



RAY EDWARDS

LIVE WITH JOY. LEAD WITH PASSION. PROSPER WITH PURPOSE.

How to Recover

from Stupid Mistakes Episode #178

Sean: Welcome to the Ray Edwards show, where we help you start, run, and grow your own Internet based business, so you can enjoy more freedom in your life. I'm your host, Sean Edwards. Is this from personal experience? Surely you have never done anything stupid.

Ray: Yes, I have. I've done stupid things, as you know, but you don't have to jump on board and acknowledge it with enthusiasm.

Sean: I have a list.

Ray: We all make stupid mistakes, and yes I've made my fair share. I'm not talking about minor things, I'm talking like very recently I did a majorly stupid thing which I'm going to share with you. I'll talk about how you recover from something stupid that you do that's not private, other people know about it and it's created a big mess. That's what we'll be talking about on today's show.

Sean: Wow, I'm excited. Before we do that we'll jump straight into our first segment.

Spiritual Foundations

Ray: A couple shows ago we talked about rest and what Christians mean when they start speaking Christian-ese and they say, you just need to enter into his rest. You're not resting enough. It's frustrating if you're in the state of anxiety and phonetic activity that prompts other people to offer that helpful advice.

Sean: Not phonetic, because then you'd just be sounding out your problems, which is what some people do.

Ray: They do sound them out with all kinds of language. In John 16:13 it says, '*when He, the spirit of truth has come, He will guide you into all truth.*' A lot of people think that this verse is speaking of only the original 12 disciples, that those were the only people that were going to get God. I know it's crazy but some people believe that. So this is for us as well today, as believers and followers of Jesus, that the Holy Spirit has come and he will guide us into all truth.

So resting in the finished work of Jesus is not, as my previous episode may have led you to believe because I may not have expressed it as clearly as I reflect back on it. It's not inactivity, laziness or The Secret, where I just sit around and think, I want a Mercedes Benz and then I check out the window to see if it's in my front yard. That's not rest. Rest will always result in Holy Spirit directed activity. While you're trusting God for your healing, for instance, you may need some specific wisdom to deal practically with your physical symptoms. In other words, you might need to go to the doctor.

Maybe you should stop putting the donuts in your mouth or maybe you should throw out your cigarettes, and these are just practical thoughts that may be helpful. These things will come to you through your intellect and often they will be inspired thoughts from the Holy Spirit. He wants to guide you into all truth and lead you to victory. Some of the truth He guides you into might be hey, maybe you shouldn't drink so much because last night you left the car on the lawn and you woke up with your clothes on.

For example, maybe you have an ulcer and the Holy Spirit may tell you that you need to stop that stressful stuff you've been doing. Or, maybe He'll tell you to spend more time playing with your kids or with your dogs. He knows exactly what the problem is and He has the perfect solution that will bring about the results that you're looking for. He always knows. He knows. So choose to tune in to that radio station. Choose to tune in to Holy Spirit.fm and follow his promptings and when you do that you will find life, you will find peace, you will find victory and yes, you will find that very ever elusive thing called rest.

Feature Presentation

Sean: All right, the main topic for today is How to Recover From Stupid Mistakes. How do you do that?

Ray: Well, let's acknowledge that we all occasionally do stupid things.

Sean: Occasionally.

Ray: Just every now and then, once a decade or so. We all do and I recently did something very stupid and I'm not going to share the details of who it involved, because there's no need to drag them through it again. I was doing some copywriting work and I wrote some copy that was sent out in a marketing campaign that I was so excited about the angle the copy took, so excited about the hook in the copy because I love writing copy and I thought, 'this was good copy'. I didn't stop to think of how it might affect the people who were involved in the story I was telling in the copy.

I think of any of that before I pressed the send button. I did this late at night. I had insomnia. I was awake after midnight. A friend of mind said one time, nothing good ever happens after midnight. He was right apparently. So I sent this email and went to sleep at about 4:00 a.m. and got up a few hours later and the first thing that Sean said... Do you remember the first words out of your mouth when you walked into the kitchen that morning?

Sean: I don't remember the first words, but I remember the general...

Ray: And it went like...

Sean: It was like sooooo that email...

Ray: I immediately had this sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach and realized, oh shoot!

Sean: Did you have a plan? Did you talk to them before you sent that out?

Ray: And then I had the sick feeling in the pit of my stomach like, I'm going to throw up. I realized I had done something really stupid. We're laughing now, but what I did was

wrong. It was dumb and irresponsible and it hurt other people. Now, before you write me an email and say Ray, don't be self-condemning; I'm not being self-condemning but I'm admitting I did something stupid and there's a difference.

It's wisdom when you can look and say, oh that behavior was dumb I shouldn't have done that, I'm not going to do that in the future. What do we do when it creates a mess that involves other people, especially when it's a public mess? There are all kinds of things that could happen that other people may know about, and it happens in all walks of life. For me it was part of business and was a marketing email that I sent out that involved other people and I didn't ask their permission. It made a big mess, but for other people it could be things that are even more serious.

Think of the husband or wife who has an affair, and other people find out about it. That has implications in the marriage and beyond. It has implications for the children and the friends of the couple and the other person that was involved. There are so many stupid things we can do that involve others, and how do we recover from those stupid mistakes? Do we hide them? That's what many people do they hide the mistakes. Do we deny them or lie about them? Those are not the best approaches. In fact, I think there are seven very specific steps to take to deal with having made a stupid mistake that you can recover from that mistake? Would you like to know what they are?

