



Failing Forward

Mindful Failing

Recap

*Failure tests our “**why**”*

*Western Christianity is good at
answering the **what** and the **how**, but
only a disciple can truly answer the **why**.*

Recap

*Like many great leaders, Peter **survived himself**. With Jesus' guidance, Peter's fertile and active mind matured. **Ken Boa***

Recap

*Then Jesus told him, “**Follow me.**” vs 19*

walk

run

jog

crawl

inch

sprint

all of the above throughout our entire lives

*Failure is **universal**. We all have
experienced it and felt it.*



“Failing Forward” is an attempt at reframing our failures from shame and guilt to learning and growing

Failure isn't an “if” it is a “when”

If we don't reframe our failures then they will reframe us



Life Expectancy of a Pastor, Carolyn Moore

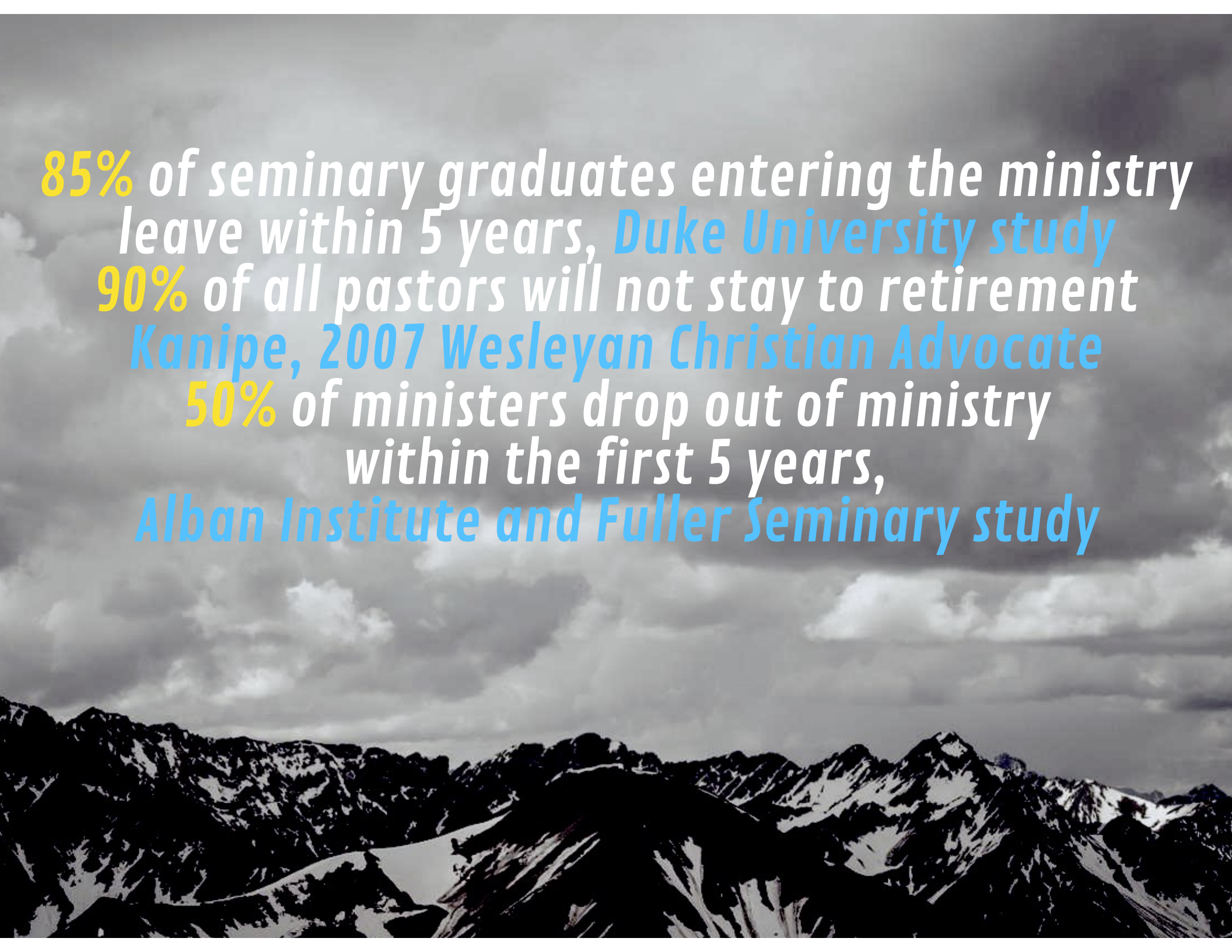
What **sane** person would want to deal with competing demands, the **constant fear of failure** and the **chronic loss of sleep** (not to mention the loss of weekends)? And those are first-world, 21st-century struggles.

