

## MORNING DEVOTIONS

### OVERCOMING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

You've heard the stories: The man born with a clubbed foot who becomes a successful football player. The handicapped painter who must hold the brush in his mouth but still creates masterpieces. The world-renowned scientist who lost his ability to speak but now communicates through technology. The politician who returns to the podium after receiving a devastating gunshot wound. Even the most jaded and cynical person can't help but be inspired by stories of those who overcome adversity.

But how do they do it? How do people continue to play the game of life—often going on to find remarkable success—when circumstances are against them?

It's a difficult concept for most of us to comprehend. We normally look for direction in natural abilities, talents, and affirmation from others, letting those things define who we are. Few of us—had we been born with a malformed foot, for example—would dare to dream of being a professional athlete, much less actually go through the grueling process of making that dream a reality.

How do you overcome this kind of adversity?

Clichéd though it may seem, one of the most basic ingredients needed to overcome adversity is **a positive state of mind**. Remarkable people who are struck down with disabilities and found themselves in such difficult circumstances simply refused to give up.

For them, allowing themselves to be defined—and thereby restricted—by their limitations was not an option. They simply refused to abandon their hopes and dreams, even when their circumstances would seem to dictate a far different path.

Literary critic John Churton Collins once said, "*In prosperity, our friends know us; in adversity, we know our friends.*" There is no denying the value of a support group when we are going through tough times.

The presence of others in our lives can ward off feelings of isolation, depression, and desperation. Friends and family members can carry us when we're just not able to maintain that positivity or cheery disposition any longer. We need loved ones around us because, as we all seem to discover time and again, we simply can't do it alone.

But are these support systems enough? When the surgery doesn't go as planned and the alternative treatment has failed, what then? How do you "keep your chin up" and "get back in the saddle" when the tumors have paralyzed you from the waist down?

Many people turn to God. And what a great step to take. Christians believe that God is the all-powerful creator, that he stands above it all—above disease, above violence, above birth defects, above tragedy of any kind. The Bible, which Christians believe to be the Word of God, tells us that times of adversity and challenge are the best moments to look heavenward, to "set [our] minds on things above, not on earthly things."

My belief is in a **God who is personal**. He cares for each of us and the particular struggles we are going through. Even more than that, he desires to be in relationship with us to help us get through difficult times, to help us overcome fear and adversity.

The Bible is filled with verses that reinforce this belief: *“For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.”*<sup>2</sup> *“The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.”*<sup>3</sup> *“The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”*<sup>4</sup> *“Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the Lord.*<sup>5</sup>

## **GOD’S LOVE**

God’s love and support transcend time, space, and circumstance. Where family and friends fall short, God is there. Where personal resources and prestige prove shallow, God is there. Where mental outlook, self-created philosophies, and a positive mind-set crumble, fade, and fail, God is there.

God’s love for us literally knows no bounds, as Christians believe is proven ultimately in the life, death, and resurrection of his son, Jesus Christ. In Christian understanding, Jesus’ sacrifice allows all people to experience a personal relationship with God and to be assured of eternal salvation. Nothing can take that away—not birth defects nor disease nor failed relationships nor adversity of any kind.

Because Jesus conquered sin and death, those who have accepted him as their savior are gifted with the knowledge that they can surmount any obstacle the world throws at them. Jesus himself said, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”<sup>6</sup>

Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection paved the way for Christians to receive the gift of eternal life and focus on this rather than on temporary struggles. The apostle Paul, a man credited with writing a large portion of the New Testament, wrote, *“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.”*<sup>7</sup> It is this kind of eternity-focused faith that equips Christians to adapt and overcome. For “[Jesus’] divine power has given us everything we need.”

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**SOURCE - <https://www.explorethegod.com/articles/how-to-overcome-adversity>**