

## New Year, New You, New Do #4 — “New Do”

*Intentions, Failure, Connection, Taking the Next Right Step, BHAGGS*

Dave Geldart | February 1, 2026 | Tru Community Church

**Announcements:** Welcome, Connect Cards, Giving, B: Financial Update, B Elder Exit Thx & Prayer

### 1. [1] INTRO: WHEN GOOD INTENTIONS COLLIDE WITH REAL LIFE

- a. **You know that feeling when something looks simple at first**
  - i. You see it online.
  - ii. Clean lines. Minimalist design. No clutter. No chaos.
  - iii. **And you think, Yeah. I can do that.**
- b. **Then you open the box.**
  - i. Suddenly there are about a hundred pieces.
  - ii. A tiny little wrench.
  - iii. Instructions with no words.
  - iv. And the growing awareness that something is about to go wrong.
- c. **IKEA furniture always looks easier than it actually is.**
  - i. You didn't intend to quit.
  - ii. You didn't plan to get frustrated.
  - iii. You didn't expect to be missing a screw halfway through.
- d. **But somewhere between intending to build it and actually doing it, the experience got harder than you imagined.**
- e. And IKEA isn't the only place this shows up.
  - i. You start a home project that seemed manageable—until you're halfway in.
  - ii. You download an app with great intentions and stop using it after a week.
  - iii. You plan to reach out to someone, have a conversation, take a step—and then the moment passes.
- f. Not because you didn't care. Not because you were opposed.
  - i. But because **doing something is often harder than deciding to do something.**
- g. **That gap—between good intentions and faithful action—is where many of us live.**
- h. And it shows up powerfully **in our spiritual lives.**
  - i. Most of us genuinely want to follow Jesus.
  - ii. We want to grow.
  - iii. We want to respond to God.
  - iv. We want to say yes when He nudges us.
  - v. But when the moment comes to act, something inside us hesitates.
    - 1. Sometimes for a very, very long time
- i. [2] Today we're talking about New Do – Next steps of action and obedience
  - i. **Not as pressure to do more, but as an invitation to take faithful steps with God.**
    - 1. even when those steps feel small, uncertain, or uncomfortable
- j. Because spiritual **transformation** does not happen at the level of **intention** alone.

i. **It happens when we trust God enough to begin.**

**2. [3] GRACE ALWAYS COMES FIRST**

a. Scripture is clear: God always moves first.

b. [4] Listen to one of our church's key verses: Ephesians 2:8–10:

i. **"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."**

c. Notice the order:

i. Grace comes first.

1. Salvation comes first.

2. Identity comes first.

ii. Then comes action.

d. **We do not work for grace. We work from grace.**

i. When we reverse that order, obedience becomes either exhausting or paralyzing.

1. Some of us drift into **passivity**: > "God will do it all, so I'll just wait."

2. Others drift into **performance**: > "It all depends on me, so I better not mess this up."

**a. WHICH ONE DO YOU MOST NATURALLY LEAN TOWARD?**

ii. But the gospel invites us into a **third way**.

e. [5] Paul names it clearly in Philippians 2:12–13:

i. **"Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose."**

f. **We work because God is at work.**

i. That tension—God's action and our participation—is the soil where New Do grows.

**3. (THE REAL OBSTACLE ISN'T LAZINESS — IT'S FEAR)**

a. **For many of us, the real obstacle -- the thing holding us back from next steps of obedience -- is not apathy,**

i. **It's fear.**

b. Fear of doing it wrong.

i. Fear of awkwardness.

ii. Fear of rejection.

iii. Fear of failure.

c. Underneath a lot of spiritual hesitation is a quiet, persistent thought:

i. What if I try... and it doesn't work?

d. So we delay.

i. We wait for clarity.

