

Survival Quest

Volume Two



 **LifeWay**
Biblical Solutions for Life

Survival **Quest**

Volume Two **Student Edition**



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LifeWay

LifeWay

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Introduction	SURVIVING AND THRIVING	1
Chapter 19	ESTHER: SURVIVING POSITION AND POSSESSIONS	11
Chapter 20	CAIN AND ABEL: SURVIVING DESTRUCTIVE ANGER	19
Chapter 21	JONAH: SURVIVING WRONG MOTIVES	31
Chapter 22	PAUL: SURVIVING LIFE CHANGES	41
Chapter 23	JACOB: SURVIVING HABITS OF DECEPTION	49
Chapter 24	DEBORAH: SURVIVING UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS	61
Chapter 25	MOSES: SURVIVING PERSONAL INADEQUACIES	71
Chapter 26	JOB: SURVIVING BAD THINGS THAT HAPPEN	81
Chapter 27	JOHN: SURVIVING LONELINESS	93
Chapter 28	OTHNIEL: SURVIVING A POOR BACKGROUND	105
Chapter 29	NOAH: SURVIVING RIDICULE AND VENGEANCE	115
Chapter 30	SOLOMON: SURVIVING UNFULFILLED DREAMS	125
Chapter 31	DANIEL: SURVIVING FALSE ACCUSATIONS	135
Chapter 32	MARY AND MARTHA: SURVIVING A CRITICAL SPIRIT	145
Chapter 33	SAMUEL: SURVIVING OBSTACLES TO SUCCESS	155
Chapter 34	ELIJAH: SURVIVING DISCOURAGEMENT	163
Chapter 35	LUKE: SURVIVING CHALLENGES OF SERVICE	171
Chapter 36	REVIEW: SURVIVING AND THRIVING	179
Glossary		189
Prescriptions for Life's Challenges		199

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INTRODUCTION

Surviving and Thriving

Stress, hurt, anxiety, frustrations, anger, disappointments, depression, bewilderment, crisis, panic. Life is tough. And it's getting tougher for teens. What can you do? Give up? Go hide in a cave? Sit in a corner and suck your thumb?

You are about to begin the second half of a 36-week course entitled *Survival-Quest*. You will learn practical, down-to-earth skills based on Biblical examples and principles. Beyond surviving the upsets of life, you will learn to thrive as you develop relationships and build toward your future. Perhaps no other study could be more important to you at this time of life.

Do bad things happen to teenagers? They surely do. Students at a high school in Paducah, Kentucky, discovered this when a classmate opened fire on a group meeting for prayer. Ben Strong, a 17-year-old, spoke these words at his friends' funeral: "They died for what they believed in. It hurts to see them go, but to them, there was no better way. They were praying. As soon as they said, 'Amen,' they saw the face of God."

Three teens dead; another in prison for life. What a tragedy for every person and family involved.

In listening to the media coverage of many similar events, we share the anguish and grief of such suffering and loss. Our hearts ache for teens who couldn't resolve their deep emotional conflicts in more positive and productive ways. We are left with the questions: How could such events happen, and how can they be prevented in the future?

More quietly and with less fanfare, 1.5 million teens a year attempt suicide feeling that they have nothing to live for or that their mistakes are so grievous, they cannot face the future. Other teens turn to gangs, sex or crime seeking a way to ease their deep hurts and satisfy the longings of their hearts.

For you, there are better ways to solve the conflicts and hurts. Without making light of the problems you face, your study of *SurvivalQuest* will provide you with choices and solutions. You will learn to accept your natural emotions and desires as you exercise options toward recovery and growth. You will learn not only to survive but thrive in the midst of your challenges.

Throughout your study you will be drawn back to the characteristics of God, who made you and loves you. Knowing He is sovereign—in control of all events and their outcomes—can give you the confidence to face tomorrow. Just when you feel that there is no hope, no way out of the pit, God can magnificently step into your life to bring peace and sureness of the future (Jeremiah 31:3–4; 29:11).

*... Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love;
therefore with loving-kindness I have drawn you. Again
I will build you. ... For I know the thoughts that I think
toward you ... thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give
you a future and a hope.*

Nobody messes up too much for God. No one is beyond His power to forgive and restore. Having extensively persecuted early Christian believers and assented to the death of Stephen, the Apostle Paul called himself the worst of sinners. Arrogant, prideful, self-centered and self-sufficient, Paul was a wreck, yet God could bring victory and joy to his life. After becoming a believer, Paul's life was no flower garden. The Christians distrusted him. The Jews hated him, stoned him and left him for dead. He suffered disappointing friendships, imprisonment, shipwreck, poor health—you name it. But in the end, Paul wrote the song of the overcomer (Romans 8:28, 31–32, 37).

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. . . . If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

We can overcome. We can survive. And we can thrive. But to do so, we must follow the same foundational steps as Paul. As you read each step, consider whether you have honestly taken this step in your own life. God's way or no way, the choice is yours.

1. **Recognize God as the source of all goodness and happiness in this life and the life to come.** With Him, all things are possible. Without Him, nothing is. Because He is life, light and love, He alone has the wisdom to provide clear direction for your life, the power to help and the love to forgive.
2. **Realize your own helplessness.** We are made of clay and a few trace minerals. We have a mindset that is in opposition to God. The Bible says that we have deceitful hearts, bent toward wickedness. Given our best efforts and best intents, we fall miserably short of God's standard. This failure is called sin. The solution is to agree that, in ourselves, we have no answers. Therefore, we come to God in confession of sin and our helpless condition.
3. **Receive Christ as Savior.** God's method of forgiving sin and establishing a right relationship with Him is through His Son, Jesus Christ. By faith, we accept God's provision and make a commitment to live as He commands. In return, God sends the Holy Spirit to eternally live within us, giving us the desire and ability to live as God wants.
4. **Reflect the relationship you have with God.** Commit to learning all you can about God through Bible reading, prayer and interaction with other believers. Apply what you learn to the everyday experiences of life. Trust that in every

situation, God is in control. His plan is bigger than we can see. It ultimately leads to building our character and conforming us to be more like Christ.

- 5. Rejoice in all things.** Because God has a purpose and the final outcome is certain, you don't have to sweat the small stuff. Even in the most difficult trials, or embarrassing mistakes, you can experience hope, peace and joy. Every circumstance can be your teacher toward spiritual maturity and successful living. Embrace life with enthusiasm as you grow up in Him.

These five steps can set the course of your life. They can make you emotionally secure and confident as you face the challenges of the future. They give you what psychologists call "resilience." This is the ability to rebound from life's upsets. It is the ability to regain composure in the midst of turmoil. It is the ability to rebuild after the most devastating blows imaginable. It is a key factor in "emotional intelligence" or an EQ that is recognized as being of far greater importance than IQ, or intelligence, when considering personal success.

Begin with these five steps firmly established as goals for daily living. Then, each week, as you study the challenges different people of the Bible survived, you will understand how to apply these five principles in your personal challenges. When you complete the course, you will have learned how to both survive and thrive through many of life's complications. You will be an overcomer.

... they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

Revelation 3:4-5

CHECKPOINT I.1



MY TOP CHALLENGES AND GOALS

1. _____ extremely high LEVEL OF CONCERN little or none
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

2. _____ extremely high LEVEL OF CONCERN little or none
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

3. _____ extremely high LEVEL OF CONCERN little or none
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

4. _____ extremely high LEVEL OF CONCERN little or none
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

5. _____ extremely high LEVEL OF CONCERN little or none
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

6. _____ extremely high LEVEL OF CONCERN little or none
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

CHECKPOINT I.1



Based on the personal challenges and concerns I face, some things I would like to learn in this course are:

In order to really learn and apply Biblical solutions to life problems, I make the following promises to God and myself.

- ☐ I promise to work on my relationship with God.
- ☐ I promise to study Biblical principles and apply them to my life.
- ☐ I promise to pray and be sensitive to the Holy Spirit working in me.
- ☐ I promise to seek godly counsel when I am in situations that seem overwhelming.
- ☐ I promise to help others find godly solutions to the problems they face.

Signature

Date

CHECKPOINT I.2



ROMANS 8

Read the chapter and complete your answers to the questions.

1. Throughout the passage we see a dramatic contrast in trying to live the human way versus living by God's Spirit. In the two columns below write words from the passage that describe these two ways to live.

