

# On The Frontier

“For the glory of God and the furtherance of the Gospel”

## Survivor

by Linus A. Mathis III

The word survive comes from the Latin word *supervivere*, a compound word made up of *super* and *vivere*. When used as a prefix *super* means over or above. Something that's super exceeds or surpasses the norm of its kind in quality, quantity, strength or degree, e.g., superhuman, superconductor, superhighway, superheated, superstrong, supernatural, etc. *Vivere* simply means "to live." To survive then is to superlive! That means remaining alive or in existence after a life threatening crisis or attack. For example, a man caught in a train wreck who lives to tell about it has "survived," he continues to exist. Seemingly, this gives an extra degree of strength, quality and quantity to that individual's life. At least it's viewed as such, in an abstract sort of way. We may not say it but we think he or she has "superlived."

In the aftermath of an earthquake rescue crews work tirelessly searching for the missing. Often people and animals will be found alive days or even weeks later perhaps buried under tons and tons of debris. They've survived and we rejoice. This is also true for those who survive floods, fires, hurricanes, tornados, airplane crashes, war and disease. The list of life threatening ordeals is indeed a long one. The number of those who survive these things remains select. There's something unique about those who persist that goes beyond endurance.

Maybe that's why they say, "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." What does it take then, to "superlive?"

On the grand scale, it's a gift:

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We work for wages but gifts are free! Isn't our God awesome!!!

I John 5:1-5

Whoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh [*nikao* = to conquer, gets the victory] the world: and this is the victory that overcometh [*nikao*] the world, *even* our faith.

Who is he that overcometh [*nikao*] the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

If we're born of God we have the victory. This is best appreciated as

we stay mindful of what it means to have ETERNAL LIFE. I'd say that was superlife! Wouldn't you? Of course we haven't as yet manifested the fulness of it as our Lord is yet to return. But when he does, we'll have that superlife in all its magnificence! In the meantime, even as mortals, we can lead superlives.

Romans 8:31-39

What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.

Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors [*hupernikao* = superconquerors] through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

That certainly is a long list; death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, or anything created! But not nearly long enough!!! Nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing is able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord! WOW! I guess that makes us superconquerors then! Doesn't it? That sounds even better than being a survivor. Nevertheless, being a survivor is important.

Consider what the Apostle Paul had to say at the end of his life:

#### II Timothy 4:6-8

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith:

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Paul kept on keeping on! He was a survivor! He didn't quit and that's what I want to address. Endurance! You see, it takes endurance and plenty of it to be a true survivor. You simply cannot give up. As believers

we will be challenged every time we take a stand for God. The object of the challenge will be to get you to quit. Obviously you can't stop being a child of God. But you can stop walking with Him. You can stop reading your Bible, going to fellowship or church, praying, spending time with the saints and tithing. What would it take to get you to quit? George Washington once said, "Few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder." I would hate to think I had a price wouldn't you? But you know as well as I that it's usually pressure that makes us yield. The Devil uses both pleasure and pressure to get us to forsake the things of God but it's been my experience that he favors the pressure. How about it? He tried it on Paul, why wouldn't he try it on you?

#### II Corinthians 11:16-29

I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.

That which I speak, I speak *it* not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.

Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye *yourselves* are wise.

For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take *of you*, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is

bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.

Are they Hebrews? so *am* I. Are they Israelites? so *am* I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so *am* I.

Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I *am* more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one [that's 195 lashes across his naked back with something like a bull whip].

Thrice was I beaten with rods [stuck 117 times with rods, an object somewhat more vicious than a whip], once was I stoned [he was pummeled with stones by an angry mob], thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

*In* journeyings often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils by *mine own* countrymen, *in* perils by the heathen, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren;

In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

What a man! He endured so much and never, never gave up.

The Lamsa Bible renders  
II Corinthians 11:29 as follows:

Who is sick that I do not feel the pain? Who stumbles that does not have my heartfelt sympathy?

Paul understood the pressures and challenges the Corinthians went through because he himself endured much more than they. Yet through it all, he never gave up. He was a survivor! However, an even greater example is our Lord Jesus Christ and he's the one we are to follow.

I Peter 2:21-24

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously:

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

When life gets tough we are to consider him and what he endured. That's what I do and it sure puts things in perspective for me!

Hebrews 12:1-3

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,

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.

For consider him that endured [*hupomeno* = endure, bear up bravely, to remain behind after every one else has fled] such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Our Saviour is stupendous! His endurance is way beyond legendary! He literally bore the entire weight of sin for all humanity. This he did without any human support. All of his friends and family forsook him. When it came time to die he had to do it without the comfort and encouragement one would expect in such a time.

