

Eph 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God,  
that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.  
(See also I Cor 10:12 and Eph 6:1)

*Suppose that you step into eternity at the end of your life on this earth. Instantly, you know the absolute truth about sin, hell, riches, God's power, the church, and countless other things that were not so clear before. Your faith no longer matters: now you have sight. You see the Saviour who died for your sins. You see the beauty of heaven and know the peace that comes from having no sin, doubt, or fear. You contemplate the bliss, and the blessings that you will enjoy forever more. Then, you shudder in awful realization that you wasted almost all of your life when you could have done so much for God. You believed the lies of the devil about the Bible, the church, the pastor, and true doctrine. You wasted countless hours and opportunities to witness to the lost, strengthen other believers and encourage the pastor. You spent your time and money on yourself and what you wanted in the life now ended, and forsook faith, God's work and lost souls. And now, knowing what you could have done, you weep bitterly over a life that could have been used wisely if you had only listened to those God sent to warn you of the dangers that ensnared your soul. If you could go back and live life again, what would you do different to cause you to survive?*

**I. THE WORLD IS A DANGEROUS PLACE FOR EVERYONE**

- A. You could be killed
- B. You could be maimed and unable to go through life normally
- C. You could suffer horrible pain
- D. You could starve to death
- E. You could catch a horrible and painful disease
- F. You could see your friends or loved ones suffer
- G. You could be financially ruined or forced to live in poverty
- H. You could be tricked into wasting your money on something useless
- I. You could be falsely convicted and spend life in prison
- J. You could suffer emotional breakdown or deep depression
- K. You could live in fear and isolation

**II. THE WORLD IS A DANGEROUS PLACE FOR A SOUL**

- A. You could suffer eternal death
- B. You could live in a spiritually maimed condition with limited ability to serve God
- C. You could suffer guilt, bitterness, and heartache
- D. You could go without sufficient scriptural teaching and preaching, or even had none at all
- E. You could be trapped in heresy and false doctrine and be a diseased Christian
- F. You could see your friends or loved ones suffer the wages of sin and spend eternity in hell
- G. You could waste your life on this world and have poverty in heaven (no treasure laid up)
- H. You could succumb to temptation and reap corruption for your deeds
- I. You could be captured by an unscriptural church and spend your life there
- J. You could be a defeated Christian
- K. You could live in spiritual fear, hopelessness, prayerlessness, or isolation

**III. AND, THE WORLD IS A DANGEROUS PLACE FOR A BORN AGAIN BELIEVER**

- A. You have a roaring adversarial enemy who is loose and seeking to devour you (I Pe 5:8)
- B. You are surrounded by children of the devil, your enemy, who are at his disposal to attack you (John 8:44)
- C. You live in a body which is flesh, indwelt by no good thing, and inclined to sin (Rom 7:18)
- D. But, there is hope. You are also indwelt by the Spirit of Christ (Rom 8:9)

**IV. WHAT IS SURVIVAL?**

- A. Survival is "The act of continuing or enduring, especially under adverse or threatening conditions."
- B. "Survive" is a newer word in our language and does not appear in the KJB.
- C. Another word – Endurance - means "Bearing up or withstanding in the face of hardship, adversity or peril."
- D. And we are told "To stand" (Eph 6:13)
- E. The opposite of survival is
  - 1. To cease, top, quit, or leave
  - 2. To give up, depart, forsake, fall or discontinue
  - 3. To die
  - 4. To fail

**V. WHAT IS THE WORST THAT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU?**

- A. Physically and emotionally?
  - 1. Death? – Entering the joy of heaven but knowing that your loved ones grieve
  - 2. Seeing your loved ones suffer? – Bad when you can do nothing to help them
  - 3. Going through life paralyzed or maimed? – Trying, but God would get you through
  - 4. Losing everything? – We might grieve over the loss, but many have lost everything and started over and then found greater success and prosperity.
- B. Spiritually?
  - 1. Spending eternity in hell (Matt 10:28) – rejecting Christ and spending eternity in hell
  - 2. Spiritual disaster/shipwreck (I Tim 1:19-20) – losing everything, including the ship, spiritually in such a way that you cannot do anything for Christ with your life.
  - 3. Being cast away by God (I Cor 9:27) – having such sin in your life that you are set aside by the Lord Himself.
- C. But, one of the worst types of pain a man can experience is the pain that comes into his heart when he realizes that his suffering, or the suffering of others, could have been easily avoided.

**VI. WHAT IS THE WORST WE HAVE EVER SEEN?**

- A. The man who attended and served faithfully in his local church, giving and serving in a great way, who is somehow deceived by the devil and stops. He quits serving, quits giving, and quits his church. He has a family, perhaps children, and those he loves are taught by his actions that God and eternity are not important.
  - 1. He is greatly accountable – “To whom much is given . . .” (Lu 12:48)
  - 2. He has forfeited most of God’s help and blessings (James 1:7)
- B. Then, the suffering begins.
  - 1. Perhaps there is a divorce or tremendous marital and family strife.
  - 2. Perhaps there is financial distress or failure.
  - 3. Perhaps he cannot find or keep a good job.
  - 4. Perhaps his children become ungodly and walk away from church and God.
  - 5. Usually, he ceases to care about life and has no vision or zest.
- C. Still, the man is blinded and refuses/fails to return to a good Baptist church and serving God.
- D. Then, he will die and step into eternity and grieve horribly over how he let the devil use him to deceive many others, and how he wasted his life on pleasure, self, and possessions.
- E. Finally, he will stand and watch his children or grandchildren cast into a lake of fire, knowing that he could have prevented their fate if only he had believed God’s word.

**VII. THE DANGERS?**

- A. What are they?
  - 1. Temptation
  - 2. Discouragement
  - 3. Opposition (i.e. direct attack)
  - 4. False doctrine – false teachers and wolves
  - 5. Financial danger
    - a. Mishandling money
    - b. Debt
  - 6. Physical difficulties
    - a. Health
    - b. Emotional
    - c. Old age
  - 7. Government and authority
  - 8. Family members can be a danger
  - 9. Unfaithful or ungodly Christians
- B. Where are they?
  - 1. At work
  - 2. In the sin filled world
- C. Who is in danger?
  - 1. You
  - 2. Your spouse
  - 3. Your children
  - 4. Other family members
  - 5. Your pastor

**VIII. WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SURVIVE?**

- A. Increasing your faith & strength?
- B. Increased awareness of the dangers? Wisdom?
  - 1. God provides us with warnings aplenty
  - 2. i.e. the Bible cautions us about false teachers
- C. Protecting yourself and preparing for future threats?

