



More Than Survival

Adapted from "Family Survivor" series by Rod Loy

If you have never watched the TV series *Survivor* here is a quick overview. A group of mostly dysfunctional people are stranded on an island and divided into two competing teams. Each week, the losing team must vote one person off the team. At the end of the show, the person who survives is the winner. You don't win by winning. You win by not losing. On *Survivor*, surviving is winning.

There are times in your marriage and family when you are content to survive. In fact, you are thrilled to survive.

- If you survive the week leading up to your wedding, that is a great victory!
- If you survive Lamaze class, way to go!
- If you survive your grandchildren spending the week with you, you have won.
- If you survive teaching your child to drive.
- If your marriage survives the battle over the thermostat, you are pretty happy.
- If you survive the terrible two's, or for that matter, the terrible fiftens (they know everything at that age).
- If you survive a week with your in-laws.
- If you survive giving the wrong answer to the 'Does this make me look fat?' question, you have won.

Sometimes you are content to survive. Sometimes, surviving is actually a victory:

- When you lose a parent
- When your spouse has an affair
- When you lose your job
- When your child is doing wrong
- When a member of your family turns their back on you
- When all hope seems gone

True surviving can be a victory. But, for the most part, surviving is not winning. Surviving is enduring, staying in the game, not losing. That is all good, but we want to do more than survive.

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Some of you have been in survival mode for far too long – so long that surviving has become victory. How do you move beyond that? How do you lead your family beyond survival into making a difference – significance for the kingdom?

Many helpful suggestions could be given to help you and your family live a life of significance. However, the most important thing you can do is pray. Prayer is foundational to move past just survival in our marriage, family, and life.

COURAGE

C1: Name some times you were just content to survive. Name some times you consider survival a victory.

C2: Some of you have been in survival mode for so long that surviving has become a victory.

- Write out a plan to lead your family beyond survival into making a difference for the Kingdom of God.

C3: Write down six things you think you would need to survive in a crisis.

STRENGTH

S1: Write down your prayer for your family. How often do you pray for your family?

S2: Read and answer the following.

3 John 4 (ESV)

- From this verse, what is one thing you can pray for your family?
- What do you have to do for your family to be followers of Christ?
- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate how strong you display your personal relationship with Christ. Write out a plan to improve.

S3: Read and answer the following.

Matthew 5:14–16 (ESV)

- From these verses, what is something you can pray for your family?
- How do you balance protecting your family with reaching out to others?

ENDURANCE

E1: We live in a world that constantly sends us conflicting messages. Read and answer the following.

1 Corinthians 6:18–20 (ESV)

- From these verses, what can you pray over your family?
- What guards do you have in place in your life and family that helps keeps you morally pure?

E2: Living with integrity is the exact opposite of being a hypocrite. Read and answer the following.

- Look up the word hypocrite in the dictionary.
- Summarize the word hypocrite in one sentence.
- How would you pray for integrity for your family? Write it out.

E3: When you live with integrity the result is authentic faith. Read and answer the following.

James 1:22–26 (ESV)

- From these verses, what are two things you glean about authentic faith?
- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being not very authentic and 4 being very authentic, rate how authentic your faith is. Write out a plan to improve.

E4: Read and answer the following.

1 John 3:18 (ESV)

1 John 4:16 (ESV)

Hebrews 3:12 (ESV)

James 4:7–10 (ESV)

- From these verses, what are two things you can pray for your family?
- Write out a prayer plan for your family to participate in together for 5 out of 7 days for the next 60 days.
- Was there a difference in your family after 60 days of prayer? What was it?