- ii. We wait for confidence.
- iii. We wait to feel ready.
- e. **And over time, waiting begins to feel like wisdom**
  - i. **when it's actually fear** wearing spiritual language.
- f. Which means if we're going to grow, **we need a healthy theology of failure.**

#### 4. [6] A THEOLOGY OF FAILURE

- a. When you read Scripture honestly, one thing becomes very clear:
  - i. **Failure is not an interruption to God's work,**
  - ii. **It is often part of God's formation.**
- b. [7] Consider the people God consistently uses:
  - i. **Abraham** gets tired of waiting on God and takes matters into his own hands.
  - ii. **Moses** doubts his ability, resists his calling, and later disobeys God publicly.
  - iii. **David** fails morally, relationally, and leadership-wise in ways that ripple outward.
  - iv. **Peter** misunderstands Jesus repeatedly—and then denies even knowing Him.
  - v. **Paul** begins his story trying to serve God by persecuting and killing Christians.
- c. If failure disqualified people from participating in God's work, Scripture would be very short.
- d. And yet, God continues to call, restore, and send.
- e. Why?
- f. Because in Scripture, failure is rarely disqualifying.
  - i. Refusal to keep walking is.
- g. [8] **Failure is really only failure if you give up.**
- h. Failure is an event.
  - i. **Faithfulness is a posture.**
- i. And Scripture consistently shows us that God is far more interested in faithfulness over time than flawless obedience in the moment.
- j. This matters deeply—because **many of us are stuck not because we don't love God, but because we're afraid of failing Him.**
- k. If fear is the thing that keeps us from taking steps of obedience, then we need to listen carefully to how Scripture speaks to fear—especially fear of failure.
  - i. Because many of us carry a quiet assumption into our spiritual lives: If I mess this up too badly, God will be done with me.
  - ii. We may never say that out loud. But it shows up in how cautiously we live.
  - iii. We hold back. We hesitate. We stay disconnected.
  - iv. So let's slow down and look carefully at how God actually deals with failure.

#### 5. [9] FAILURE IN SCRIPTURE IS RARELY FINAL

- a. One of the most consistent patterns in Scripture is this:
  - i. **God does not abandon people at the point of their failure.**
  - ii. **He meets them there.**
- b. Think about Peter.

- i. Peter is bold. Impulsive. Confident.
- ii. He is often the first to speak—and frequently the first to be wrong.
- iii. He steps out of the boat...and then sinks.
- iv. He confesses Jesus as the Messiah...and then rebukes Him.
- v. He promises Jesus his dying loyalty...and then denies 3x even knowing Him.
- c. **If you or I were writing the story, Peter's denial would be the end of his leadership.**
  - i. **But it isn't.**
- d. In John 21, after the resurrection, Jesus goes looking for Peter.
  - i. Not to shame him.
    - 1. Not to lecture him.
    - 2. But to restore him.**
  - ii. Three times Jesus asks, "Do you love me?"
    - 1. Three times Peter answers.
  - iii. And three times Jesus responds, "Feed my sheep."
  - iv. Jesus doesn't pretend the failure didn't happen.
    - 1. But He also doesn't treat it as the final word.
  - v. Failure becomes the place where Peter learns humility, dependence, and grace.
  - vi. The calling remains.
  - vii. The relationship remains.
  - viii. The mission remains.
- e. That pattern shows us something essential about the heart of God.

## 6. [10] CONDEMNATION VS. CONVICTION

- a. This is where **Romans 8:1 becomes** absolutely central to the Christian life:
  - i. **"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."**
- b. Condemnation says: - **You are a failure.**
  - i. Conviction says: - **You failed at that.** Come back.
- c. Condemnation isolates.
  - i. Conviction restores.
- d. One pushes you away from God.
  - i. The other draws you back.
- e. **Many believers confuse the two**—and end up living under a weight Jesus never intended them to carry.
- f. **When we stumble, the enemy's condemning voice rushes in quickly:**
  - i. "See? You're not cut out for this. Other people can do this, but not you."
  - ii. You'll never be good enough.
  - iii. "You ARE a failure"
- g. But Jesus' voice is gentler and firmer at the same time:
  - i. That wasn't life-giving. - Come back. - Let's walk forward together.
  - ii. "Stay with me. Don't leave. Let me teach you."
- h. This distinction matters because **condemnation freezes us.**