**IX. THE BIBLE IS A TEXTBOOK ON SURVIVAL – i.e. II Timothy**

- A. Chapter One – An overview of the Situation
  - 1. Paul is praying for Timothy because Paul knows how dangerous things are (1:3)
    - a. He is confident because of Timothy’s real faith (1:5)
    - b. He has seen that faith in Timothy’s family
  - 2. As we walk in a dangerous world
    - a. Do not be afraid (1:7)
    - b. Do not be ashamed (1:8)
    - c. Do not avoid affliction (1:8)
  - 3. Our appointment
    - a. Is wonderful (1:9-11)
    - b. Involves suffering (1:12)
    - c. Ends in victory (1:12)
  - 4. THE KEY TO SURVIVAL
    - a. “Hold fast the form of sound words” (1:13)
    - b. Keep your commitment – the appointment God gave us (1:14)
  - 5. The dangers and blessings you face
    - a. Many (or all) will forsake you (1:15)
    - b. A very few will bless you (1:16-18)
- B. Chapter Two – A formula for endurance in perilous times
  - 1. In response to the danger
    - a. Gain much strength from the Grace of Christ - depend on it (2:1)
    - b. Teach FAITHFUL men what you have learned so they can teach others (2:2)
  - 2. Decide to ENDURE HARDNESS like a good soldier (2:3)
    - a. Don’t get tangled up in irrelevant affairs that have no eternal value (2:4)
    - b. Remember who you are to please – Jesus Christ (2:4)
    - c. No cheating (2:5)
    - d. You are as close to the work as you can get, and will reap first (2:6)
    - e. Consider your instructor’s words and trust God for understanding (2:7)
  - 3. The central cause of the peril is that Jesus is risen and men do not believe it (2:8)
    - a. Paul is an example of what one may suffer for faith in Christ (2:9)
    - b. Paul is an example of enduring (surviving) for the sake of others (2:10)
    - c. Just as Christ, we will live and reign (2:11-12)
    - d. But, if we deny Him, He will deny us (2:12)
    - e. Those who do not believe do not affect the reality of the truth (2:13)
  - 4. Teach men these things, and not to waste their time arguing (14)
  - 5. Your confidence as a workman is only as good as your intense study and understanding of God’s word (15) – BE CAREFUL
    - a. Don’t let useless words and writings into your head (2:16)
    - b. Don’t get infected – Men who believe useless babble are infected and eaten with a cancer (17)
    - c. Don’t lose the truth – They reject truth, become Preterists (or some other proponent of lies), and OVERTHROW THE FAITH OF SOME (18)
  - 6. Just because others fall away from truth does not mean it is not true (2:19)
    - a. The Lord still knows them
    - b. We are still called to holiness
    - c. It is to be expected that some will fall away (2:20)
    - d. Purge yourself from profane babble and the men who say it, and you will remain useful to Christ (2:21)
  - 7. Watch out for sin and lust (2:22)
    - a. Pursue righteousness, faith, charity, and peace
    - b. Stick with those who call on the Lord out of a pure (unpolluted) heart (2:22)
  - 8. Watch out for and avoid foolish questions that cause argument (23)
    - a. We are not to argue, but to be gentle to all (24)
    - b. Be instructive and patient, trusting God to open their eyes (24-26)
- C. Chapter Three – The Increasing Evil and Protection from it

1. Even more perilous times are coming (3:1)
  - a. Description of the source of the peril – men who . . . (3:2-7)
    - (1) Note: the problem is MEN
    - (2) Those who do not have knowledge of the truth are the dangerous ones
  - b. Example of the types of peril – those who imitate God’s miracles (8-9)
    - (1) These are two Egyptian magicians who imitated the miracles of Moses
    - (2) This story is in Exodus 7, 8, and 9 – the magicians could not keep up with Moses and eventually conceded that it was the “finger of God”
2. Paul is an example of survival in dangerous times (3:10)
  - a. He lists doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, and patience as assets in these times (3:10)
  - b. He lists persecution, affliction, and places where he was persecuted as liabilities (11)
  - c. He finally says that suffering persecution is to be expected by everyone (12)
3. The situation is deteriorating all the time (3:13)
  - a. More evil men and seducers
  - b. Doing more evil things: deceiving and being deceived (13)
4. The ultimate protection from evil is CONTINUING (3:14)
  - a. Don’t ever let go of the things you have been taught and sure about (14)
  - b. Trust the one God gave to teach you, when he stands with God’s word (14)
  - c. Be confident in the Holy Scriptures which pointed you to Christ and salvation (15)
  - d. Scripture is unshakeable (16)
  - e. Scripture is the only “furnishing” you need for good works (17)
- D. Chapter Four – Accountability and Obligation in the face of Peril
  1. You will be judged along with everyone else, and have an obligation (4:1)
    - a. To preach God’s word (2)
    - b. To do so when it is not popular (2)
    - c. To utilize reproof, rebuke, and exhortation accompanied by longsuffering and doctrine (2)
    - d. Don’t be surprised when men reject it and go after fables (3-4)
  2. Final words
    - a. Be alert (watch) about everything (4:5)
    - b. Endure affliction - don’t let affliction stop you
    - c. Keep preaching the gospel
    - d. Prove that God made you a minister (5)
    - e. Be able to say what Paul said – to be confident that you have done what you must when you face the last day of your life (7-8)
- E. Chapter Four, Part II – Practical matters
  1. Seven requests and remarks
    - a. Come see me quickly (4:9)
    - b. Paul knew what it meant to be forsaken by those who loved this present world (4:10)
    - c. Men in the ministry need the company and support of other men (4:11)
    - d. Sometimes we must forfeit the company of others so they can serve God elsewhere (4:12)
    - e. Physical needs also exist (4:13) but the greatest need is the Bible
    - f. Some will intentionally do much evil to us – God will deal with them accordingly (4:14)
    - g. Beware those who reject God’s man (4:15)
  2. When everyone rejects you, the Lord still stands with you: what more can you ask or need? (4:16-18)
  3. At the end of it all, it is those we have served with who we love and care about (19-20)
    - a. Individuals who cared about God’s work (19)
    - b. Some who are busy and others who are suffering (20)
  4. Please be urgent to bring my coat before it gets cold (21)
  5. There are fellow believers with me who comfort me (21)
  6. I wish you the presence and grace of God (22)

*II Tim 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.*

### **I. WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO SURVIVE PERILOUS TIMES?**

- A. Are you increasing your faith & strength?
- B. Do you have an increased awareness of the dangers? Wisdom?
  1. God provides us with warnings aplenty
  2. i.e. the Bible cautions us about false teachers
- C. Are you protecting yourself and preparing for future threats?

### **II. THE BIBLE IS A TEXTBOOK ON SURVIVAL – PARTICULARLY II TIMOTHY**

- A. II Timothy is called “Paul’s dying shout of triumph.” It is the very last of Paul’s Epistles – 66 A.D. and the theme is “Endurance.” Paul was probably martyred in 67 A.D.
- B. Paul endured, and commanded Timothy to endure (to survive)
  1. “Endure hardness” – II Tim 2:3
  2. “I endure all things” (II Tim 2:10)
  3. I endured persecutions (II Tim 3:11)
  4. [Timothy is instructed to] “endure afflictions” (II Tim 4:5)
  5. “The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine” (II Tim 4:3)
- C. Twenty three people are named in II Timothy. Some are praised, some are cautioned, and some are accused of wrongdoing.
- D. Paul is the example of the survivor – II Tim 4:7 “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith”
- E. Three are seven metaphors for the surviving believer in Chapter two
  1. Child/Son (2:1)
  2. Soldier (2:3)
  3. Athlete (2:5)
  4. Farmer (2:6)
  5. Workman (2:15)
  6. Vessel (2:20)
  7. Servant (2:24)
- F. II Timothy also provides one of the most definitive passages on the inspiration of the Bible  
II Tim 3:16-17 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

### **III. SURVEY OF II TIMOTHY – PART ONE**

- A. Chapter One – An overview of the Situation (i.e. in the Ministry)
  1. Paul is praying for Timothy because Paul knows how dangerous things are (1:3)
    - a. He is confident because of Timothy’s real faith (1:5)
    - b. He has seen that faith in Timothy’s family
  2. While we walk in a dangerous world . . .
    - a. Do not be afraid (1:7)
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    - c. Do not avoid affliction (1:8)
  3. Our appointment in this world . . .
    - a. Is wonderful (1:9-11)
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    - c. Ends in victory (1:12)

*II Tim 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.*

### **I. THE KEY TO SURVIVAL IS COMMITMENT**

- A. To God's Word – "Hold fast the form of sound words" (II Tim 1:13)
- B. To God's Will – Keep the appointment (commitment) God gave us (II Tim 1:14)
- C. Not to Men – There are dangers and blessings you will experience from people
  - 1. Many (most, or all) will forsake you (1:15)
  - 2. A very few will bless you (1:16-18)