The Human Way	The Way of God's Spirit

2. Based on your descriptions, which way of thinking would be best if you were facing a serious crisis? Why? _____

3. Check verses 1 and 9 then explain how a person can change from a natural way of thinking to a spiritual way of thinking. _____

4. Check verse 15. The term "Abba, Father" is very intimate and endearing. It's the picture of a little child who has climbed into his dad's lap, given him a big hug and said, "You're my sweet papa." As an adopted child of God, what special protections and privileges do you have? Name at least three based on the passage. _____

CHECKPOINT 1.2



5. Check verse 28. God has a big plan and can see the end from the beginning. Some things that seem so bad now turn out to be a blessing later. In hindsight, you can see how God was protecting you or working things to your eventual good. Write one example of this from your personal experience. _____

6. Check verses 35 through 39. Paul wrote a long list of things that cannot separate us from God then said, "Nor any other creature/created thing." Think about the challenges or problems students face. Can any of them separate you from God? Why or why not?

7. Check verse 37. Being more than a conqueror is an interesting idea. If you win, you are a conqueror. But how can you be **more** than a conqueror? Write at least two sentences to explain your ideas. _____

8. Below are five principles based on Romans 8. Write the numerals 1 through 5 in the circles next to them to show their order in the Scripture.



Tough times don't have to overwhelm us. We can overcome them through His love and power.



Even in tough times, God has a purpose and a plan to bless us and make the eventual outcome good.



Tough times cannot separate us from God's love and the future glory we will share with Him.



Doing things man's way (the natural way) is opposed to doing things God's way.



Christians are God's children and can be directed by His Spirit living in them.

[illegible]

S U R V I V A L Q U E S T

NOTES

ESTHER

Surviving Position and Possessions

Billy was a bright little boy, and very competitive. Although he was only eight, he could beat almost anyone at a game of Monopoly—anyone except his grandmother! Last summer, when he spent two weeks at her house in the mountains, she beat him every time they played. It would be different this summer. He just knew it would.

As soon as he arrived at Grandma's house, he was ready to "take her on." Knowing that Billy would want to restore his reputation, she already had the Monopoly board set up. Before even unpacking his suitcase, Billy and his grandmother were challenging each other for the right to own Boardwalk. A little over two hours later, the game ended. Grandma had won again. Each day Billy and Grandma played, and each day Billy lost. When his vacation was over, Billy had failed to win even once.

Billy's grandma saw the discouragement on his face. As he was packing to go home, she shared with him, "The way to win at Monopoly is to get all of the property, houses and hotels as fast as you can." For the next year, Billy played the game of Monopoly differently. He bought property, houses and hotels as fast as he possibly could.

Summer finally came again. School was out and it was time to go to Grandma's. But more importantly, it was time for Billy to find out if all of his practice would pay off. Within a few minutes of arriving at Grandma's, the Monopoly box was opened and they were setting up the game. About three hours later, the game ended. However, the results were different this time. Billy won! Matter of fact, for the next two weeks, Billy won every game they played. He could not be stopped. He had taken his grandma's advice and beaten her at her own game.



The two weeks passed quickly. The final game of Monopoly for the summer was over and Billy had won again. With a big grin on his face, he started to leave the table. “Wait a minute,” Grandma said. “You followed my advice and learned your lessons well. But it’s time for you to learn another important lesson.” She then picked up the Monopoly board and dumped the property, houses, hotels and money back into the box. She put the top back on and carefully tucked the Monopoly game under her arm.

“You may win the game,” she said. “But never forget, I own the box!”

Grandma’s lesson for Billy, and for us, is a simple one. No matter how many possessions we have and no matter how important we think we are, when the game of life is over, everything goes back into the box. In the game of life, God owns the box. Grandma’s lesson for Billy illustrated the important truth of Mark 8:36, “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?”

“Wanting it all and wanting it now” certainly sums up the way many people think today. When it comes to possessions or achieving certain positions in life, they are determined that nothing is going to stop them from getting what they want. There seem to be fewer people who seek higher goals of service to their fellowman and to the kingdom of God—people who refuse to let possessions and position be their main focus. Esther was such a person.

The story of Esther almost reads like a modern day movie plot. It begins with a king who banishes his queen and then spends a year searching for a maiden to replace her. Among those chosen to participate in one of the first ever “Miss Kingdom Beauty Pageants” is the orphaned cousin of Mordecai. More beautiful and winsome than her peers, Esther is chosen as the new queen. Unknown to the powerful Persian king, Esther’s family is Jewish, part of the captives exiled from Jerusalem during the Babylonian captivity.