- i. **Conviction frees us to keep walking.**

## 7. [11] FAILURE AS FORMATION, NOT DISQUALIFICATION

- a. God does not wait for us to become flawless before inviting us to participate.
  - i. If He did, nothing would ever happen.
- b. **Instead, God forms us as we walk.**
- c. [12] Listen to how Paul describes this dynamic in 2 Corinthians 4:7:
  - i. **“We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.”**
- d. **THAT’S US**
- e. Jars of clay are fragile. Ordinary. Easily cracked.
  - i. That’s not a bug in the system—it’s the design.
- f. **Our weakness does not disqualify us.**
  - i. **It reveals where the power actually comes from.**
- g. Which means your fear, your hesitation, your sense of inadequacy
  - i. those are not signs that God cannot use you.
  - ii. **They are often the very places where dependence is formed.**
- h. God is far more interested in shaping your trust than showcasing your competence.
- i. When we avoid obedience because we fear failure, we miss something important:
  - i. God often uses imperfect steps to shape us more deeply than perfect plans ever could.
- j. Growth rarely happens in theory,
  - i. It happens in practice.
- k. It happens when we try, stumble, adjust, repent, and keep going.
- l. [13] James puts it this way:
  - i. **“Consider it pure joy... whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.” (James 1:2–3)**
- m. Testing produces perseverance.
  - i. Not instant success.
  - ii. Not flawless outcomes.
  - iii. Perseverance.
    - 1. The ability to keep going even in the face of failure and opposition
- n. **Which means maturity is not built by avoiding risk**
  - i. **it’s built by staying engaged when things are messy.**
- o. It means God is not standing at the finish line with crossed arms.
  - i. He is walking with us in the middle of the process.

## 8. WHAT THIS MEANS FOR “NEW DO”

- a. If this is true—if God meets us in failure rather than abandoning us—then New Do becomes less threatening.
  - i. We no longer have to wait until we feel ready.
  - ii. We don’t have to guarantee outcomes.

- iii. We don't have to protect ourselves from every possible misstep.
- iv. We can take a step—not because we're confident in ourselves—but because we trust the character of God.
  - 1. And that trust grows most often in the context of relationships.
- b. Which brings us to something just as important as obedience itself: connection.

## 9. [14] CONNECTION AND HAPPINESS

- a. If fear of failure keeps many of us from taking steps of obedience, **one of the main places that fear shows up is around relationships.**
- b. Because relationships are where things feel most unpredictable.
  - i. You can study Scripture privately.
  - ii. You can pray privately.
  - iii. You can listen to sermons privately.
  - iv. You can even attend church privately.
- c. But you cannot practice love, forgiveness, patience, or encouragement in isolation.
  - i. **Connection requires risk.**
  - ii. It requires initiative.
  - iii. It requires vulnerability.
  - iv. It requires showing up when it would be easier to stay comfortable and unseen.
- d. And yet—both Scripture and human experience tell us the same thing:
  - i. **Deep, meaningful connection is essential to human flourishing.**

## 10. WHAT ACTUALLY MAKES US HAPPY AND HEALTHY

- a. For decades, one of the longest-running studies on human flourishing has followed people across their entire lives, asking a simple but profound question:
  - i. **What actually leads to long-term happiness and health?**
  - ii. In fact there's a famous Harvard study that's been running for 87 years!
- b. The answer has been remarkably consistent:
  - i. Not money.
  - ii. Not success.
  - iii. Not comfort.
  - iv. Not personal freedom.
  - v. Not achievement of one's dreams and preferences
- c. **The strongest predictor—by far—of human health and happiness is**
  - i. [15] **deep, meaningful, relationships**
- d. People with deep, meaningful relational connections live longer, healthier, more joyful lives.
  - i. Chronic loneliness, on the other hand, is strongly associated with increased anxiety, depression, physical illness, and early death.
- e. **In other words: deep connection isn't a “nice add-on” to life. It's foundational.**
- f. And Scripture has been saying this from the very beginning.
  - i. [16] **“It is not good for the man to be alone.” (Genesis 2:18)**

- ii. We were created for shared, connected life.
  - 1. Not just romantic relationships.
  - 2. Not just family.
- iii. But knowing and being known.
  - 1. Walking together. Carrying life together.