### **II. II TIMOTHY, Chapter Two – An eightfold formula for endurance in perilous times**

- A. **STRENGTH:** Respond to the danger with strength and instruction
  - 1. Gain much strength from the Grace of Christ - depend on it (2:1)
  - 2. Teach **FAITHFUL** men what you have learned so they can teach others (2:2)
- B. **ENDURANCE:** Determine to **ENDURE HARDNESS** like a good soldier (2:3)
  - 1. Don't get tangled up in irrelevant affairs that have no eternal value (2:4)
  - 2. Remember who you are to please – Jesus Christ (2:4)
  - 3. No cheating (2:5)
  - 4. You are as close to the work as you can get, and will reap first (2:6)
  - 5. Consider your instructor's words and trust God for understanding (2:7)
- C. **UNDERSTANDING:** Understand that the main cause of the peril is that Jesus is risen and men do not believe it (2:8)
  - 1. Paul is an example of what one may suffer for faith in Christ (2:9)
  - 2. Paul is an example of enduring (surviving) for the sake of others (2:10)
  - 3. Just as Christ, we will live and reign (2:11-12)
  - 4. But, if we deny Him, He will deny us (2:12)
  - 5. Those who do not believe do not affect the reality of the truth (2:13)
- D. **INSTRUCTION:** Focus on the truth: teach men these things, and not to waste their time arguing (14)
- E. **STUDY:** Be a confident workman – your confidence as a workman is only as good as your intense study and understanding of God's word (15) – **BE CAREFUL**
  - 1. Don't let useless words and writings into your head (2:16)
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- F. **AWARENESS:** Expect men to fall out – just because others fall away from truth does not mean it is not true (2:19)
  - 1. The Lord still knows them that are **HIS**
  - 2. We are still called to holiness
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  - 4. Purge yourself from profane babble and the men who say it, and you will remain useful to Christ (2:21)
- G. **HOLINESS:** Watch out for and avoid sin and lust which can destroy anyone - saved or lost (2:22)
  - 1. Pursue righteousness, faith, charity, and peace
  - 2. Stick with those who call on the Lord out of a pure (unpolluted) heart (2:22)
- H. **PRECISION:** Be cautious against and avoid foolish questions that cause arguments (23)
  - 1. We are not to argue, but to be gentle to all men (24)
  - 2. Be instructive and patient, trusting God to open their eyes (24-26)

II Tim 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

**I. THE BIBLE IS A TEXTBOOK ON SURVIVAL – II TIMOTHY, PART TWO**

- A. Chapter Three – The Increasing Evil and Protection from it**
1. Even more perilous times are coming (3:1)
    - a. Description of the source of the peril – men who . . . (3:2-7)
      - (1) Note: the problem is MEN
      - (2) Those who do not have knowledge of the truth are the dangerous ones
    - b. Example of the types of peril – those who imitate God’s miracles (8-9)
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- B. Chapter Four – Accountability and Obligation in the face of Peril**
1. You will be judged along with everyone else, and have an obligation (4:1)
    - a. To preach God’s word (2)
    - b. To do so when it is not popular (2)
    - c. To utilize reproof, rebuke, and exhortation accompanied by longsuffering and doctrine (2)
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    - e. Be able to say what Paul said – to be confident that you have done what you must when you face the last day of your life (7-8)
- C. Chapter Four, Part II – Practical matters**
1. Seven requests and remarks
    - a. Come see me quickly (4:9)
    - b. Paul knew what it meant to be forsaken by those who loved this present world (4:10)
    - c. Men in the ministry need the company and support of other men (4:11)
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  5. There are fellow believers with me who comfort me (21)
  6. I wish you the presence and grace of God (22)

Num 21:4 And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom:  
and the soul of **the people was much discouraged because of the way.**

**I. WHAT IS DISCOURAGEMENT?**

- A. Discouragement is a frame of mind, or way of thinking, which presumes future disappointment, suffering, or failure.
  - 1. To be disheartened or lacking in confidence; dejected.
  - 2. Loss of hope; persuaded that effort is futile and vain
  - 3. Diminished in courage or confidence
- B. Vexed, grieved, dismayed, afraid, fearful, crushed, broken in spirit
- C. Many different things can discourage us in the Christian life
  - 1. Failure to overcome temptation
  - 2. People who reject us or let us down
  - 3. Friends and loved ones who disappoint us by refusing to walk with God
  - 4. Ongoing health issues or diagnosis of failing health
  - 5. Seeing ungodly men and causes in apparent triumph
  - 6. Circumstances that appear overwhelming (finances, opposition, etc.)
  - 7. "Bad news"
- D. Anything that takes away our courage is a cause of discouragement
- E. Discouragement is contagious: one discouraged person can spread it to many others

**II. SEVEN SCRIPTURAL CASES OF DISCOURAGEMENT**

- A. Difficult conditions in the wilderness (Numbers 21:4 – "because of the way")
- B. Apparently overwhelming opposition (Numbers 32:7-9, Deut 1:28)
  - 1. And, when fellow Christians do not help fight the battle (as in Numbers 32)
- C. Overwhelming loss (I Sam 30:1-6)
- D. Improper discipline can cause a child to be discouraged (Col 3:21)
- E. Trying to carry the burden that God did not intend for you to bare (Php 4:6, I Pe 5:7, Mt 11:30)
  - 1. Failure to pray
  - 2. Attempting to serve in our own strength
- F. Envyng the apparent prosperity and success of the wicked (Psalm 73, Psalm 37)
- G. Looking at the situation rather than at the Lord (Matt 14:30)

**III. SEVENFOLD SCRIPTURAL CURE FOR DISCOURAGEMENT**

- A. Knowing that God is at work in your life (Acts 21:11)
- B. Be furnished unto all good works thru scripture (II Tim 3:16-17)
- C. Giving each and every situation to God and trusting Him for the outcome (Rom 8:28)
- D. Fixing your mind on God and trusting Him completely (Is 26:3)
- E. The comfort and fellowship of other believers (Acts 28:15, Is 41:6)
- F. Decide to pursue God's purpose in spite of the obstacles (Ps 27:14, Ps 31:24)
- G. Find courage "in the LORD" (I Sam 30:6)
  - 1. Find God's will (I Sam 30:7-8)
  - 2. Pursue it (9)

**IV. CLOSING THOUGHTS ON DISCOURAGEMENT**

- A. Do you think the Lord Jesus Christ was ever discouraged? See Isaiah 42:1-4
- B. God does not intend for us to be discouraged when His will is in focus (Deut 1:21)
- C. We can encourage one another to continue in God's will (Deut 1:38; Deut 3:28)

*Pray that ye enter not into temptation. (Luke 22:40)***I. THE NATURE OF TEMPTATION**

- A. Temptation is a test; an attempt to try whether or not a thing can be done (i.e. can you be deceived into sin?)
- B. There are two different, but similar, types of temptation
  - 1. Temptation to sin against God's law (God does not tempt us in this way)
  - 2. Trials that test our faith (i.e. persecution, failing health, burdens, etc.)
- C. The first occurrence of temptation is recorded in Genesis chapter 3 - Eve and the Serpent
  - 1. The nature of the tempter is that he is subtle - tricky and deceitful (Gen 3:1)
  - 2. The temptation began by questioning God's word (1)
    - a. If God's word is right, sin is wrong and sin brings pain, sorrow, death, and loss
    - b. In order for a man to sin, he must first decide to ignore God's word
  - 3. The temptation emphasized then negative - what God prohibited, not what God allowed (1)
    - a. They could eat from any tree except one
    - b. Note: God put the tree right in the middle of the garden: He did not hide the forbidden tree in a corner where it was impossible to find.
  - 4. The next step (verse 2) was a meek defense of God's rule, but fell short of a hardy "NO!"
    - a. What is she doing talking to a snake? Especially one who questions God!
    - b. Why did she not become outraged that the serpent dared to call God a liar?
    - c. There was also a failure to accurately quote God's word (in verse 3)
  - 5. Now, the word of God is denied - temptation asks us to deny God's word (4)
    - a. When we sin, if we knew the pain it caused Jesus, we would not do it
    - b. When we sin, if we knew the pain it will cause us and others, we would not do it
    - c. The devil must get us to deny God's word in order for him to win
  - 6. Next, there was a suggested benefit for violating God's way
    - a. Sin would not be tempting if there was nothing to supposedly gain by doing it
    - b. We are asked to choose between the supposed benefit (i.e. the thrill, pleasure, carnal enjoyment, etc.) and the promise of God that sin brings suffering.
  - 7. Finally, the woman "SAW" (she was deceived) and therefore she sinned
    - a. She saw the bounty (food value) – but there was no shortage of food
    - b. She saw the beauty – but there was also plenty of beauty elsewhere in the garden
    - c. She saw the benefit – but she DID NOT SEE the curse (all of death and suffering in the world today was hanging on that tree).
      - (1) She wanted to be more than she thought God could or would make her
      - (2) She "desired" to know something that she later regretted knowing
      - (3) She thought that the serpent's way was more beneficial than God's way
- D. To this day, the perfect picture of temptation seen in Genesis 3 is being played out in the lives of billions of people every day – and in us.
- E. "Every man is tempted" (James 1:14)

**II. OTHER EXAMPLES OF TEMPTATION IN THE BIBLE**

- A. Joseph's temptation (Gen 39:7-12) and lessons from his test
  - 1. Joseph knew that sin was "against God" (Gen 39:9)
  - 2. Satan knows that repeated temptation is often successful (10)
  - 3. God knows when enough is enough and puts a stop to the temptation (20)
  - 4. When we give in and sin:
    - a. We injure our relationship with God
    - b. We forfeit our usefulness to God
    - c. We lose our testimony before men
    - d. We give Satan the victory
- B. The Lord's temptation (Luke 4:1-13)
  - 1. The taunting was, "if thou be the Son of God" (this is the question of the ages)
  - 2. There were three areas of temptation
    - a. Stones to bread (4:3) – "is God providing for you?"

