

10-8-2016, COTR Texarkana

- Title: Survival Skills
- Purpose: Provoke people to practice spiritual survival skills to maintain strong faith in God during hard times.
- Spiritual Truth: Spiritual survival skills help us maintain strong faith in hard times.
- Text: Genesis 41:14-16
- Topic: Joseph, Crisis, Faith, Perseverance, Survival Skills
- Series: Not Your Average Joe
- Series Purpose: Provoke people to live an extraordinary life by following the example of Joseph.

Survival Skills

I. Introduction

- A. Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7jyJJCSM1U> He survived because he had survival skills. We need spiritual survival skills to keep strong faith in hard times.
- B. Review Series, “Not Your Average Joe”. We’re learning how to live an extraordinary life by following the example of the OT character, Joseph.
 - 1. Listen to live stream @ChurchOnTheRock.org or the COTR iPhone/ Android app
- C. Today I’ll make the point that Joseph had “Survival Skills” that helped him maintain his faith in God during a long season of difficulty and disappointment.
 - 1. Context: Genesis 41:14–16 (NIV) So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon... 15 Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I had a dream, and no one can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.” 16 “I cannot do it,” Joseph replied to Pharaoh, “**but God will give Pharaoh the answer** he desires.”
 - 2. For 13 years Joseph wondered why God let so many bad things happen. His brothers sold him into slavery, he was put in jail when he did nothing wrong and he was forgotten for 2 years by people who could have gotten him out. But now his response to Pharaoh indicates he still has deep faith in God. How did he maintain faith in God during 13 years of difficulty? He had spiritual “Survival Skills”.
 - 3. The Bible doesn’t tell us what spiritual survival skills Joseph used so we’ll look to other parts of the Bible to find answers.
- D. Title: Survival Skills
- E. Purpose: Provoke people to practice spiritual survival skills to maintain strong faith in God during hard times.
- F. Spiritual Truth: Spiritual survival skills help us maintain strong faith in hard times.

II. David found spiritual strength to survive a crisis

- A. 1 Samuel 30:1–8 (NLT)...when David and his men arrived home at...Ziklag, they found that the Amalekites had...crushed Ziklag and burned it to the ground. 2 They had carried off the women and children...without killing anyone. 3 When David and his men saw the ruins and realized what had happened to their families, 4 they wept until they could weep no more...6 David was now in great danger because all his men...began to talk of

stoning him. But **David found strength in the LORD his God...**⁸ Then David asked the Lord, “Should I chase after this band of raiders...And **the Lord told him**, “Yes, go after them. You will surely recover everything that was taken from you!”

1. When bad things happen our faith is tested. Usually our 1st response is to wonder why God let it happen or doubt God cares and complain. But we can follow David’s example and find spiritual strength and direction as we seek God for help.

B. David and Joseph used spiritual survival skills in a crisis. We can, too. Let’s learn how.

III. Spiritual survival skills help us maintain strong faith in hard times

A. Remember what God has done

1. Psalm 77:2–14 (ESV) In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord...6 I said, “**Let me remember** (NLT) when my nights were filled with joyful songs... I search my soul and ponder the difference now. 7 “Will the Lord (NCV reject us) forever, and never again be favorable? 8...Are his promises at an end for all time? 9 Has God forgotten to be gracious?... 11(NCV) **I remember what the LORD did; I remember the miracles** you did long ago...13 God, your ways are holy. No god is as great as our God. 14 You are the God who does miracles; you have shown people your power.
 - a He went from worrying about his trouble to faith in the miracle working God. Remembering what God did yesterday gave him hope for tomorrow. E.g. Rebekah C-section cord around her neck and RSV, driving, missions trips...

B. Believe what God has promised

1. Context: Absalom, David’s son led a rebellion and has been killed. 2 Samuel 18:28 (ESV) Then Ahimaaz cried out to the king, “**All is well.**” (*NLT everything is alright*) And he...said, “Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delivered up the men who raised their hand against my lord the king.”
2. A word from God can still any storm in our life and give us hope for a bright future.
3. I wrote in my Bible LaNell going to Baylor, 12-17-2012; prophesy re. my health
4. Perhaps Joseph’s dream at 17 kept his faith alive for 13 years.

C. Cultivate a thankful attitude

1. Habakkuk 3:17–19 (NLT) Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vines...and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty, 18 **yet I will rejoice in the LORD!** I will be joyful in the God of my salvation! 19 The Sovereign LORD is my strength! He makes me as surefooted as a deer, able to tread upon the heights...
 - a When bad things happen I have 2 choices, look at the problem and complain or rejoice in the Lord. God is still good even when my circumstances are bad.

D. Deepen your prayer life

1. When pastor Jay was here I told him about my struggles with anxiety and he asked me if I prayed in the Spirit more when I was battling anxiety.
2. Jude 20 (NKJV) But you, beloved, **building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit...** Ephesians 6:18 (ESV) **praying at all times in the Spirit...**

- a The preposition *in* here most probably means “in the control of,” “under the inspiration of,” “guided by,” or “by means of the power of.” This implies Spirit-filled or Spirit-controlled prayer. (Christianity divided over HS)
- 3. Context ch 14: a problem in the church at Corinth; people were speaking in tongues, an unlearned language supernaturally given by the Holy Spirit, in church and it caused confusion. However, praying under the influence of the Holy Spirit is good. 1 Corinthians 14:4-15 (ESV) **The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself** ... 14 For if I pray in a tongue, **my spirit prays** but my mind is unfruitful. 15 What am I to do? **I will pray with my spirit**, but I will pray with my mind also...
- E. Seek out Christian fellowship
 - 1. 2 Corinthians 7:5–6 (NLT) When we arrived in Macedonia...We faced conflict from every direction, with battles on the outside and fear on the inside. 6 But **God, who encourages those who are discouraged, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus.**
 - 2. It’s hard to keep strong faith in hard times; Paul needed other Christians to encourage him and so do we.
 - 3. Jay told me to text, “pray” when I’m battling anxiety. I have and his fellowship helps strengthen me when I’m having a hard time.
- F. Meditate on God’s Word
 - 1. When I feel I don’t have the strength to go on I meditate on: Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) being confident of this very thing, that **He who has begun a good work in you will complete it** until the day of Jesus Christ;
 - 2. When I feel alone and fearful I meditate on: Isaiah 41:10 (ESV) **fear not, for I am with you**; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
 - 3. When I don’t know what to do I meditate on: Proverbs 3:5–6 (NKJV) Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And **He shall direct your paths.**

IV. Conclusion: Spiritual survival skills help us persevere in hard times.

- A. Def. perseverance: constant pursuit; to persist in spite of opposition and discouragement; hang in there, stick it out. Joseph and David persevered and were victorious; so can we.
- B. Summary: (1) Remember what God has done (2) Believe what God has promised (3) Cultivate a thankful attitude (4) Deepen your prayer life (5) Seek out Christian fellowship (6) Meditate on God’s Word.

V. Response

- A. Prayer: Are you having trouble keeping strong faith in a hard time?
- B. Souls
- C. *** *Logos Bible Software and library, A Handbook on the Letter of Jude, Wuest’s Word Studies in the Greek NT, A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: 1 Corinthians were used to prepare this message.*