## 11.(DISCONNECTED IN A CONNECTED WORLD)

- a. **Here's the strange paradox of our moment.**
- b. **We are more digitally connected than any generation in history—and yet many of us feel more relationally disconnected than ever.**
  - i. We have hundreds of friends who like our posts online, and vice versa.
  - ii. We can scroll endlessly.
  - iii. We can consume community from a distance.
  - iv. We can listen without engaging.
- c. And even in the church, it's possible to attend fairly faithfully while remaining deeply disconnected.
  - i. To sit in rows without ever forming circles.
  - ii. To recognize faces but not know stories.
  - iii. To worship together without actually sharing our real lives.
- d. **That kind of disconnection doesn't usually feel dramatic.**
  - i. It feels normal. Quiet. Manageable. Safe.
- e. **But over time, it hollows us out.**
  - i. And it shapes our discipleship – our growth in Christ- in subtle but powerful ways.

## 12.(THE PREFERENCE-DRIVEN BARRIER TO COMMUNITY)

- a. [17] One of the biggest obstacles to meaningful connection today isn't hostility—it's preference.
  - i. We highly value flexibility.
  - ii. We value convenience.
  - iii. We value keeping our options open.
- b. **And without realizing it,**
  - i. **we often protect our preferences at the expense of relationships.**
- c. We choose schedules over people.
  - i. Comfort over commitment.
  - ii. Autonomy over accountability.
- d. **But Scripture consistently teaches that love requires intentional limitation!**
  - i. Love binds itself.
  - ii. Love commits.
  - iii. Love shows up even when it's inconvenient.
  - iv. Love pays the price.

- e. [18] Phil 2:3 (MSG) - “Don’t push your way to the front; don’t sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don’t be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand.”
- f. Our put more succinctly:
  - i. [19] “Serve one another humbly in love.” (Galatians 5:13)
  - ii. **Humility always costs us something.**
    - 1. Usually starting with our **preferences**.
- g. **Which means real community will almost always feel inconvenient at first.**
  - i. It will require rearranging schedules.
  - ii. Saying no to some things so we can say yes to people.
  - iii. Choosing presence over efficiency.
  - iv. **And presence over preferences.**
- h. That doesn’t mean it’s wrong.
  - i. Often, it means it’s real.

### 13.(NEW DO AS A STEP TOWARD CONNECTION)

- a. **For many of us, New Do is not primarily about doing more religious activity.**
- b. [20] It’s about choosing connection over isolation.
  - i. Choosing to move toward people instead of pulling back.
  - ii. Choosing to be known instead of remaining anonymous.
  - iii. **Choosing commitment to others instead of constant optionality.**
- c. This might look like:
  - i. Joining a small group or discipleship relationship
  - ii. Initiating a spiritual conversation you’ve been avoiding
  - iii. Showing up consistently instead of sporadically
  - iv. Serving alongside others rather than staying on the edges
- d. These steps may feel small.
  - i. But they are deeply formative.
  - ii. Because God often shapes us most powerfully through other people.

### 14.[21] DISCIPLESHIP AS INTENTIONAL FRIENDSHIP

- a. For many of us, the word discipleship can feel heavy or intimidating.
  - i. It sounds formal. Programmatic. Advanced.
- b. But at its core, discipleship is simply intentional friendship centered on Jesus.
  - i. It’s choosing to walk with someone.
  - ii. To read Scripture together.
  - iii. To pray honestly.
  - iv. To ask and answer real questions.
  - v. To show up consistently over time.
- c. **And that kind of discipleship doesn’t require expertise.**
  - i. **It requires presence.**
  - ii. It requires a willingness to be inconvenienced and disrupted.

- iii. It requires humility.
- iv. Saying, “I don’t have this all figured out, but I’m willing to walk with you.”
- d. That is exactly the kind of space where God loves to work.

## 15.(TESTIMONY: SAYING YES BEFORE YOU FEEL READY)

- a. At this point, I want us to hear a story—not of dramatic success, but of faithful steps.
- b. [22] David Muir & Chris Swanson
  - i. You’ve begun meeting together regularly for bible study and discipleship.
  - ii. What led you to take that step together?
  - iii. What fears and discomforts have you had to face?
  - iv. What’s the experience been like so far?
  - v. Any words of encouragement for the ppl here as they consider taking next steps of relational connection?