Sean: I certainly would.

Ray:

1. Admit the mistake to yourself.

The easiest thing in the world for me to have done when you asked me, Sean, hey that email... would have been to cover it over with my apparent expertise, knowledge of marketing and people that I work with and say hey, I'm in the marketing game and we do this sort of thing all the time, it's no big deal. It's a commonly known accepted practice, we tell stories and we do it for the purpose of marketing, as long as it sells product it's okay. I could have said that, but you would have never bought that load of malarkey.

Sean: No.

Ray: Secondly, I wouldn't have bought it either and would have known I was deceiving myself.

2. You need to identify who you hurt.

That's the kind of mistake we're talking about. Maybe you say I didn't hurt anybody but myself. Then admit that and even then, I don't think there's such a thing as a victimless crime. There are various activities, like smoking for instance, people say if I smoke and I don't breathe smoke on others then I'm only hurting myself. That's not really true, what about the people you love who have to watch you die a slow painful, agonizing and horrible death of lung cancer? You may not have hurt them immediately, but you're going to hurt them eventually.

3. Confess exactly what you did to the person to whom you did it.

I had to think about this for quite some time the day I made this mistake, before I finally realized okay, I know what the right thing to do is. I couldn't reach the persons involved directly, so I sent them an email and when you do it by email you have to be really clear.

My email said basically these words, but I won't say the specifics because again I don't want to drag anyone publicly back through this, I said look I sent this email. It said these words. That was very hurtful, very wrong, I'm sorry, please forgive me.

Don't offer explanations or justifications. They may want those things from you later, but the last thing someone wants to hear is, look I did this horrible thing to you but let me explain why. Trust me, they stopped listening after the horrible thing to you.

4. Express your understanding of the pain you caused.

I learned this in my marriage. Early in my marriage I had a pattern of, I would do something stupid, like forget to bring flowers on Valentine's Day or forget a birthday card on a birthday or something stupid! I would say I'm sorry and eventually my wife in her wisdom said, sorry for what? I'm sorry for not bringing you flowers. I'm sorry for not bringing home the groceries I said I would bring home. Nope, try again. Eventually I would figure it out, I'm sorry that I made you feel disrespected because I didn't pay attention to your request. I'm sorry that I hurt your feelings by not thinking about you in advance. You have to think about exactly the pain you cause the other people.

So these individuals involved in the incident that I've been referring to a few days ago, I said I'm sorry I know that my saying these things about you publicly felt like disrespect to you, it was disrespectful to you and I'm sure that hurt coming from a friend and I'm really sorry. So I understood the pain I had caused.

5. Own your behavior.

This is the part where you don't make excuses, you just say look I did it. Nobody respects you when you try to pass the blame off on something else. I could have said well, I wasn't in my right mind. I was having insomnia and wasn't really clear on what I was doing or whatever. I was under stress, just trying to find some external excuse or force to blame it on. Own what you did and admit that you did it.

6. Admit you were wrong.

Don't pretty it up and say well, I made a mistake. No, you did something stupid. You did something wrong. Just say it.

7. Ask forgiveness.

Here's the key to this part. Don't expect it and don't demand it. That's not your place. My place with my friends, and they are my friends, was to tell them what I did, own it, admit it was wrong, to let them know I understood how I hurt them, to apologize and ask for their forgiveness. It wasn't my decision to make whether they would forgive me. I didn't expect them to do it and I couldn't make them do it. It's not like I ask for your forgiveness so you have to. That's not how it works.

And as it turns out, because they're very gracious and loving people they did forgive me and I'm so thankful for that. It's very important to me.

So this is the only way I know to recover from stupid mistakes and maybe the specifics of your mistake might be different than the specifics I just described, but I guarantee the emotions and dynamics involved are probably almost identical.

Sean: So just once again to recap.

1. Admit the mistake to yourself.
2. You need to identify who you hurt.
3. Confess exactly what you did to the person to whom you did it.
4. Express your understanding of the pain you caused.
5. Own your behavior.
6. Admit you were wrong.
7. Ask forgiveness; don't demand or expect it.

Sean: Now remember, you can get the show notes, the links and the transcript of this episode at RayEdwards.com/178. And if you get value from these shows and think others would as well, the best way to help spread the word is to subscribe to the show in iTunes, and give us a rating and review. That causes the show to be more visible in iTunes and that way more people find out about it.

Any final thoughts?

Ray: Yes. I know people want a formula so I want to give people the formula for how to handle the apology of owning your mistake. It sounds like this... I have something to confess to you. I hurt you. I (fill in what you did that was stupid). I have no excuse. This was wrong. I'm so sorry and I hope you will forgive me. I know it's a formula, but I don't think anyone will fault you for using that formula and it's the most honest, heartfelt way to deal with a stupid mistake. If you have any messes in your life you need to clean up and this is what you need to do to do it, I hope you'll be brave. Ask yourself, would I do this if I was brave? Then be brave and do it and you'll feel better for it.

Until the next time remember that God has already forgiven you for your stupid mistakes. He knew what they were before you made them. Thank you Lord. May He bless you and continue to do more for you than you could possibly ask or possibly even imagine.

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