Mark 14:27

And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

Here are some of the places where it was prophesied that his friends and kinsmen would abandon him in his hour.

Zechariah 13:7

Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man *that is my fellow*, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

Psalms 38:11

My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my

kinsmen stand afar off.

Things happened precisely as Zechariah had foretold.

Mark 14:50

And they all forsook him, and fled.

All the humans that is! God remained with His Son!

John 16:32

Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

Our Lord was NOT alone for God was with him. Yet, think how great he was to stand as he did! He was resolved to stand even in the face of being deserted by all those he loved and served. Now that's a SURVIVOR!

Jesus is not unique in biblical record as having stood without the support of his followers. Moses was known to do so on numerous occasions as were others. It could be that one day you may have to stand without the backing of your loved ones. Would you continue to "bear up under" if your family forsook the Word of God? If your husband, wife or child were to turn their back on living a holy lifestyle would you join them? Or would you stand, withstand and endure? Are you a survivor?

Paul faced a burden not unlike the above scenarios.

II Timothy 4:16-18

At my first answer no man stood with me, but all *men* forsook me: *I pray God* that it may not be laid

to their charge.

Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Isn't it wonderful how God never forsook Paul! He will not forsake us either. Nevertheless, the "all" that forsook Paul were men and women that he knew and loved. Surely that must have been painful! This great man gave his life to the glory of God and the furtherance of the Gospel. His success still remains unsurpassed in scope and depth. Paul was able to take the Word of God to the entire civilized world.

Acts 19:8-12

And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

In just two years and three months all the known world heard the Word of the Lord. You may say that the world was smaller then and that's true. But, I remind you that the Apostle Paul didn't have an airplane or an automobile. He didn't have a telephone or a computer. There was no electricity, no radio, television, videos or cassette tapes. He didn't have paper and pencil, ball point pen or marker. He didn't have any of the modern conveniences that we so often take for granted. Yet, he was able to get out the Word of the Lord so that ALL they that dwelt in Asia (Asia Minor as we know it today) heard it both Jew and Greek. You can also rest assured that none of his tribulations and persecutions took a hiatus while he was so involved. He got the job done without so much as a postage stamp! He never gave up, he was a survivor. And when all was said and done at the end of his life and ministry they ALL forsook him. The all being, all those that heard the Word of the Lord through the staggering efforts of this man. It had to hurt! To work so hard for so long and then see all those you love so dearly walk away, it had to hurt deeply. But did he quit? Did he at any time throw in the towel? NO! Paul was a survivor! Are you a survivor? Just what does it take to be one? Hope! Hope is vital to us if we are to survive, that is, stand, withstand and endure!

Look again at what Paul said at the

end of his life:

II Timothy 4:6-8

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith:

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Will you love his appearing? I know I will! I will survive! Will you? Neither you nor I will do it apart from Hope!

Hope is the key to being a survivor, without it we might give in and quit. But with Hope alive in our hearts we may be able to say at the end of our lives (should the Lord tarry), "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." I long to say that. Don't you? That's my singular goal should I fall asleep before the Lord Jesus Christ returns. If I can say that, then I know that I know that I know, I AM A SURVIVOR!

When the storms batter this old ship of life it's the Hope that gives us safe harbor. Our lives remain anchored in Truth and we can and will weather anything that perils our mooring!

Hebrews 6:19

Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

The Lord Jesus Christ has gone before us and on our behalf. What's more, he's coming back! With the Hope in our hearts we are daily brought closer to victory!

Consequently, we should live our lives in response to "it is written:"

Hebrews 10:19-25

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

And *having* an high priest over the house of God;

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us hold fast the profession of [our] faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;)

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

To be a survivor, look to THE RETURN! Be a survivor, live in light of the second coming of Jesus Christ!

P.S. In case you're wondering, I've never watched the "popular" TV series!

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## The Counselor's Corner

### Gossip

A common activity among youngsters is gossip. It begins in the early years when our little ones feel compelled to tell on EVERYONE! Though some may find this cute, they soon learn that nothing could be further from the truth. It's not cute, nice or acceptable to speak about others in their absence. In most cases this becomes little more than evil speaking.

Titus 3:2,3

To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, *but* gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.

For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another.

We are to speak evil of no man! That's pretty clear. It's also obvious, from even a cursory glance at the Word, that God hates such behavior.

