



The Survival Instinct

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 6:11-12; 2 TIMOTHY 4:5-8

1 TIMOTHY 6:11-12

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

2 TIMOTHY 4:5-8

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

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

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

8 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.

9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:

INTRODUCTION

In ecology, wild animals live and die with one basic drive. And that drive and that motivation is what is known as the survival instinct. And without instinct they become extinct!

The survival instinct drives them to do two basic things: First - To feed, Secondly - To breed. There is no motivation to do as man to build cities, reputations, and civilizations. Only one thing moves them, and that is the will to survive!

It is interesting to see that many times, when man is stripped of everything of comfort and leisure, even so far as to take away his family, his job or career, his identification as a human being - Anything to break him down - there remains the innate desire to survive! Something that cries out from within that says, "I want to live!"

When animals lose their survival instinct they die. They lose it due to sickness, become old and weak then fall prey to other wild animals, or they die from wounds that will not heal!

I. OUR FOCUS FOR CHRISTIAN SURVIVAL

The Christian life seems to have some very similar comparisons.

Christians, upon new birth, have entered a world that is new to them. The desire of God is pounding in their heart, and the memory of the past accompanied by the prospect of the future is enough to make them want to "make it" all the way for God!

But, it's not long before life and trials bring adversity; Satan assails with doubts and temptations; and the hurts of brothers and sisters have tested that sacred will to survive!

It is then that you must never lose that survival instinct that God first formed in you! There is nothing in the life that can keep you from making it, if you want to make it!

There is nothing that can separate you from that very thing that gave you that will to survive, which is the love of God!

Romans 8:35-39 - 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 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.

Yes, we're in a battle - We're pursued - but "greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world!"

II. THE POWER OF RESISTANCE

1 Peter 5:8-10 - "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. 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."

Resistance is a product of the survival instinct! It shows you will to survive!

III. SPIRITUAL TRAINING - (Honing Our Skills)

Illustration - Captain Scott O'Grady

During the Bosnian Conflict, NATO forces were sent to assist matters in protecting the Croats from Serbian aggression.

During this conflict and while in faithful service, 29 year old United States Air Force pilot, Captain Scott O'Grady, was shot down on June 2, 1995, while flying his F-16 Falcon over Serbian territory.

For 6 days he eluded and evaded the enemy safely, until he was rescued. Though O'Grady's personal courage and mettle carried him through, he said that it was the training that gave him the extra edge.

He had previously gone through a 17 day course at the U.S.A.F. Survival School at Fairchild A.F.B. near Spokane, Washington. It gave him the skills that he would unknowingly need in the future.

At the heart of his survival training course was this message:

"In order to stay alive and survive, you
must pay attention to what you have been
taught and rely on it, and your inner strength.

(Your will to survive!)"

Colonel John Chapman, commander of the Joint Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape Agency at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, said:

"Survival is a matter of will. You
will not survive or be rescued unless you
have the will, the confidence, and the skills
to do what it takes to survive and be rescued."

According to the "Aircraft Survival Manual" or Air Force Pamphlet 64-5 (121 page book on survival) there are 13 major points that they must remember in survival. They are:

1) **Stay Alert!** - In peacetime, assess your situation. Treat injuries promptly. Make contact with rescue forces as quickly as possible. (Deal with hurts and offenses quickly. Pray much.)

In wartime, conceal yourself where the enemy can't follow, but where you have a clear view and several avenues of escape! (Stay on the straight and narrow way, have a clear view of Jesus, and look for the way of escape!)

2) **Conceal yourself** - Hide from the enemy. (We are hidden in Christ!)

3) **Don't wander** - Stay near your aircraft, it makes it easier for rescuers to find you. (We must stay near the Cross!)

In wartime, depending on the location of the enemy, head toward the nearest recovery zone. (Always go to the House of God!)

Never take a straight path, but zigzag. Every 10 paces stop, look, and listen for human or animal movement.

Watch for booby-traps! (We are not ignorant of Satan's devices!)

Avoid leaving any signs of travel. (We're temporarily here on this earth, just passing through!)

Cover foot prints - bury wastes - camouflage campsite.

4) **Move Carefully** - (Walk in the Word of God)

5) **Find Water** - You can survive weeks without food, but you must have water. (We must drink from the fountain of Living Waters!) Avoid dehydration! Don't drink "foul water."

6) **Find Food** - Select edible insects, plants, and small animals. (We need the Bread of Life!)

7) **Improvise** - Use all equipment possible to survive, and bury what you do not need! (Use God's arsenal - Ephesians 6 - Bury every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us!)

8) **Light a Fire** - (Build a Holy Ghost Fire!)

9) **Cook your Food** - Kills parasites. (Meditate on the Word)

10) **Sleep Carefully** - Choose a place that won't be easily searched out. Don't stay in one place too long. (Sleep to rest - not for laziness. We must never stay too long in one place in God. We must move on and move up in God!)

11) **Stay Dry** - Keep clean and dry. (Keep yourself unspotted from the world!)

12) **Send Signals** - (Pray without ceasing!)

13) **Don't Despair** - Maintain a positive attitude at all times, and banish the possibility of failure from your mind!

Remember that everything possible is being done to locate and rescue you!

Others have been in the same situation and have survived by following the same training!

Find solace and strength by praying, and thinking about your family, and what you plan to do when you are recovered!

IV. REMAIN EVASIVE TO THE ENEMY!

You must remain evasive to the enemy of your soul!

Illustration - Captain Roger Locher

One of the longest evasions in history was logged by then Captain Roger Locher, now a Colonel serving as director of safety for the Pacific Air Forces headquarters at Hickam A.F.B. near Honolulu.

After his F-4 Phantom was shot down 45 miles northwest of Hanoi, Vietnam on May 10, 1972, he successfully evaded the enemy for 23 days until he was rescued by Air Force combat search and rescue helicopters about 11 miles from where he ejected.

He survived because he evaded the enemy!

Captain Scott O'Grady was welcomed home as a national hero, not because of great heroics - killing the enemy or destroying enemy armories - but he was a hero simply because he successfully evaded the enemy!

CLOSING

If we remain faithful, use what God has given us to be successful, the enemy will be defeated and God will deliver us from all the tactics of the devil!