- b. Power over the world's kingdoms, in exchange for worship (4:5-7) – “is God giving you what you deserve?”
- c. Miraculous deliverance (4:9-10) – “is God watching over you?”
- 3. The Lord quoted scripture in answer to each temptation
  - a. He knew it
  - b. He obeyed it

### III. THE DESCRIPTION OF TEMPTATION IN JAMES CHAPTER ONE

- A. Our lust is the lever that Satan uses to get us – “what do you want” (James 1:14)
  - 1. By controlling our “wants” we can limit what tempts us – Be careful what you try – things you have never tried can be less tempting
  - 2. By believing God, our wants can change – you won't want what you know will hurt you
  - 3. In Genesis 3:6, Eve sinned because “it was a tree to be DESIRED”
- B. Satisfaction with what God has given is an antidote for lust (Heb 13:5; Php 4:11)
  - 1. Note: desire to be rich causes us to fall into temptation (I Tim 6:9)
- C. Source: Where we go to get “every good gift” is also a key – do we really think that we (i.e. through sin) can give ourselves things that are better than God can give us? (James 1:17)

### IV. VICTORY AT OUR FINGERTIPS

- A. Do not say that you can't do what is right – we can.
- B. Do not expect to live in sinless perfection – we can't
- C. Do not condemn yourself for past failures – you aren't (condemned)
- D. The time when temptation is weakest is when the Lord is closest
  - 1. When you are serving Him
  - 2. When you are immersed in His word
  - 3. When your eyes are on His face – knowing His presence
- E. The way that temptation is most easily defeated
  - 1. When we value pleasing God more than pleasing self
  - 2. When we know the joy of obedience outweighs the temporary thrill of ungodliness
  - 3. When we view eternity instead of the “here and now”
- F. If temptation could not be withstood, then it would not be our fault that we sin – guilt presumes intent

### V. CONCLUSION

- A. God will not allow us to be tempted above our ability (I Cor 10:13) – there is an escape
- B. The Lord can sustain you through times of temptation (Heb 2:18)
- C. Walk in the Spirit and not fulfil lust of flesh (Gal 5:16)
- D. Falling and getting back up is a Christian trait (Ps 37:24)
- E. “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations” (II Pe 2:9)

***Proverbs 24:16 For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again*****I. WHAT IS FAILURE?**

- A. In the Bible, the word “fail” often means that something ends, runs out, is not sufficient, is too weak, etc.
  - 1. “If money fail” (Gen 47:16)
  - 2. “If there be prophesies, they shall fail” (I Cor 13:8)
- B. In the Christian life, failure means falling – losing the position we once had (see Acts 20:9). Consider the fall of Eutychus (whose name means, “fortunate”)
  - 1. Falling/Failure is painful
  - 2. Failure is injurious - it leaves wounds and scars
  - 3. Failure is noticed by others and is embarrassing
  - 4. Failure is avoidable, which makes it hurt even more
  - 5. Failure leaves us helpless
  - 6. Failure requires recovery by another person and/or by the Lord (see Acts 20:10)
  - 7. When recovery comes to those who have fallen, many are comforted (Acts 20:12)
- C. In particular, as Christians, we are interested in surviving the times in life . . .
  - 1. When we fall into temptation
  - 2. When we fail at a task given to us by God
  - 3. When we are overcome by a burden
  - 4. When we make a decision that causes calamity in our life
  - 5. When we fall for any reason

Ps 34:19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

Ps 37:24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.

Mic 7:8 Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.

Pr 28:18 Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at once.

Ro 14:4 Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

**II. SOME OF THE MANY CAUSES OF FAILURE AND FALLING**

- A. Pride goeth before a fall (Prov 16:18, I Tim 3:6)
  - 1. God will not honor our endeavors when we seek glory for ourselves
  - 2. When we think we can stand without God’s help, we will fall (I Cor 10:12)
- B. A prating (talks a lot but says nothing) fool shall fall (Prov 10:8)
  - 1. A fool is anyone who ignores God, to whatever extent (Ps 53:1)
  - 2. In particular, a fool ignores counsel, correction, and Godly instruction (Prov 12:15)
- C. Trusting in riches (Pr 11:28), self, or circumstances
- D. Those who habitually disobey God (Pr 28:14, Pr 28:18)
  - 1. The DOER of God’s word is blessed, not the hearer (James 1:25)
  - 2. The man who refuses to repent will fall (Prov 29:1)
- E. Note that falling is not caused by God, is not God’s will, and is not to be blamed on God.
  - 1. Job, for example, was not an example of falling – in fact, he did not fall
  - 2. When we fall, it is our “fault” (Gal 6:1)

**III. EXAMPLES OF FAILURE IN THE BIBLE**

- A. Moses – Ex 2:11-12 (he murdered an Egyptian)
- B. David – II Kings 11:12-17 (he had Uriah the Hittite murdered)
- C. Peter – Luke 22:54-62 (he denied Christ in front of many)
- D. The Disciples – Matt 17:14-27 (they failed to cast out a demon)

**IV. THE NEED FOR RESTORATION OF THOSE WHO FALL**

- A. Those who fall need a restorer
  - 1. Consider Eutychus in Acts 20 - Paul restored him
  - 2. Consider Peter - the Lord restored him (see John 21:15-17)
- B. We are commanded to be restorers (Gal 6:1-3)
  - 1. We are to be meek, realizing that we too can fall (Gal 6:1)
  - 2. The burdens (trials, weakness, ignorance) that other believers possess are ours to carry (2)

3. If you think you are better than the one who fell, you are deceiving yourself (3)
4. If you want to rejoice, rejoice in being a restorer (4)

#### V. AN EXAMPLE OF FAILURE AND RESTORATION IN THE BIBLE – MANNESEH

- A. He was warned (II KINGS 21:10-15)
  1. God's message came thru the prophets (II Ki 21:10)
  2. There was a cause for God's judgment (11)
    - a. His abominations
    - b. Wickedness in excess of the Amorites
    - c. Turning Judah to idolatry
  3. Jerusalem would be wiped as a man wipes a dish (13)
- B. He was judged (II Chron 33:11-13)
  1. "Wherefore" (see verses 10) Manasseh was taken into captivity to Babylon (11)
- C. He repented
  1. Manasseh humbled himself and prayed to the Lord (12)
- D. He was restored
  1. God brought him out of captivity and back to Jerusalem (13)
  2. "Then Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God" (13)
  3. The problem is not that a man can't find God, but that he doesn't look for Him
- E. He was productive for God after his fall
  1. After his restoration, he built up Jerusalem (14)
  2. He took away idolatry (15) and he repaired the house of the Lord (16)
  3. He died peacefully and was buried in his own house (20)

#### VI. CONCLUSION

- A. Failure is not uncommon, even among born again believers
- B. The hallmark of a Christian is that he does not quit when he fails (Prov 24:16)
- C. When others fail, our role is to restore them (Gal 6:1)
- D. God never rejects a born again child of God, but He may limit what they can do for Him
  1. It is possible to disqualify one's self from the ministry
  2. It is possible to pass a point of no return where the injury cannot be remedied

Proverbs 24:21 My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change:  
 Daniel 2:20 Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever:  
 for wisdom and might are his: 21 And he changeth the times and the seasons:  
 Malachi 3:6 For I am the LORD, I change not

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Circumstances can change in our life which cause us to face new unknown situations, to make new plans, or to otherwise alter our course of life in order to adjust.
- B. What kind of changes might we encounter during our life?
  - 1. Getting saved and baptized
  - 2. Moving to a new city: joining a new church
  - 3. Change of employer or employment
  - 4. Getting married or losing a spouse
  - 5. The birth of a child
  - 6. The death or deterioration of health of a close family member
  - 7. Changes caused by disaster or calamity in one's life
    - a. Financial hardship
    - b. Loss due to natural catastrophe
    - c. Failure of one's business
    - d. Many other possibilities exist
  - 8. Changes in our health condition
  - 9. Entering or leaving the ministry or taking on or losing a ministry
- C. Why does change trouble us and/or cause difficulty?
  - 1. Because we are on untried and untested territory and have no experience to help guide us – i.e. we don't know what to do
  - 2. Because we fear the unknown that comes with change – i.e. we don't know what to expect and/or we are afraid
  - 3. Because we had plans based on past circumstances, and now they are all for naught – i.e. we don't know where to go from here
  - 4. Because that which was once familiar is now gone, and we must learn anew how to get along – i.e. because we are in need of guidance
- D. Change is an expected part of life. There are certain changes that cannot and should not be avoided.
- E. Most of what we do in our life will be done in unfamiliar territory (when things have changed).

