

Moving from Surviving to Thriving

Life today can be challenging, with financial uncertainties and political unrest vying for our attention. It's easy to feel overwhelmed and merely focus on getting through each day. Let's explore the shift from surviving to thriving in the midst of life's complexities.

Introduction

In our fast-paced world, challenges often seem insurmountable. Whether it is stretching a paycheck to cover essentials or navigating a string of unfortunate events, the feeling of being surrounded by obstacles can be daunting. However, there is a way out of this seemingly inescapable situation.

It is easy to get caught up in the day-to-day things of life. We start to lose sight of the big picture and God's plan for our lives. The world starts to surround us and makes us feel trapped. Real or imagined, it is a scary perspective to have. It is very natural to drop into survival mode and stop thriving. That is why we need the supernatural to move from surviving to thriving.

Dropping Into Survival Mode

Various factors, such as financial struggles, relationships, and challenging circumstances, can lead us into survival mode. The stress caused by these elements becomes a distraction, pulling our focus away from Jesus and the bigger picture of God's plan for our lives. It's crucial to recognize when we start losing sight of thriving and begin merely surviving.

Financial difficulties can force us into a survival mindset, where we lose focus on spiritual matters. Many people have gotten to the point financially where they don't have any money saved in case of an emergency. Worse yet, they aren't able to make it from paycheck to paycheck without help. This causes us to shift our focus from Jesus to finances. We drop into survival mode.

Surrounding ourselves with people is essential, but if those connections become emotionally draining, we risk falling into a survival mode. We run dry when we are constantly giving emotional and social support to others and not refilling ourselves with the things that are focused on Jesus. This can lead to depression and a feeling of surviving instead of thriving.

Similarly, circumstances can divert our attention from Jesus, making us feel trapped in the immediate challenges rather than thriving. Circumstances can draw our attention away from Jesus and cause us to focus on what is right in front of us.

The Devil's Scheme

You know you are just surviving when all you think about is getting through today, or just getting to that next paycheck. You are only surviving when your circumstances consume you and all of your focus. At that point, you are not thriving at all.

Jesus warns and encourages us in John 10:10 saying:



John 10:10 (New King James Version)

(10) The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Jesus is portraying the devil as a thief whose purpose is to steal, kill, and destroy. Satan aims to separate us from God, but Jesus came to give us life abundantly. When we fall prey to the devil's schemes, we merely survive instead of thrive.

Satan wants to kill us before we can say yes to Jesus. He wants to destroy us even after we have said yes to Jesus. That is what the devil wants. He wants to hurt God by separating us from God, nothing more and nothing less.

It started with deceiving Adam and Eve, and it continues to this day. The whole message of God can be summarized like this. God created us for fellowship. We sin, at the devil's enticement, and separate ourselves from God. God sent Jesus to redeem us and bring us back to him. The gospel is really that simple.

Jesus Saves You

But Jesus came and redeemed us! John records Jesus saying it. He says he came to give us life. He didn't give us just enough life to survive. Jesus gives us life in abundance! He wants us to live life and enjoy it! In other words, he wants us to move from surviving to thriving!

Jesus redeems us and desires us to live an abundant life. Much like a resilient fig tree in the desert, he wants us to flourish, grow, and share the sweet fruit of a life in Christ. Regardless of challenging situations, Jesus offers supernatural power to move beyond survival mode and into a thriving life.

You may be saying, "But you don't know my situation. My electricity is about to be turned off. I don't have food for my kids. I don't have any transportation to get to and from a job or church."

You may be thinking that there is no way out of the dead-end job you are in. There may be no appreciation for all the hard work you do for others. There are mountains all around you and you can't seem to do it. You are correct, you can't, but Jesus can!

You see, surviving is a natural thing. It is natural things that put us into survival mode. What does it take to get out of the results of natural things? Supernatural power! Look at Philippians 4:13

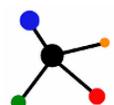
Philippians 4:13

(13) I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

We cannot do it on our own or under our own power. Do you know what we call it when we try to accomplish things under our own power? Surviving! The Holy Spirit equips us and empowers us to move from surviving to thriving.

The Holy Spirit's Power to Thrive

Relying on the Holy Spirit's power, given by Jesus, enables us to thrive. John 16:7 says:



John 16:7

(7) But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

And Acts 1:8 says:

Acts 1:8

(8) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

The Holy Spirit guides and empowers us, allowing us to navigate challenges with strength and purpose. Recognizing the distractions the devil places in our path, we must stay focused on our mission and spread the love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness of Jesus around the world.

Conclusion

Because Jesus lives, we have hope for tomorrow. Because Jesus lives, we do not have to fall to the devil's schemes, tricks, and lies.

The supernatural power available to us as children of God empowers us to thrive instead of merely surviving. Jesus calls us to live abundantly, and by embracing the supernatural in him, we can rise above the natural challenges life presents.

Share your story of moving from surviving to thriving – we'd love to hear it!