## 16.(WHY THIS MATTERS MORE THAN WE THINK)

- a. Stories like this matter because they show us something important:
  - i. Growth rarely happens alone.
  - ii. Healing rarely happens alone.
  - iii. And obedience almost always feels risky before it feels rewarding.
- b. But when we stay isolated—protecting our time, our comfort, our preferences—we often miss the very places where God wants to bring life and growth.
- c. **New Do is not about adding pressure.**
  - i. **It’s about stepping into the kind of relational life where joy, growth, and fruitfulness actually happen.**

## 17.[23] TAKING ONE NEXT STEP

- a. So here’s the invitation today.
- b. Not to do everything.
  - i. Not to fix everything.
  - ii. Not to become someone else.
- c. But to ask one honest question:
- d. [24] **God, what is one next step You are asking me to take toward connection and obedience?**

## 18.[25] New Do TOOL: WOTYS & BHAGGs

- a. [26] **WOTYS – SHOW 2026 WOTYs WORD CLOUD**
  - i. See yours up there? Mine is BOLDLY
- b. It can help to pair your WOTY (spiritual growth Word of the Year) with something concrete—a specific step or a goal that gives WOTY somewhere to land.
- c. We’ve been calling that a **BHAGG**—a Big, Hairy, Audacious, *God-sized* Goal.

- i. It's not something you can accomplish through effort alone—but something that requires God to show up.
- d. A BHAGG isn't about pressure.
  - i. It's not about performance.
  - ii. It's not about proving your faith.
  - iii. It's about aligning your action with your trust in a tangible way.
- e. **If your word is *Presence*, maybe your BHAGG is to consistently practicing silence and prayer 3x/week – AND HEAR HIS VOICE.**
  - i. If your word is *Courage*, maybe it's initiating that one meaningful spiritual conversation you've been putting off.
  - ii. If it's *Forgiveness*, your BHAGG might be to actually work through forgiveness for that person who's hurt you so. And experience freedom from your anger.
    - 1. You can schedule those meetings, but for it to go well, God has to show up!
- f. **The goal isn't perfection. It's direction.**
  - i. It's another tool you may find useful as you lean into your NEW DO growth goal
- g. These aren't checklists. They're faith goals.
  - i. They're the kinds of things that only happen when God is at work among His people.
  - ii. Our small step, His big work.
- h. **[27] What is God asking me to do?**

## 19. Whatever that step is, trust this:

- a. God will meet you there.
- b. He is already at work.
- c. He supplies the grace.
- d. And He uses ordinary, imperfect steps to form something beautiful—both in us and through us.
- e. As we follow him TOGETHER.