## II. EXAMPLES OF BIBLE HEROES WHO FACED CHANGE

- A. Joseph saw change - he was taken from his family and sold into slavery in Egypt
  - 1. Joseph lost everything, had his future taken, and knew not what would happen day to day
  - 2. He suffered, was falsely accused, was betrayed (forgotten) by the butler (Gen 41:9)
  - 3. The one trait that Joseph exhibited was that **the Lord was with him** (Gen 39:3, 39:23)
- B. Jacob saw change at the hand of a dishonest employer (Gen 31:41). He responded with **adjustment and persistence** until he won the hand of Rachel.
- C. Joshua faced change when Moses departed
  - 1. **He was strong and of a good courage**, as God has told him to be.
- D. Job saw change - he lost everything (Job 10:17)
  - 1. **Job never stopped trusting the LORD** and knew that he was not being punished - he refused to blame God for what happened to him.
- E. Daniel saw change - he was taken captive as a young man
  - 1. He demonstrated an **excellent spirit** in spite of his hardship (Dan 5:12, Dan 6:3)
- F. The disciples saw change - **they left everything** to follow Jesus
- G. Paul faced change when he was arrested and taken to Rome. **He proceeded to serve God** in writing to the churches – the inspired word of God came through this change in his life.

**III. HOW TO COPE WITH CHANGE**

- A. Thank God for what He has done, no matter what it is – (I Thess 5:18)
- B. Don't look back, regret, rethink, or try to wish it away.
  - 1. God could have prevented it if He had wanted to.
  - 2. God could be preparing you for something great, if you will let Him.
  - 3. Paul said it best – Php 3:13 . . . forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
- C. Consider the impact on eternity, not the impact in this life (see Php 3:8 for Pauls' view)
  - 1. Is it still possible to serve God, in spite of the change?
  - 2. How can it be used to serve God more effectively than before?
  - 3. Could it bring glory to God, and if so, how?
  - 4. How should a blood bought child of God react to the change in order to bring lost people to Christ?
- D. Realize that God already knows how to handle the change, and He will guide you if you let Him.
  - 1. When we are weak, He is strong. (II Cor 12:10)
  - 2. God has a reason for what He does, and for what He allows in our life.
- E. Don't take matters into your own hands and do anything that opposes God's word (Prov 3:5-6)
- F. Don't get in a hurry to solve the problem - be patient and wait on God (Is 40:31, Ps 123:2)
- G. Be sure to give God His proper place in your life. (Matt 6:33)
  - 1. You absolutely must be in church on Sundays and Wednesdays - don't use change as an excuse to stop worshiping God.
    - a. If you move, immediately find a church and attend all the services.
    - b. If you find that the church is not satisfactory, immediately find another one
    - c. Keep tithing and giving to missions. God will bless and reward this, and He deserves it.
  - 2. Don't use new children as an excuse not to be in church activities. Doing so is a poor way to thank God for the gift He has given you.
  - 3. Continue to have daily devotions with your family
- H. Realize that most of the things we do in life that count most are done without prior experience.
  - 1. You have never raised children before, and have no experience in this area
  - 2. There is a first time for everything – losing a job, moving to a new city, having financial trouble, major health issues, etc.
- I. Get wisdom from those who can help you – find someone (i.e. a pastor or older saint) who has faced that kind of change, and ask them for godly wisdom. (Prov 11:14; Prov 15:22)

**IV. SPECIAL SITUATIONS - GOOD COUNSEL FOR THESE TYPES OF CHANGE**

- A. When you get saved
  - 1. Get baptized and join a church right away. (Ac 2:38)
  - 2. Attend church faithfully whenever services are held – all of them.
  - 3. Read your Bible and pray every day.
  - 4. Seek ways to serve God in your local church.
  - 5. Take discipleship classes and be faithful to them.
- B. When you move to a new city.
  - 1. Start attending church and keep doing so until you find one you can join. Finding a church is not a beauty contest. Try one at a time.
  - 2. If possible, find a church before you choose where to live.
  - 3. If you cannot find a church, and cannot start one, you don't belong there.
- C. When you change employment
  - 1. Do not allow new employment to erode your faithfulness to church (none at all).
  - 2. Be sure to be ready to defend your testimony to new co-workers. Make it very clear that you are a Christian and be ready to be watched and challenged.
  - 3. Establish a daily routine that keeps you faithful to the Bible and prayer.
- D. When a child is born
  - 1. Don't use the new child as an excuse to back away from church or serving God.

2. Make it a habit to bring the child to church, even when very young.
  3. As soon as possible, teach the child to love God, to pray, to honor God, and to put God first in their life.
  4. **KEEP THE CHILD IN SUNDAY SCHOOL.**
- E. When a family member is very ill, or dies
1. The Lord cautioned those who followed Him that they not make the death of a loved one an excuse (Matt 8:22; Luke 9:60).
  2. If they are saved, you can be happy for them - they would not return to you if they had the option: they are with the Lord.
  3. If they were lost, they are praying that you will go to their brethren and win them to the Lord (Luke 16:28)
- F. When catastrophe comes (i.e. house fire, tornado, flood, etc.) or financial failure occurs
1. In everything give thanks (I Thess 5:18)
  2. God can provide even more bountifully than before
  3. Draw close to God and allow Him to comfort you and meet your needs
  4. Realize that there is a purpose - accept what has happened and go forward
  5. Encourage yourself in the Lord
- G. When you start or end a ministry
1. Was it yours or was it God's ministry? If it was God's, and he chose to end it, you must accept that it was His will and He is responsible for the results.
  2. What did you learn from the failures or errors. Take the lessons and avoid them.
  3. What did you learn from the blessings and victories. Take them and do them again.
  4. Seek counsel from those who have had similar experiences
  5. "Work hard and pray."
  6. Be patient. Let God do things in His timing, not yours.

Gen 4:13 And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear.

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The Bible tells the story of a number of men and women who did not survive
  - 1. They had an opportunity to survive, but a decision, act, or preference caused them to fail.
  - 2. They did not recover and were not restored.
  - 3. In some cases they died right away, and in others they languished or wasted their life.
  - 4. Most of them were aware of their mistake, regretted it, but had gone too far to be recovered.
  - 5. None of them are people that others would envy, or desire to be like.
- B. They are there as examples for us – as warnings that we can see and use to our benefit.
- C. The mistakes they made were grievous, and serious, and if we can identify those mistakes perhaps we can learn how to avoid a failure to survive.
- D. Questions to ask:
  - 1. What was their situation and opportunity?
  - 2. What decision(s) did they make that caused them to fail?
  - 3. What were the consequences of those decisions? What did they experience?
  - 4. What should they have done that would have prevented failure?
  - 5. How can we avoid the mistake that they made?