Proverbs 6:16 & 19

These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him:

A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

I'll let you read about the other five things at your leisure. Suffice to say, God hates gossip and talebearing.

Proverbs 11:13

A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit

concealeth the matter.

Regardless of how old we are when we speak ill of others it causes pain and sorrow.

Proverbs 18:8

The words of a talebearer *are* as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

If you love and revere God you will hate what He hates and love what He loves!

Proverbs 8:13

The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

Should you find yourself in this situation here's what you should do:

Proverbs 30:32

If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, *lay* thine hand upon thy mouth.

Little kids are sometimes what we call "tattletales." It's up to their parents to teach them about love, honor and integrity. Train up your child God's way. His way is the love way! A tattletale demonstrates hatred and strife, both of which are antithetical to love.

Proverbs 17:9

He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth *very* friends.

Proverbs 10:12

Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.

Being a busybody is also something

that God warns against:

Proverbs 26:17

He that passeth by, *and* meddleth with strife *belonging* not to him, *is like* one that taketh a dog by the ears.

This verse gives us a very forceful and wonderful mind picture. Imagine going up to a strange Pit Bull or Doberman and grabbing him by the ears! Let me tell you, once you do that you are COMMITTED!!! You can't let go that easily, if you do you will get hurt. You could be standing there holding that dog's ears for a very long time! You know you shouldn't have done that but it's too late. Now what to do? If you don't let go soon you're bound to get tired and loose your grip. But if you let go too soon . . . oh man! What a pickle! Now let's get real for a moment. Would you want your child to go up to any strange dog and grab it by the ears? Of course not! It behooves us then to teach our children the perils of meddling with the affairs of others. It may seem like fun to a youngster to be a busybody but the truth is quite another story.

Consider the following passage addressed to Church leaders:

I Timothy 5:3-13

Honour widows that are widows indeed.

But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.

Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.

But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.

But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man,

Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

There you have God's criteria for a widow indeed.

Verses 11-13:

But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;

Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.

And withal they learn *to be* idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

God does not like this behavior at all! He hates it, because it's sin and He hates sin. Notice that the persons in question are adult. Notice also that the behavior is a learned one. These younger widows learned to be idle.

They learned to wander from house to house. They BECAME tattlers and busybodies. Don't let your child learn to be idle, the result could produce a tattler and a busybody. These are learned or acquired behaviors which appeal to our sin nature. We must teach our children the how of renewed mind love.

Once again we see leader and spouse as the intended recipients of Scripture and once again we learn a great deal from the guidance given them. Married couples who are overseers of God's people should provide the greatest insight as to what is godly and what is not. This is evident in the Scripture and must be manifest in the lives of those who stand in positions of authority within the Church. These truths must be taught to their children and they must do their utmost to help their children live for God. If any of us are to live for God we must be circumspect in our observation and application of His Word.

I Timothy 3:8-13

Likewise *must* the deacons *be* grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless.

Even so *must their wives be* grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

The English word slanderers in verse 11 has been translated from the Greek word *diabolos*. Even those with a limited knowledge of Greek will recognize the word *diabolos* as the word most commonly translated devil. Slander is devilish. Gossip requires the speaker to be a busybody, tattler, talebearer and slanderer. It's devilish and completely unacceptable behavior for anyone, let alone our children. The speaker becomes a hypocrite and a liar.

This is NOT what anyone who loves God wants for their kids.

Exodus 20:16

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Proverbs 25:18

A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.

Proverbs 19:5 & 9

A false witness shall not be unpunished, and *he that* speaketh lies shall not escape.

A false witness shall not be unpunished, and *he that* speaketh lies shall perish.

Teach your child how to renew their mind with the truth of God's Word.

Ephesians 4:17-25,29,31,32

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

But ye have not so learned Christ;

If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

It's never okay to speak evil. When we speak let it be for good, let it be for the Truth.

Before a third party is ever informed of the activities of another the informant must be certain to first confront the party in question. If that individual refuses to listen and they are a danger to themselves or others, it then becomes your obligation to speak to the proper people. With safety as an issue, either to the person spoken to or others, then and only then is speaking to a third party

is acceptable.

Bear in mind constantly that the motive behind being the messenger of information regarding someone other than yourself must be the love of God. Nothing less is ever acceptable. Anything else is a counterfeit and an excuse for rejoicing in iniquity.

Since our culture is entertained by slander and talebearing, it's incumbent upon us as parents to put forth the necessary effort to countermand such devilishness.

Verses 29,31,32

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

I'm proud to say my mama didn't raise a rat or a snitch. I intend to follow her lead!

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