

12 ROUND RESILIENCE - 1 Samuel 30:1-8

What I love about the both **Creed 1** and **Rocky 1** is at the end - **they lose**.

It's a reminder that life is as much about how we respond to our losses as it is about our wins. We want the microwaved, meteoric rise to the top. We don't want the pain, heartache and loss. We don't want to count the cost to get to where we want to be.

Resilience by definition is multi faceted:

- 1.) *The ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape. Elasticity.*
- 2.) *The ability of a person to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulty. Toughness.*

Creed wanted to prove "that I'm not a mistake" and he's driven to the final bell in spite of being knocked down.

Proverbs 24:16 - *for though the righteous fall seven times, they rise again, but the wicked stumble when calamity strikes.*

Buckle up because 7 is more than just 7 here; poetically it speaks to an *infinite capacity* to fall *The faith walk is not about never messing up. It's about always getting up.*

The real question and unknown we actually need to tackle tonight:

Are you resilient? *When life knocks you down how do you get off the mat?*

1 SAMUEL 30:1-8

Each of us will have a life sentence.

In the end, most of our lives and our contributions will commonly be summed up in 1 sentence.

In **Acts 13:36**, Paul is preaching when he makes mention of King David, and in summation of his life, he says of David – "**He served the purpose of God in his own generation.**"

I want a life sentence like David's.

I want to go all 12 rounds. I don't want to throw the towel. I want to fight to the final bell.

So the question is: **How was David resilient enough to endure a life FULL of traumatic experiences to serve God's purpose?**

We get a picture in **1 Samuel 30:1-8**,

Verse 6: *...Now David was greatly distressed; for the people spoke of stoning him because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters. But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.*

This may be the peak picture of mental toughness and resilience in David's life.

It says that David and his men had **no strength left**, and they were **bitter in spirit**.

And then we get the simple but significant statement:

“David found strength in the LORD his God.”

I read that and it seems as simple as him flipping a switch.
Like where’s this easy button for emotional elasticity?

Your translation may read **“strengthened himself”** or he **“found strength”**

The Hebrew word speaks to repairing and encouraging as the means of strengthening.

The verb structure is indicative of David being both the **giver** and **recipient**.

While other translations make it sound like he could have passively “found” or stumbled upon the strength he needed, the KJV and its translation “David encouraged himself in the Lord” nails what is happening here. *David is actively encouraging himself in order to find strength and courage in God.*

The question remains- what did this look like?

Talking to himself?

Speaking out loud can help you organize your thoughts and concentrate.

The same part of the brain used when you talk out loud is used by your inner voice.

It’s the part of the brain that David was engaging audibly or internally in 1 Samuel 30.

“David encouraged himself in the Lord.”

Psychologists would call this **“changing the narrative”**

We let discouragement be the dominant discourse in our head.

A mature believer in Christ will **take ownership of their encouragement.**

But what was he saying?

We have David’s journal of prayers. An entire diary of what often amount to internal monologues. 150 of them.

Psalm 42

Twice in the same Psalm David interrupts his discourse of discouragement and asks...

“Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God.

For I will yet praise him. My Savior and my God.”

It’s a vivid picture of how David encouraged himself in the Lord.

We see David speaking God’s truth over dire circumstances again and again in the Psalms.

150 of them. Full of words he spoke to encourage himself and walk in resilience.

And I want to humbly submit 5 verses that represent either perspectives or practices that David walked in that I personally have found key.

POUR OUT

Psalm 62 – “Trust in Him at all times. Pour out your heart to God.”

Put simply: when it comes to resilience, it's hard to get off the mat when your heart is weighing you down. You have to pour it out.

Proverbs 4:23 we're way more familiar with in the Church - **Guard your heart.**

But in order to protect, we often repress.

Hurt, pain, insecurity and shame - when you bury and repress them don't lay dormant.

They take root. **And they can keep you rooted to the mat when life knocks you down.**

Old study found that participants who did **Expressive Writing** – writing about our emotions - for four days were healthier six weeks later and happier up to three months later, when compared to people who didn't.

The study showed that expressive writing about our life and emotions helped people find a narrative, get a sense of control back, and walk in resilience.

David did this: When pursued and hunted by Saul, he wrote Psalm 59
 When imprisoned in Gath, he wrote Psalm 56
 When fleeing from his son Absalom, he wrote Psalm 3
 When hiding in the wilderness of Judah, he wrote Psalm 63

Therapy is also all about pouring out. Steph and I lean into it.

GRATITUDE

Exercise is one of the best things you can do to fight off arthritis because it lubricates your joints. But do you know what scientists have found lubricates the brain? Gratitude.

A recent study showed more grateful people have more brain activity in the medial prefrontal cortex, the area associated with learning and decision-making. This brain activity persisted a month later, suggesting that gratitude has long-lasting effects.

Regularly practicing gratitude functionally rewires your brain to be happier.

David walked in this:

Psalm 16:6- ***“The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places...”***

Rewire your brain with gratitude and fall in love with your life again.

You WILL grow into resilience – because here's the thing: when you love it, you'll never ever stop fighting for it.

DAY BY DAY PERSPECTIVE

Psalm 68:19 - praise God our savior! For each day he carries us in his arms.

NIV – *daily bears our burdens.*

KJV – *daily loads us with benefits.*

It's not a Costco sized load, but a daily load of "our daily bread."

God is saying here's what you need for today. AND I'll always have what you need for today.

24 hours by 24 hours. Stack days and walk faithfully.

Go to bed with an empty tank and trust that each morning God's got new grace for you.

Corrie Ten Boom - "Worry doesn't empty tomorrow of its sorrow. It empties today of its strength."

Jesus instructs us in Matthew 6:34 – **"So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today."**

I may feel like I can't do this for the rest of my life.

But I can for another 24 hours.

COMMUNITY

There will be times where you absolutely have to encourage yourself because no one else is there to. But we can't live there.

Psalm 68:6 – God places the lonely in families.

Suffering can make us feel isolated and entirely alone in our struggle. "How can I ever get through this?" In community we look around and see – "oh... that's how."

Boxing may be one on one combat, but every boxer has folks in their corner.

My question for you: who's in your corner?

PURPOSE

"David served the purpose of God in his generation."

Amidst countless, repeated traumatic hardships throughout his life. How?

In Psalm 138:8 he speaks these powerful words over his circumstances

"The LORD will fulfill his purposes for me..."

This man spent years and years as a hunted fugitive after God had called him a future King.

Imagine how many times he had to say that over himself.

The author and psychiatrist Victor Frankl spent three years in Auschwitz's concentration camp during the Holocaust. He was a psychiatrist and author, and he wrote extensively on his experience and made the profound claim that **"despair is suffering without meaning."**

Frankl even writes, ***“in some ways suffering ceases to be suffering at the moment it finds a meaning.”***

When you’ve aligned your life with God’s intention for you and you know you’re walking in your calling... fight to the bell.

We live but one life.

We will have one life sentence.

I want mine to mean something.

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Jesus didn’t just model resilience.

He made it possible spiritually.

His death and resurrection restored us to our original state – communion and relationship with God our Father.

Jesus is the Greater David – he didn’t just fulfill the purposes of the Lord for his generation, he fulfilled the purposes of the Lord for human history.