## II. CAIN – FAILURE CAUSED BY DISOBEDIENCE AND REBELLION: CHOOSING SIN

- A. Cain's story is isolated to one chapter in the Bible – Genesis 4
- B. He is later mentioned only three times – Hebrews 11:4, I John 3:12, and Jude 1:11 (these three references are very descriptive of the cause of his failure)
- C. Cain was the first child ever born of a woman (Genesis 4:1)
- D. Cain's descendant would have been the Messiah. Cain was the hope of salvation to Eve. He had a great opportunity.
- E. Cain's first error was eligible for correction: he brought an offering that God rejected (Gen 4:4:5)
  - 1. But, Cain was angry (at God), and his countenance fell (he was depressed about it) when God refused his offering. Note: disobedience brings depression.
  - 2. Cain knew what God wanted, but he refused to bring it.
- F. Then, Cain had a second opportunity to do right, and was personally instructed by the LORD, but Cain rejected God's word and will again (Gen 4:6-7).
- G. Finally, Cain sealed his fate when he killed Abel. (Gen 4:8) Then, to add further offence he mocked God when asked what happened to Abel (Gen 4:9)
- H. Therefore, God judged him:
  - 1. Gen 4:11 And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; 12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.
    - a. His hope (agriculture) was cursed and made unproductive
    - b. His style of life (staying in one place and farming) was destroyed and he was caused to be a fugitive and vagabond.
  - 2. Gen 4:13 And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear.
- I. God's further commentary on Cain
  - 1. Heb 11:4 – Cain's offering excluded faith
  - 2. I John 3:12 – Cain's jealousy and hatred towards Abel led him to kill Abel.
- J. LESSON:
  - 1. Bring what God asks, and not a substitute – the Lord Jesus Christ is the ONLY valid way.
  - 2. When corrected by God, hear and comply.
  - 3. Don't try to outdo God or get even with Him.

## III. ESAU – FAILURE CAUSED BY CARNAL DESIRE AND WRONG PRIORITIES

- A. Esau is first mentioned in Genesis chapter 25, then often in Genesis. Then, he is mentioned often in the Old Testament and three times in the New (Ro 9:13, Heb 11:20, and Heb 12:16).

- B. Esau was the firstborn son of Isaac. He had the birthright, and again would have produced the line of Christ. He had all the rights of a firstborn son, and forfeited them.
  - 1. Isaac loved him more (Gen 25:28)
  - 2. He was an outdoorsman (Gen 25:27) whereas Jacob was “plain.”
- C. In the end, God says He hated Esau (Rom 9:13). What happened?
- D. Esau’s first mistake was to despise his birthright (Gen 25:34). He thought nothing of giving away all the privileges of being used by God just so he could have a bowl of beans.
- E. Then, as he grew older, he chose to marry ungodly women of the heathen nations (Gen 26:34)
- F. Finally, God had a hand in allowing Jacob to deceive Isaac and steal the blessing (Gen 27)
- G. When the blessing was stolen (don’t forget that he had already sold it to Jacob for beans) he was grieved (Gen 27:34).
  - 1. When we finally see the consequences of our sin, grief will result.
- H. Esau’s descendants (the Edomites) became the enemy of God’s people and were cursed and destroyed by God
- I. Hebrews 12:16 defines Esau’s fatal mistake. He was profane and undervalued his birthright so much that he sold it cheaply for “one morsel.”
  - 1. The Greek word for “profane” refers to the bottom of the foot - something that is unclean
  - 2. Esau found his comfort more valuable than the priceless things of God.
- J. Lesson:
  - 1. Sometimes when you trade godliness for pleasure, the deal is final.
  - 2. Esau wanted to “feel good right now” (i.e. pleasure of sin for a season) rather than be used by God in eternity, and he got what he wanted.
  - 3. After the good feeling was gone, bitter disappointment took its place.
  - 4. You have a choice (with your life, your children, your money, etc.) and you can use them for temporary carnal satisfaction, or you can let God use them for eternal purposes.

#### IV. LOT – FAILURE CAUSED BY BAD EYES

- A. Lot’s story begins at the end of Genesis chapter 11, and continues thru chapter 19.
- B. He is mentioned three times in the New Testament (Lu 17:28-29, Lu 17:32, II Pe 2:7)
- C. Lot’s problems begin in Genesis 13:10 when “Lot lifted up his eyes” and saw the well watered plain.
  - 1. What Lot saw was potential for prosperity, comfort, and an easy life.
  - 2. What Lot did not see was the wickedness that he would have to accept in order to have all those things.
- D. Interestingly, after Lot “lifted up his eyes” and departed from Abram, God told Abram to lift up his eyes and look every direction, because God would give all that land to him (Ge 13:15).
  - 1. Abram’s eyes were directed by God
  - 2. Lot’s eyes were guided only by Lot
- E. Lot had another chance (see Gen 14:12). Lot was captured and delivered by Abram (Gen 14:16). He could have left then, but he went right back to the wickedness.
- F. His final chance (what little chance there was) is seen in Genesis 19. God sends angels to deliver Lot, but Lot doesn’t want to go.
  - 1. His family was so affected by Lot’s acceptance of ungodliness that they thought he was joking when he told them to flee (Gen 19:14)
  - 2. He lingered and they forced him to escape (Gen 19:16)
  - 3. His wife looked back and died (God turned her to salt) (26)
- G. He rejected the place God had chosen for him (the mountain) and chose a cave (Gen 19:30)
- H. His daughters got him drunk, were incestuous, and gave birth to two nations that were the enemies of God’s people – the Moabites and Ammonites.
- I. Lot lost EVERYTHING – his wife, his home, his possessions, his family, and his dignity.
- J. Lesson:
  - 1. What looks good now may end in horrible sadness. Let God direct your eyes.
  - 2. Don’t think it is OK to accept a little sin (or a lot) in order to get what you want.
  - 3. Once you compromise, you will do so again and again and the price will get higher and higher. At one point, Lot was even willing to give his daughters to Sodomites.

Joshua 1:8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth;  
but thou shalt meditate therein day and night,  
that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein:  
for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. An antonym (opposite word) for “failure” is “success.”
- B. The word “success” only appears one time in the Bible – Joshua 1:8
  - 1. It is interesting that the Hebrew word which is translated “success” in Joshua 1:8 is the same Hebrew word used in Genesis 3:6 (for “wise”) when Eve decided to eat the fruit because it was “a tree to be **desired** to make one **wise**.” Eve wanted success.
  - 2. “Success” means different things to different people, but almost everyone is seeking it.
- C. God promised Joshua that he would have success IF:
  - 1. Joshua would meditate in God’s law day and night
  - 2. Joshua would observe to do ALL that was written therein
- D. This is the same message found in David’s Psalm 1. Prosperity is promised to:
  - 1. The man that meditates in the law of the Lord day and night, and who
  - 2. Walks not in the counsel of the ungodly . . .
- E. The essential ingredient in success and/or prosperity is the Word of God
  - 1. Knowing it
  - 2. Staying in it
  - 3. Living according to it
- F. David is a man who, as seen in Psalm 119, loved God’s word above all else.
- G. The one example of failure in David’s life resulted from his disobedience in the matter of Uriah the Hittite (1 Kings 15:5 Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.)

## II. THE SURVIVAL OF DAVID

- A. From what did David need to be a survivor?
  - 1. Battle with of an impossible opponent - the giant
  - 2. Jealousy and hatred of an ungodly king – Saul
  - 3. Opposition by the enemy of God’s people - the Philistines
  - 4. Rebellion of a disloyal child - Absalom
- B. What could have happened?
  - 1. The giant could have overwhelmed and killed him
  - 2. King Saul could have captured and killed him
  - 3. The Philistines could have defeated and killed him
  - 4. Absalom could have escaped, ruled, and killed him
- C. What did happen? — *David was saved “by the name of God” (Psalm 54:1)* (see I Sam 17:45)<sup>1</sup>
  - 1. Goliath – I Samuel 17
    - a. The Giant’s plan was to kill David (44)
    - b. David’s answer was the name of God (45)
      - (1) Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts
      - (2) David’s cause, purpose, and objective was to fight the Lord’s fight. God’s battle was David’s battle.
      - (3) What is our purpose and objective? Whose cause do we uphold?
  - 2. Saul – Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul. (I Sam 18:12)
    - a. I Sam 18:28 And Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal Saul’s daughter loved him. 29 And Saul was yet the more afraid of David;

<sup>1</sup> David’s cause was to uphold God’s name. He told Goliath that very fact, then killed him by God’s power.