33% felt burned out within their first five years of ministry.

90% feel unqualified or poorly prepared for ministry.

90% work more than 50 hours a week

**hundreds of Pastors leave ministry monthly*



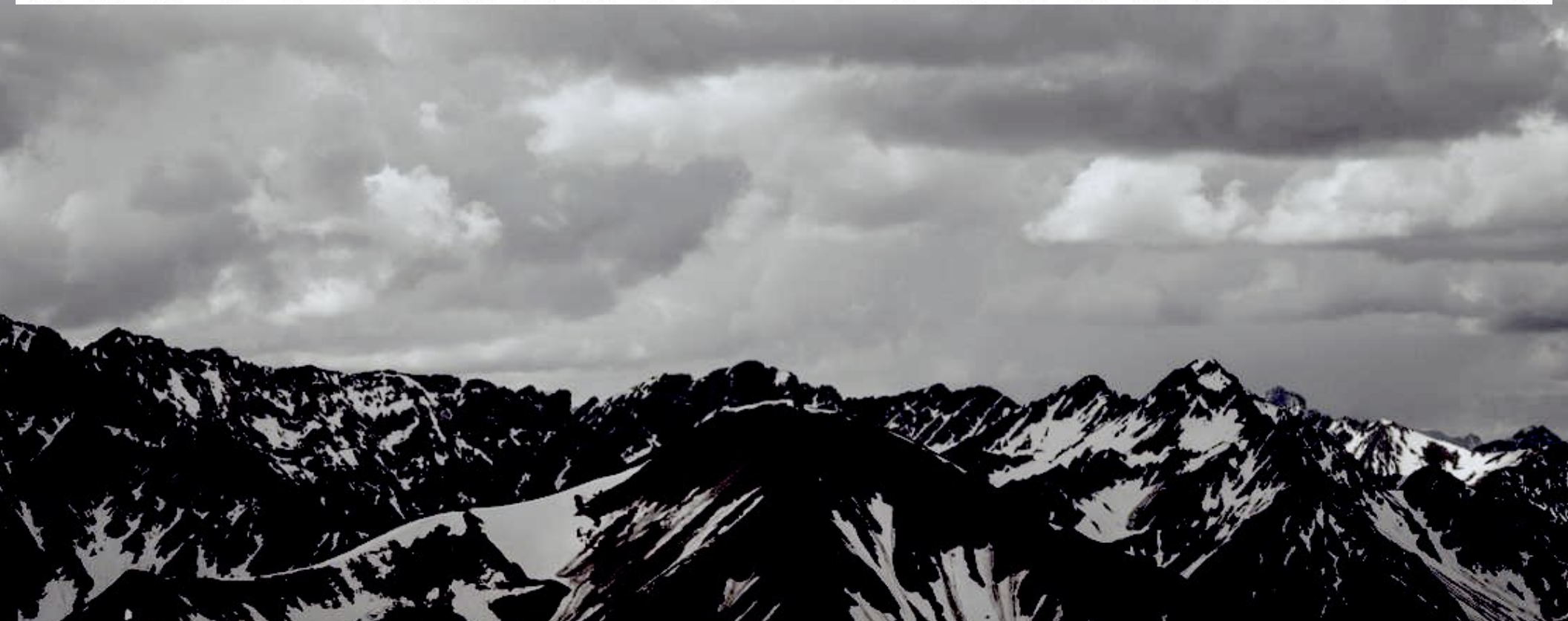
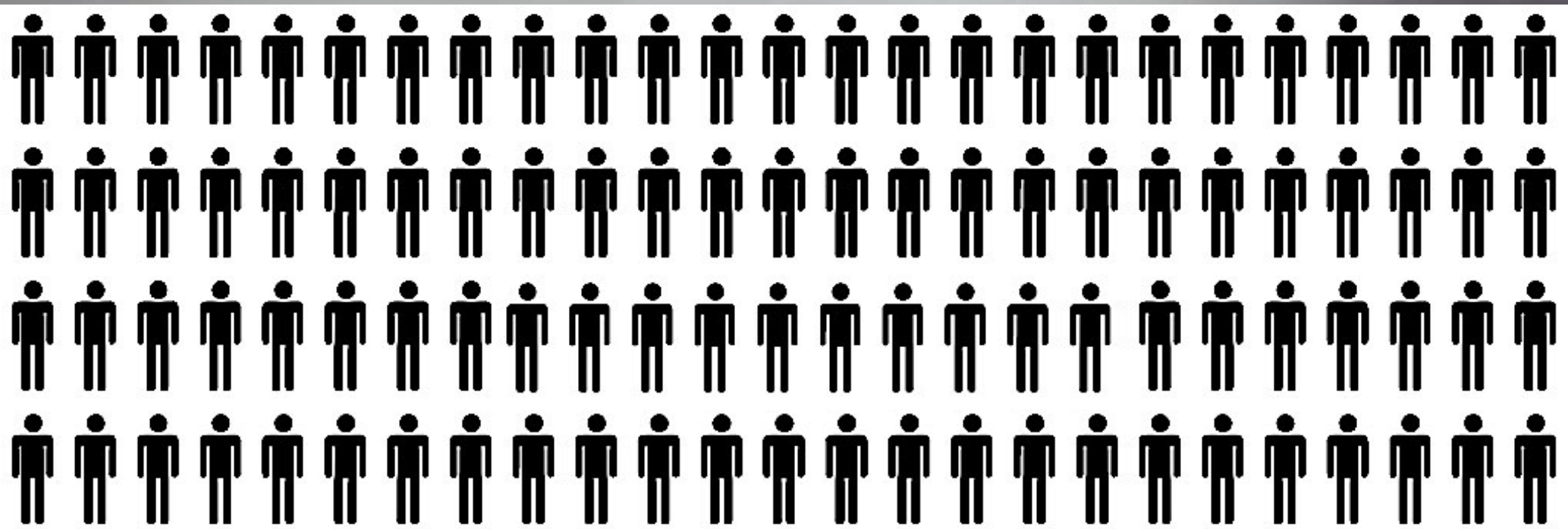
85% of seminary graduates entering the ministry
leave within 5 years, *Duke University study*
90% of all pastors will not stay to retirement
Kanipe, 2007 Wesleyan Christian Advocate
50% of ministers drop out of ministry
within the first 5 years,
Alban Institute and Fuller Seminary study

