

# The God Of The Second Opportunity

*“The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai:  
‘Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it,  
because its wickedness has come up before me.’”  
Jonah 1:1-2 (NIV)*

*“Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time:  
‘Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.’”  
Jonah 3:1-2 (NIV)*

Scripture is full of incidents where the Lord picks up one of His fallen children, dusts them off and gives them another possibility to succeed. How wonderful for people like Jonah, Peter (Matthew 16-17), John Mark (Acts 15). Usually, as in the cases cited, we see the individual seizing the new opportunity to succeed and making good on it.

Sadly, some of the Lord's people, leaders included, prefer to leave footprints on top of the fallen than to place a strong hand underneath them and lift them up. Why do we “Shoot our own wounded” as one person so vividly worded it?

We must be compassionate toward fallen believers just as the Lord has

been toward us before we became followers of the Saviour. We all need grace, unmerited favour, on a daily basis.

If you have stumbled, look for help first from some other believer who has travelled the same road and somehow got back on track. Ask them to tell you how they were restored. How did the Lord offer them a second situation in which to succeed? Then look for your new opportunity to succeed for your beloved Lord and God.

For those who have not fallen so obviously I encourage you to seek out hurting ones and offer to help them break the cycle of failure. Your Master came to call sinners to repentance. Our Master is meek and lowly of heart.

Imitate Him as you seek to mend broken hearts. To lift up the downcast is at the heart of Christian ministry.

Afflicted saint,  
to Christ draw near,  
Your Savior's gracious  
promise hear;  
His faithful Word  
you can believe:  
That as your days  
your strength shall be.  
Your faith is weak,  
your foes are strong,  
And if the conflict  
should be long,  
The Lord will make  
the tempter flee  
That as your days  
your strength shall be.

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