- and Saul became David's enemy continually.
- b. Saul sought to kill David (I Sam 19:1)
  - c. Saul's disobedience and God's promise were David's defense.
    - (1) The Lord had become Saul's enemy (I Sam 28:16)
    - (2) The Lord had promised David the kingdom (17)
  - d. Saul fell in battle and David was made king (I Sam 31:1-6)
3. Absalom – Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel (II Sam 15:6)
- a. He sent spies around the nation and had them declare him king (II Sam 15:10)
  - b. Then, David's life was threatened and he was forced to flee (II Sam 15:14)
  - c. The Lord was on David's side, and "appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom." (II Sam 17:14)
  - d. Absalom was killed by Joab, in defiance of David's orders (II Sam 18:14-15)
  - e. David mourned Absalom's death (II Sam 19:4)
  - f. But, again, God delivered David from his enemies (Ps 54:7 For he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.)
- D. In each case, had it not been for the Lord, David would have been defeated. As God promised Joshua (Josh 1:8), success is dependent upon our love for His word, not upon our ability.

### III. CONCLUSION

- A. You and I are like David in many ways.
  1. We have the word of God at our fingertips
  2. We can decide to love it and to obey it.
  3. We can decide to believe what it says and live by it.
  4. We have enemies who will try to destroy us - they ultimately come in the form of people like Goliath, Saul, or Absalom.
- B. Were it not for the Lord, our enemies would defeat us and we would fail.
- C. But, like David, God can deliver us from all trouble (Psalm 54:7).
  1. Ps 34:4 I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.
  2. Ps 34:17 The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.
  3. Ps 34:19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.
- D. David explained it this way. Psalm 27:1 « A Psalm of David. » The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
- E. It is the Lord and the Lord alone who can keep us from failing, but only if we will trust Him and live according to His word.
  1. What is your daily practice concerning God's word? Do you know it and meditate (think) of it as often as you should?
  2. What is your pattern of living? Is God's word the guide in your life, or are you living in a way that neglects God's word and will?
- F. Success is up to us only in that it is up to us to place ourselves in God's protective hands by loving, knowing, and obeying His word.

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus,  
after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. I Peter 5:10

Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord,  
for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. James 5:10

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Suffer – “To feel or bear what is painful, disagreeable or distressing, either to the body or mind; to undergo. We suffer pain of body; we suffer grief of mind. The criminal suffers punishment; the sinner suffers the pangs of conscience in this life, and is condemned to suffer the wrath of an offended God. We often suffer wrong; we suffer abuse; we suffer injustice.” (Webster’s 1828)
- B. This subject, its cause, its remedy, and countless examples of it are found in the Bible.
- C. Everyone suffers, and there is nothing that can be done to avoid this fact. It is not just a part of the Christian’s life, or the unbeliever’s life, it is a part of life.
  1. The lost man who does all he can to avoid suffering will still experience the suffering of doubt and guilt and sin’s wages, and then the suffering of hell.
  2. The saved man who does all he can to avoid suffering will still experience the suffering of being backslidden, sin’s wages, and feeling guilty towards Christ. (Heb 10:26-27)
  3. The saved man who lives a godly life will suffer persecution, trials, etc. (II Tim 2:12, Acts 9:16, Php 1:29)
- D. If you are alive, you have suffered and will suffer. Suffering is caused by the presence of sin in the world, and will continue until sin is removed.

## II. EXAMPLES OF SUFFERING FOUND IN THE BIBLE<sup>2</sup>

- A. Loss of a loved one to death
  1. David’s son Absalom (II Sam 18:33)
  2. Lazarus (John 11:1-21)
- B. Being betrayed by friends or loved ones
  1. Job’s wife (Job 2:9) – it is a most painful
  2. Joseph’s brothers (Gen 37:28-36)
  3. Jesus was betrayed by Judas Iscariot (Mark 14:10-11)
- C. Not being properly loved, cared for, or raised by parents
  1. Ishmael (Gen 21:8-21)
- D. Physical pain and other loss due to illness
  1. Job (2:7-8)
  2. Epaphroditus (Php 2:25-27)
- E. Going without things due to poverty
  1. Lazarus (Luke 16:20)
  2. The Apostle Paul (II Cor 11:27)
- F. Physical pain due to mistreatment at the hands of others
  1. Tamar - abused by Amnon (II Sam 13:1-14)
  2. Paul - beaten and stoned (II Cor 11:24-25)
- G. Emotional pain due to false accusation
  1. Saul falsely accused David (I Sam 18:8-30)
  2. Ahab accused the prophet Elijah (I Kings 18:17-18)
- H. Defeat (or overwhelming odds) while trying to do what is right
  1. Elijah (I Kings 19:1-10)
  2. Joshua (Josh 7:1-5)
- I. Persecution for standing with the Lord
  1. The Prophets (James 5:10)

### Interesting Facts about “Suffering”

- The word “suffer” never appears in the gospel of John.
- It comes from two Latin words that mean, “to put under” or “carry.”
- I Peter mentions suffering more often than almost any other book, but in the book of II Peter it is never named.

### Job as a comprehensive example of suffering

#### THINGS JOB LOST:

- His protection from God
- His material wealth
- His loved ones (to death)
- His health
- His reputation
- The loyalty of his friends
- The loyalty of his family

*In most of these, Job is a picture of Jesus Christ*

<sup>2</sup> See E. Allen Griffith, *Victory over Trial and Trouble*, Faithful Life Publishers, Lebanon, PA, 2004.

2. Joseph, Daniel, Peter, Paul, etc. etc.

### III. MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SUFFERING

- A. That we are the exceptional case - that others are not suffering like we are – and that it is something very unusual that God is allowing us to endure.
  1. I Pe 4:12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.
  2. Truth: suffering is to be expected, and is nothing unusual. And, while we may have suffered quite a lot, there are many examples of those who have suffered much more.
    - a. The Lord Jesus Christ
    - b. The Apostle Paul
    - c. Missionary Adoniram Judson
- B. That the reason we are suffering is solely because of our sin and sinful condition.
  1. Job 2:3 and Job 27:5 God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.
  2. Truth: We may suffer "as an evildoer" (I Pe 4:15), but that is not the only reason for suffering.
  3. Truth: Much of the time, the suffering of God's people is not the chastening of God or the wages of sin, but rather it is the manifestation of the opposition we face from the world, flesh, and devil. For example, consider why Christ suffered.
- C. That it is not God's will for His people to suffer.
  1. I Pe 4:19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.
  2. Truth: It is sometimes God's will that we suffer.
- D. That "things" will never get any better – that there is no remedy or deliverance.
  1. Suffering is for "a while" – I Pe 5:10
  2. It is the lost who have no remedy for their suffering, not the saved.
- E. That we should always act in a way that avoids suffering (no, see Heb 11:25)

### IV. FIRST PETER CHAPTER FOUR – A PREMIER CHAPTER ON SUFFERING

- A. Christ is our example, and we must "arm ourselves" in preparation for suffering with the same "mind" (i.e. idea) that He had – namely that suffering in this life is evidence of the fact that this life is not our ultimate destination. (I Pe 4:1)
  1. Those who suffer are submitted to the will of God, not of man (2)
  2. We are no longer like those who are lost - who face judgment (5)
- B. It is to be expected that fiery trials will come our way (I Pe 4:12)
  1. When they do, we should rejoice that we are like Christ in that way (13)
  2. Acceptance of suffering with a proper spirit brings glory to God (14)
- C. We should not commit sinful acts which cause us to suffer, but if we do they will (15)
- D. When you suffer, don't be ashamed of it. Realize that it brings glory to God (16)
- E. The ultimate decision of a suffering man is to commit/trust their welfare TOTALLY to God (19)

### V. BENEFITS OF SUFFERING <sup>3</sup>

- A. Suffering verifies that our faith is genuine (I Peter 1:6-7)
- B. It equips us with the knowledge necessary to comfort others who are suffering (II Cor 1:4-5)
- C. It gives us patience and character (Rom 5:3)
- D. It removes impurities from our life (Job 23:10)

### VI. CONCLUSION

- A. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. Jn 16:33
- B. Job was a type (picture) of Christ, in that he suffered in his innocence. When we suffer, and it was not deserved, we are likewise.