The findings have surfaced with ominous regularity over the last few years, and with little notice: Members of the clergy now suffer from obesity, hypertension and depression at rates higher than most Americans. In the last decade, their use of antidepressants has risen, while their life expectancy has fallen.

Many would change jobs if they could.

The New York Times, Paul Vitello, AUG. 1, 2010





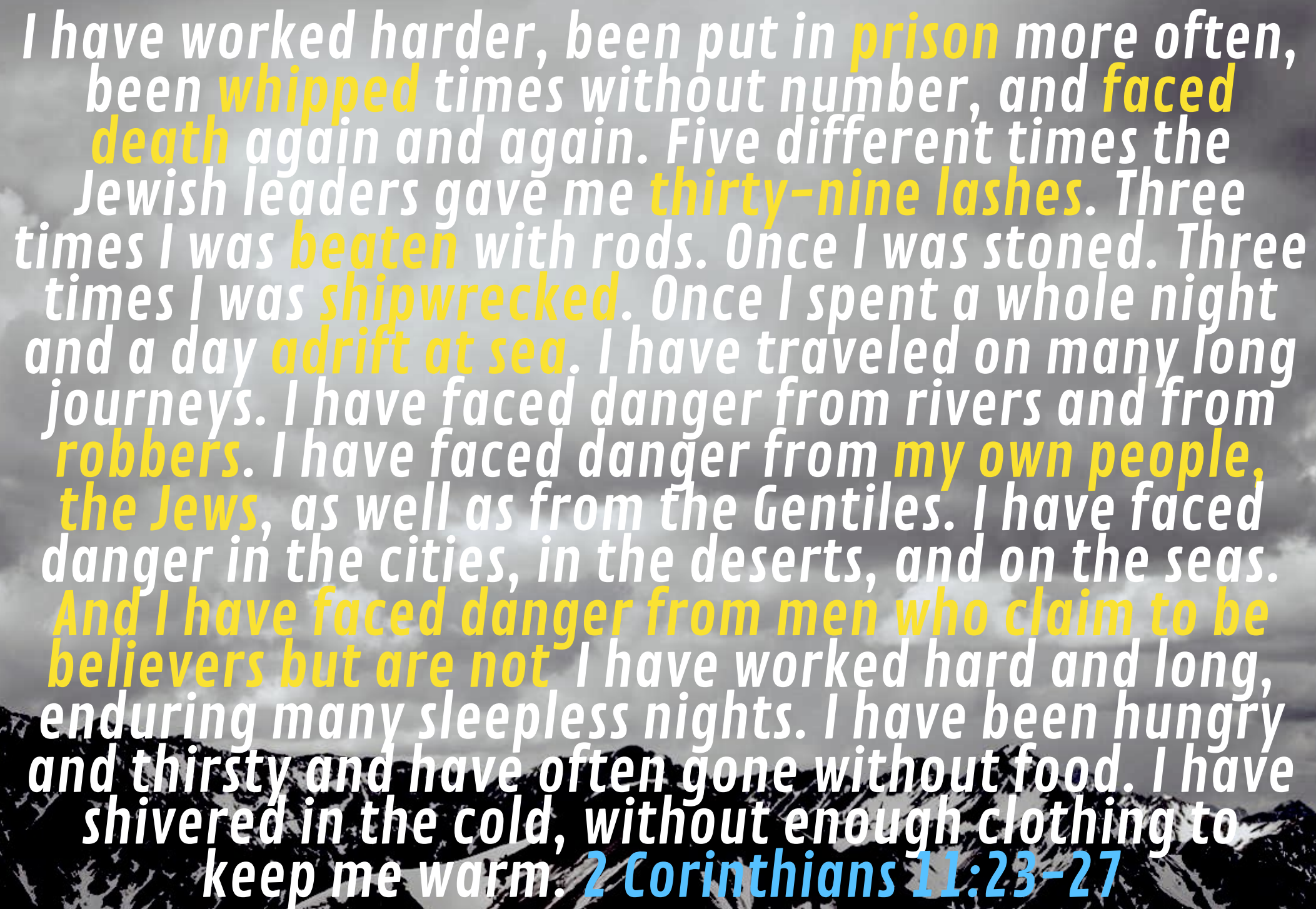
*Paul endured both **repetitive** failures and **relational** failures. What would have destroyed the faith of many others only seemed to grow Paul's*

Paul is a lesson in surviving failure



An **enduring perseverance** like Paul's **doesn't happen accidentally** and it doesn't happen overnight and it doesn't happen by sitting on the sidelines. An enduring perseverance comes by trials, by bearing fruit, by faithfulness and by holding strong to the words and love of Jesus that won't allow our burdens to become too heavy to keep us from following Him. **Eugene Adkins**





I have worked harder, been put in **prison** more often, been **whipped** times without number, and **faced death** again and again. Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me **thirty-nine lashes**. Three times I was **beaten** with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was **shipwrecked**. Once I spent a whole night and a day **adrift at sea**. I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from **robbers**. I have faced danger from **my own people, the Jews**, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. **And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not** I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm. **2 Corinthians 11:23-27**

Repetitive Failure

So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud.

2 Corinthians 12:7

***Three** different times I begged the Lord to take it away. Each time he said, “My **grace** is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” vs 8-9*



Repetitive Failure

And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. **I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't.** I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway.

