



WORDS FROM
Pastor Randy

It's springtime in Alabama and America's favorite past-time is well under way. Our Atlanta Braves are off to a good start and currently are in second place in the National League East division. Several young players are arising to become stars.

One of my all time favorite Braves was the big hitting [Dale Murphy](#). Is there anybody out there in "Baseball Land" who still remembers "Murph"? He was voted the league MVP for 2 consecutive years.

When I was a junior in high school I gave a little talk about him. Dale grew up in Portland, Oregon and always wanted to be a major league catcher. One of his heroes was [Yogi Berra](#). His coaches called him the "next [Johnny Bench](#)." He was an all star athlete growing up. Atlanta signed him right out of high school. They described him then as a "great defensive catcher with a live arm." He wasn't known as much of a hitter in those days.

He arrived at the Brave's training camp in West Palm Beach Florida. In his first intrasquad game, he was called out to replace the Brave's starting catcher. The first batter walked and in the second pitch took off for second base. Dale threw the ball over the second baseman into center field. The next day, Dale hit the pitcher trying to throw down a runner!

Dale was disgusted and began praying. The doctors examined him. His coaches tutored him. His manager soon gave him the bad news, "We're going to have to send you down to Richmond." Dale regretfully recalled that dark dreary day of cleaning out his locker and hearing Mr. Paul Snyder saying, "Hang in there."

At Richmond, things didn't improve very quickly. One night he had seven bases stolen on him. The next day, he committed two more errors. But in that game, he managed to get a couple of base hits. Two days later, Dale collected the game winning hit! By the time the year was over, he was batting .300 with about 90 RBI's. Dale Murphy was starting to become known as an "offensive threat."

The rest of the story is history now. Dale returned to the majors to play center field and win the "Golden Glove Award." He hit 398 career home runs. He helped the Braves land the National League West title. In his own words, "Maybe I do have two plaques that say, 'MVP,' but I'm still a guy who couldn't make it as a catcher. I had to grab a bat and come up swinging."

Holding on to our failures is never a smart thing to do. Why build a monument around what you couldn't accomplish? Usually, finding what you're good at involves coming to the conclusion that you're not the best at everything. It's failing at some thing that helps you move on to find the one thing you were born to accomplish. Hang in there and keep on swinging till you hit something!

See you in church!

Pastor Randy