<sup>3</sup> See Keith Piper, *Answers*, www.answersbook.org, 2007, Lesson 129.

- C. God had one Son on earth without sin, but no son on earth without suffering. (Augustine)
- D. It is the crushed grape that yields wine. (Unknown)
- E. Smooth seas do not make skillful sailors. (Unknown)
- F. A faith that has not been tested cannot be trusted. (Adrian Rogers)

*I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10:10*

## I. INTRODUCTION<sup>4</sup>

- A. *The Way of Life Encyclopedia* edited by David Cloud was first printed in 1993. It contains and defines almost every word in the Bible, does topical studies (as in this lesson), and provides a number of other tools for Bible study. We recommend it highly.
- B. In the Fourth Edition, on page 563, the following study of suffering is included. This lesson is taken and adapted from that topical study.
- C. Suffering is defined in that book as, “trouble; pain; persecution; sorrow; distress; injury; hurt; loss; misery; problems.”

## II. THE FACT OF SUFFERING

- A. Trouble and suffering is part of the life of every man (Job 5:7)
- B. The believer who walks with God will suffer the normal afflictions of this sinful world, and will also suffer because of his faith. (Acts 14:22, II Tim 3:12, I Pe 4:12).

## III. THE TYPES OF CHRISTIAN SUFFERING

- A. Financial want (I Tim 6:6-8)
  1. God does not promise His people prosperity in this life
  2. He has often required His children to be relatively poor.
  3. He does promise to meet our needs (PS 37:25, Heb 13:5) but not all of our wants.
  4. The widow’s meal barrel did not fail, but she had to scrape the bottom of the barrel daily (I Ki 17:12-16)
  5. God uses our want to teach us humility and dependance on Him.
- B. Sickness
  1. God will allow us to live with physical infirmity (II Cor 12:7-10, I Tim 5:23, II Tim 4:20)
  2. God will allow us to be sick, even unto death (Php 2:25-27)
  3. Note: Trophimus was so ill in II Tim 4:20 that he had to refrain from God’s work.
- C. Emotional Suffering
  1. Despair (II Cor 1:8)
  2. Internal fear (II Cor 7:5)
  3. Heaviness and sorrow (Psalm 119:28)
  4. Trouble and anguish (Ps 119:143)
- D. Persecution (Mark 10:30, II Tim 3:11-12)
- E. Imperfection (Gal 5:17, Rom 7:24)
  1. The Christian suffers because of his imperfect condition.
    - a. The indwelling Spirit yearns for perfect holiness, but in practice we are far from perfectly holy.
    - b. One of the greatest sufferings for the child of God is his fallen condition.
  2. The Christian is living in a body of sin and death (Rom 7:24)
- F. The Elements (Matt 5:45)
  1. The Christian must endure pain and hardship along with the unsaved
    - a. Storms
    - b. Famines
    - c. Pestilence
    - d. Wars
    - e. Tragedies
- G. Lack of visible success
  1. God’s people are not promised any certain standard of visible success in this life.
  2. Many of God’s finest saints labored with very little outward success.
  3. Noah preached for 120 years with no converts other than his family.
  4. Jeremiah prophesied to Judah for four decades with almost no response from the people.
  5. The Lord Jesus Christ was despised and rejected by those He died to save.
- H. Unnecessary suffering – Disobedience can cause suffering (I Cor 11:30). The reason God has given us commands to obey is to PROTECT US FROM SUFFERING CAUSED BY SIN.

<sup>4</sup> This lesson was taken from *Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible & Christianity*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Way of Life Literature, 2002, pp. 563-564.

1. The believer is subject to reaping what he has sown (Gal 6:7)
2. Many of our troubles are:
  - a. The fruit of our own sin and foolishness (Gal 6:7)
  - b. Caused by our lack of wisdom (Prov 19:3, 26:17, 27:12)
  - c. Results of our slothfulness (Prov 6:9-11, 15:19, 19:15)
  - d. Fruit of our dishonesty (Prov 19:5)
3. For example:
  - a. A young lady disobeys God and has a baby out of wedlock. This will result in suffering and a hard life for her and her child. (Prov 1:24-26)
  - b. The father or mother who ignore God's instructions on child rearing will suffer the consequences and pain caused by a disobedient child (Prov 29:15)

**IV. THE PURPOSE OF THE CHRISTIAN'S SUFFERING**

- A. Sin's curse (Jer 24:6, Gen 3:16-19)
  1. This present world is under a curse because of sin.
  2. The Christian is affected by this curse, as are all men.
  3. The curse includes death, weeds, sickness, sorrow, toil, pain, suffering, and the like.
- B. Testing of our faith
  1. God uses suffering to test the believer's faith and to produce growth and reward (James 1:3, I Pe 1:6-7, 4:12-13)
- C. To achieve obedience (Heb 5:8, Psalm 119:67, 71, 75)
- D. To produce patience & strength (Rom 5:3-5, I Pe 5:10)
- E. God uses suffering to humble the believer and show His power through a believer's life (II Cor 1:8-9, 4:7-12, 12:7-10)
- F. To accomplish God's purpose
  1. "It is well to remember that God is God, and He has a right to do what He pleases. It is crucial that we trust Him regardless of whether or not we understand His purposes with us. If we require that God reveal to us every purpose for His actions, He ceases to be the object of our faith." (David Cloud)
- G. To obtain reward (I Pe 1:7, II Cor 4:17)

**V. THE DURATION OF THE CHRISTIAN'S SUFFERING**

- A. "Awhile" – I Pe 5:10
- B. "A season" – I Pe 1:6
- C. "This present time" – Rom 8:18
- D. The Bible promises no time limit to suffering. God promises to be with us in our suffering, but not necessarily to remove it.
- E. Psalm 88 is interesting in that the Psalmist complains of his trouble from beginning to end, but there is no hint of relief.

**VI. POSSIBLE RESPONSES TO SUFFERING**

- A. We may despise it, rebelling instead of submitting to God; this leads to hardness.
- B. We may faint under it (Heb 12:12-13).
- C. We may agree and bear it, but not joyfully. This is the lowest form of victory.
- D. We may happily yield to the will of God; this is the highest form of victory.

Heb 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

- 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

## I. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS THE ULTIMATE EXAMPLE

- A. When considering how we are to survive, endure, and bear up under burdens, there is no better example than the Lord Jesus Christ.
  1. Heb 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.
  2. Php 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
- B. Consider the topics we have examined in regard to survival:
  1. **Discouragement** – The Lord was continually plagued by the weakness, ignorance, and lack of faith by those around Him, but He did not cease to press forward to the goal.
    - a. The disciples were a continual disappointment concerning faith, wisdom, etc.
    - b. The people around Him refused to see the obvious
    - c. Yet the Bible says he “shall not be discouraged” – Is 42:4
  2. **Temptation** – The Lord was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin (Heb 4:15)
  3. **Failure** – The Lord never experienced failure due to sin or weakness, but he did know failure in that Israel refused to accept Him as King. (His own received him not - Jn 1:12)
  4. **Change** – The Lord never knew stability. He left all at the age of 30 to accomplish His ministry, and never again had home, city, or any long term situation.
  5. **Suffering** – There is no better example of suffering than the Lord Jesus Christ
    - a. He suffered wrongfully for the sins of others, not His own (I Pe 3:18)
    - b. He suffered for us (I Pe 2:21)
    - c. He did not threaten or lash out when suffering (I Pe 2:23)
    - d. He suffered being tempted (Heb 2:18)
    - e. He suffered obediently (Heb 5:8)
- C. Consider also what the Lord endured:
  1. Rejection (John 1:11)
  2. Opposition
  3. Being forsaken by His Father (Matt 27:46)

## II. CONCLUSION

- A. Sadly, and unnecessarily, there are believers who fail to survive. They succumb to faithlessness, temptation, or suffering. Suffering is unavoidable, but it is also survivable.
- B. Know this:
  1. God is able to keep you from falling – Jude 1:24
  2. Christ is able to succor [relieve] them that are tempted – Heb 2:18
  3. Those who put on the whole armor of God are able to withstand – Eph 6:11, 13
  4. God promised not to allow us to be tempted above that which we are able – I Cor 10:13
  5. God is able to make His servant stand – Rom 14:4
- C. Job 23:10 But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.