**FOCUS** in 2020

May 24, 2020

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**In Times Like These**

***We Need Resilience***



These are difficult, uncertain times … who do we need to be … what do we need to personally possess as the people of God in times like these. Over the past three weeks, we have looked at gratitude, courage and faith. **This morning I want us to think about ... resilience.**

Author Andrew Zolli says in his book, Resilience, Why Things Bounce Back, that ...

**Resilience** is the ability of people, communities, and systems to maintain their core purpose and integrity among **unforeseen shocks and surprises**.

**The Stockdale Paradox:** people must retain faith that they will prevail in the end regardless of difficulties, but at the same time, they must confront the most brutal facts of their current reality, whatever they might be.

Asked by author Jim Collins how he dealt with the seemingly hopeless situation, he replied: “***I never lost faith in the end of the story. I never doubted not only that I would get out, but that I would prevail in the end.***”

You might say that this principle is …

Keep your heart **up** and your head **down**!

**Heart up** is about **faith** and **hope ...** regardless of the circumstances. Never stop believing and trusting God to the very end.

**Head down** is about having **honesty** and **humility** before God about the truth of the situation, the brutal facts of current reality. Being honest does not mean pessimistic or overstating the problem … just **being humble before God regarding your need and the situation.**

**So where do find resilience in the Bible?**

**One of the most resilient individuals in scripture is Joseph.**

**How do you overcome and comeback from** family betrayal, attempted murder, lies, false imprisonment, slavery … how do you keep hope in the middle of unforeseen **shocks** and **surprises**? Just when you thought it was safe to get back in the water … du dun du dun …That is a line the movie *Jaws* with the mechanical great white shark … go watch the movie.

*Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And* ***he made him a robe of many colors.*** Genesis 37:3

*But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers,* ***they hated him*** *and could not speak peacefully to him.*  Genesis 37:4

*Meanwhile the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard.* Genesis 37:36

*The Lord was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master.* *His master saw that* ***the Lord was with him*** *and that the Lord caused all that he did to succeed in his hands.* Genesis 39:2-3

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Romans 8:35–39

**Joseph’s Resilience ... and The Rest of the Story**

*So Joseph said to his brothers, “Come near to me, please.” And they came near. And he said, “****I am your brother****, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life.* Genesis 45:4–5

*And God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, “Jacob, Jacob.” And he said, “Here I am.” Then he said, “I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation. I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again, and Joseph’s hand shall close your eyes.”* Genesis 46:2–4

*As for you,* ***you meant evil*** *against me, but* ***God meant it for good,*** *to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.* Genesis 50:20

*And we know that for those who love God* ***all things work together for good****, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew* ***he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son****, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.* Romans 8:28–29

**Developing Resilience in Your Life**

Be **content** with **Christ** in any circumstance.

*For the sake of Christ, then,* ***I am content*** *with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities.* ***For when I am weak, then I am strong****.* 2 Corinthians 12:10

Let the **treasure** overcome the **tragedy**.

*But* ***we have this treasure in jars of clay****, to show that the surpassing* ***power belongs to God and not to us****. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you.*  2 Corinthians 4:7–12

Focus on the **end** and **finish** strong.

*I have* ***fought*** *the good fight, I have* ***finished*** *the race, I have* ***kept*** *the faith.*  2 Timothy 4:7

**Benediction**

*Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.*  2 Thessalonians 2:16–17