became a successful builder and craftsman during that period of young adulthood, although some skeptics suspect he might have been a lazy slug, living off the government and his family and friends, content to ride that old motorcycle, sit around drinking beer, and watching "American Chopper" on TV. There is nothing of his craft that exists today, and nothing of any value to the world still stands that would be attributed to him.

When he was about thirty, after the death of his father, this "failure" decided that he would go out among the public and do some good. Maybe he got religion, or he had a guilty conscience, but whatever the reason, he left home and decided to make his own way in life, helping other people - like a community activist or something. By many accounts, he did embark on this part of his life out of a deep personal sense of religious leading. The skeptics, many of whom may be reading this account, believe that his family got tired of his antics, and forced him to leave - to go get a real job! He headed out to where his cousin was holding some self-improvement meetings, then wandered off and got lost, this time for over a month. When he showed up in time for another cousin's wedding, he single-handedly had to provide for additional refreshments, but failed to get any recognition for it. What good is it to do good for someone, and fail to get the credit? Even when he returned to his hometown, people didn't give him any respect, and he had to move away. People wanted him to do good things for them, but they never would give him respect, just more demands for stuff. Once, he provided food for a crowd of over 5000 people, and hardly got a thank you. In fact, the same people wanted more food the next day. I guess they thought he was from the government, or something. Through the years, this man did more good for the people of his country than anyone had ever done. People's lives were so much better than ever before, but there were many who wanted to get rid of him because they thought he was a threat to their own positions of authority. Skeptics thought he was subversive, wanting to stir up a revolution, which would be bad for business. He had a knack for attracting crowds, but it seemed that he could not, or would not keep them interested, unless he was doing some gigantic give away, or putting on a show for the curiosity seekers. If he was trying to gain a following, he was a total "failure". At the end of the day, there were few who stayed with him, and most of those were mainly with him to get whatever they could out of his activities. One dark night, this man and his friends were accosted by the authorities in a public park, and he was arrested after a minor scuffle. Apparently, even his close friends fled the scene, and left him to face the music all alone. The charges that led to his incarceration included numerous incidents of breaking the laws of the land, claiming to be someone he was not, and advocating the overthrow of the government. At the time in which he lived, judgment was quick, justice was swift, and execution was immediate, mandated that very day for the one deemed a criminal and a traitor.

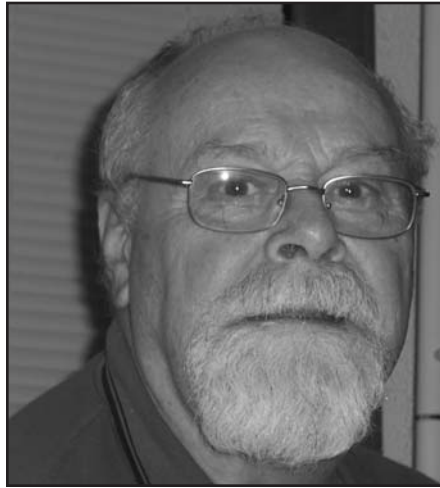
One young man, with the great promise of a happy, productive, and beneficial life, had seen all of the good deeds he had done come to nothing. His relatively short life of 33 years sadly ended with the thud of nails being driven through his flesh - the thud of the cross lifted up and set in its cradle. His weeping mother and a few friends stood nearby, and watched his life of promise slowly ebb away, his blood dripping meaninglessly upon the ground. A life with so much to offer, now ending in abject "failure". What success could he claim? What accomplishments would he leave as a legacy? To the skeptic, his accidental, random life, a life birthed by chance, a life with no purpose or meaning, ended in ignominious "failure", and is lost in the forever of oblivion. No one would remember his deeds, his death, even his name. "Failure!"

Are you kidding me? Everybody knows about him. People say his - yes, his - name, all the time. History has been changed by the influence of his life, and the great things he has done. Yes, has done! He is still at work today through millions who have been changed by his power, through his name. Millions of books have been written

about him, zillions of speeches have been given concerning his life, deeds, death, and resurrection. His archenemy, Satan, has convinced many that he was a "failure" because he died on that cross. Satan did not recognize the significance of those droplets of blood which bestowed forgiveness on those who trust in this one. Satan did not know that this one's death successfully purchased Eternal life for millions who would believe on his name. Satan did not anticipate this one's unmitigated success in escaping the bonds of death, and rising alive, from the grave. Satan could not foresee that he, himself would crash and burn as an utter "failure" in his bid to enslave the whole human race in hell for eternity. Satan wants to fool every reader of this article into believing that they can have success in life by following Satan's own example, instead of the one who brought victory out of defeat, and success out of "failure". You know that what I am saying is true, and that you can be saved from the "failures" of sin, to a life of eternal existence in the presence of God. It will take faith to believe, and God will give you grace and faith if you will call on him today. Someday, every living thing will acknowledge the name of the one who was successful even over sin and death, but for some it will be too late. Don't wait - trust him now!

Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:9-11.
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