Romans 7:18–19

I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong... **Oh, what a miserable person I am!** Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? **vs 21, 24**



Relational Failure

*Paul and his companions then left Paphos by ship for Pamphylia, landing at the port town of Perga. There **John Mark** left them and returned to Jerusalem. **Acts 13:3***

Relational Failure

After some time Paul said to Barnabas, “Let’s go back and visit each city where we previously preached the word of the Lord, to see how the new believers are doing.” Barnabas agreed and wanted to take along John Mark. But Paul disagreed strongly, since John Mark had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in their work. **Their disagreement was so sharp that they separated.** Barnabas took John Mark with him and sailed for Cyprus. **Acts 15:36–39**



Relational Failure

As you know, **everyone from the province of Asia has deserted me**—even Phygelus and Hermogenes
2 Timothy 1:15

Timothy, please come as soon as you can. Demas has **deserted** me because he loves the things of this life and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has **gone** to Galatia, and Titus has **gone** to Dalmatia. **2 Timothy 4:9–10**

Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm, but the Lord will judge him for what he has done. Be careful of him, for he fought against everything we said. The first time I was brought before the judge, no one came with me. **Everyone abandoned me.**
May it not be counted against them. vs 14–16

Mindful Failures

I felt so guilty that **I decided to hide this failure from my conversations and my resume for years.** I didn't know other failed entrepreneurs, and I thought I was the only loser in the world. **Leticia Gasca, TED, June 2018**

But what does it mean to fail mindfully? It means being aware of the **impact**, of the **consequences** of the failure.. Being aware of the lessons learned. And being aware of **the responsibility to share those learnings with the world.**



Mindful Failures

Being more serious, that night I realized that A: I wasn't the only loser in the world, and B: we all have hidden failures. Please tell me if that is not true. That night was like an exorcism for me. **I realized that sharing your failures makes you stronger, not weaker.** And being open to my vulnerability **helped me connect with others in a deeper and more meaningful way** and embrace life lessons I wouldn't have learned previously.



Paul's Secret to Surviving Failure

*So now there is no **condemnation** for those who belong to Christ Jesus. **Romans 8:1***

*Our failures don't **condemn** us, they teach us. Failures aren't final. They have no power to remove us from Jesus*



Paul's Secret to Surviving Failure

*I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: **Forgetting** the past and looking **forward** to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. **Philippians 3:12-14***

Failure tempts us with distraction

Paul's Secret to Surviving Failure

For I am the **least** of all the apostles. In fact, I'm **not even worthy** to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted God's church. **1 Corinthians 15:9**

Though I am the **least deserving of all God's people**, he graciously gave me the privilege of telling the Gentiles about the endless treasures available to them in Christ.

Ephesians 3:8

This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—and **I am the worst of them all**. But God had mercy on me so that Christ **Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners**. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life. **1 Timothy 1:15-16**

Paul never denied his past

Paul's Secret to Surviving Failure

*Only Luke is with me. Bring **Mark** with you when you come, for he will be helpful to me in my ministry. **2 Timothy 4:11***

*Or is it only **Barnabas** and I who have to work to support ourselves? **1 Corinthians 9:6***

*And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved. This is what our **beloved brother Paul** also wrote to you with the wisdom God gave him **2 Peter 3:15***

Though Paul felt the sting of relational failure, he also left room for reconciliation of relationship

*“And so, to get rid of this rumour, **Nero** set up [i.e., falsely accused] as the culprits and punished with the utmost refinement of cruelty a class hated for their abominations, **who are commonly called Christians**.. Besides being put to death they were made to serve as objects of amusement; they were clothed in the hides of beasts and torn to death by dogs; others were crucified, others set on fire to serve to illuminate the night when daylight failed.” **Tacitus (c. A.D. 60–120), Annals (XV.44)***



The foundation of Paul's life

*I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as **garbage**, so that I could gain Christ and become one with him.*

Philippians 3:7-9

*Paul understood what we have forgotten, either Jesus is worth **everything** or He becomes worth **nothing***