The plot thickens when we learn that Haman, one of the king’s chief ministers, hates Jews. He particularly hates Mordecai because of his refusal to bow and worship him. Haman tricks the king into signing a decree ordering all Jews to be executed.



Through her cousin Mordecai, Esther learns of the plot and faces a difficult decision. Should she risk her possessions and position as queen by asking the king to spare her people? Surely he would be angered at her boldness. The story has an unexpected plot twist and ending, which you can read in the book of Esther.

Esther's words, "If I perish, I perish!" prove that she was willing to sacrifice everything. As a result, her people were spared from certain destruction. Ever since that time, the Jews have celebrated their deliverance from Haman's plot and honored Esther during the religious holiday known as Purim. She also continues to be honored by descendants of the Persian people at an ancient temple built in her honor located north of the capital of Iraq.

During the perilous times Esther faced, Mordecai challenged her to consider her destiny. "Who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" The same question can be asked of you. Your generation will face tremendous challenges in the world. Young people willing to sacrifice positions, possessions and even their lives are needed to serve others and the cause of Christ. You have been called for such a time as this. How will your life make a difference?

The book of Esther is unique in that it is one of only two books of the Bible that bears a woman's name. It is also unique in that God's name is never mentioned. Yet, throughout its pages the hand of God strongly directs the lives of people. Through His providence, Esther became queen and enjoyed a position of great influence and unlimited possessions. The Bible is clear that possessions and positions are not sinful as long as we have proper attitudes toward them. Let's take a look at some Biblical principles.

God will always meet our basic needs of life.

Psalms 34:9-10; Matthew 6:31-32; Philippians 4:6 and 19

We should be content with what we have.

Philippians 4:11-13; 1 Timothy 6:6; Hebrews 13:5

What we have comes as a gift from God and should be used for His purposes.

Matthew 6:19-21, 33; James 1:17



Gaining possessions or positions should not be a primary goal.

Proverbs 23:4–5; Philippians 3:7–9; 1 Timothy 6:17–19

Pursuing riches and power can destroy our souls.

Matthew 6:24; Luke 12:15–21; 1 Timothy 6:7–10; Proverbs 30:8–9

There are things of higher value and importance than possessions and positions.

Mark 8:36–37; Proverbs 16:16–17; Proverbs 22:1

Consider again the words of Mark 8:37 — “Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” This question could be stated in several ways.

What would you give in exchange for your health?

What would you give in exchange for your family?

What would you give in exchange for a deep sense of happiness and purpose?

What would you give in exchange for God’s blessing on your life?

Your life has greater importance than any collection of possessions. You serve a greater purpose than filling a position that has no eternal value. You were sent to the kingdom in a particular time for a specific mission—eternal values focus on this exploration.



CHECKPOINT 19.1



PERSONAL LESSONS FROM ESTHER

Write about the three most important lessons you have personally learned from the book of Esther.

Lesson One

Lesson Two

Lesson Three

CHECKPOINT 19.2



POSSESSIONS AND POSITION: THE LESSONS FOR ME

God will always meet our basic needs of life.

Psalm 34:9–10; Matthew 6:31–32; Philippians 4:6 and 19

We should be content with what we have.

Philippians 4:11–13; 1 Timothy 6:6; Hebrews 13:5

What we have comes as a gift from God and should be used for His purposes.

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Pursuing riches and power can destroy our souls.

Matthew 6:24; Luke 12:15–21; 1 Timothy 6:7–10; Proverbs 30:8–9

There are things of higher value and importance than possessions and positions.

Mark 8:35–37; Proverbs 16:16–17; Proverbs 22:1



Write the truths from Mark 8:35–37 that need to be applied to your life.

[illegible]

CHECKPOINT 19.3



MARK 8:35-37

Use the Word Bank to help you write the verses.

Word Bank

a	for	is	return	will
after	forfeit	it	sake	wishes
and	gain/gains	life	same	whoever
because	give	lose/loses	save	whosoever
benefit	good	man	shall	whole
but	gospel/gospel's	me	soul	world
can	he	my	the	would
desires	his	or	to	yet
does	if	own	wants	
exchange	in	profit	what	