## 20. CLOSING PRAYER

**NEW YEAR.**  
**NEW YOU.**  
**NEW DO.**



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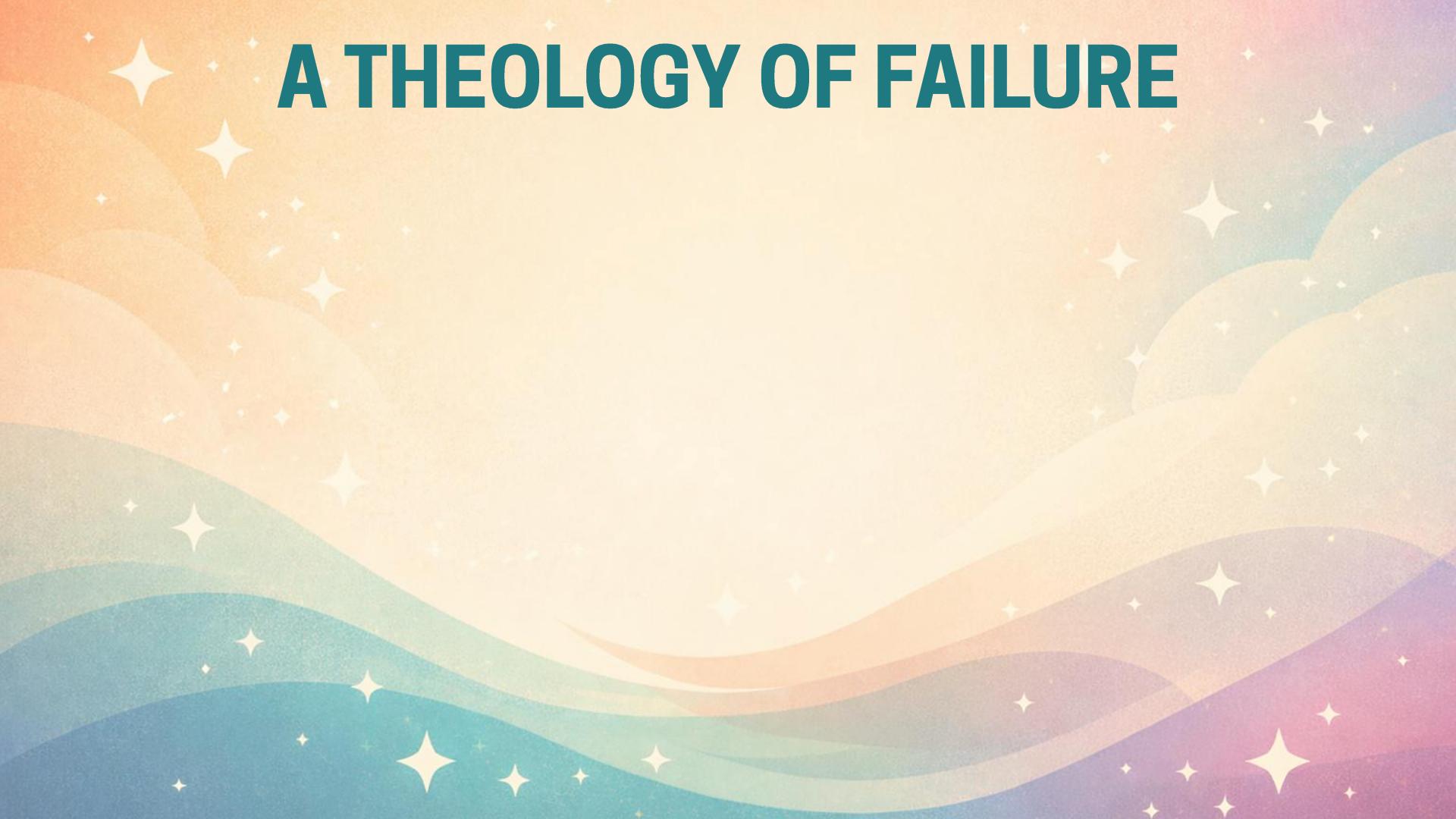
**Ephesians 2:8-10**

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## **Condemnation vs Conviction**

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

**Romans 8:1**

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**Failure as formation, not disqualification**

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“Serve one another humbly in love.”

**Galatians 5:13**

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**New Do = choosing connection over isolation**

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**Discipleship as intentional friendship**

# TESTIMONY

David Muir & Chris Swanson

# TAKING ONE NEXT STEP

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**WOTYs & BHAGGs**

# WOTY & BHAGG

Nourish  
Grounded  
Presence  
Boundaries  
Fearless  
Forgiveness  
BIG  
Enough  
Abide  
Reboot  
Perseverance  
Glory  
Vulnerability  
Messenger  
UNAPOLOGETIC  
Listen  
JOY  
INTENTIONAL  
FAITH  
COURAGE  
Gratitude  
UNAPOLOGETIC  
Patience  
Intentional  
Forward  
Plucky  
Trust  
Belonging  
Captive  
Immanuel  
RELATIONAL REST  
CONSISTENCY  
FRUIT  
Cultivate  
Bloom  
Obedience  
Trust  
Boldly  
Discipline  
Connection  
Anew  
Hydration  
Execute  
Health  
Modality  
Daybreak  
Detachment

# WOTY & BHAGG

Nourish  
Grounded  
Presence  
Boundaries  
Fearless  
Forgiveness  
BIG  
Enough  
Abide  
Reboot  
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Discipline  
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Anew  
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Hydration  
Execute  
Health  
Modality

What is God asking me to do?