



Overcoming Adversity

Adapted from "Taking Your Family to the Next Level" series by Scott Erickson

The question is not if adversity will strike, but when. And when it does, what will you choose? When adversity strikes, one can choose to stay down or get up and keep going forward.

There are plenty of panic triggers that remain for Prodeo Patria.

Large crowds, loud noises, enclosed spaces – for months and months, all of these factors reminded Patria of a single horrific night almost three years ago, when a simple trip to the movies turned into one of the greatest tragedies in Colorado history.

Patria and his family were among the hundreds who reported to the Century Theater in Aurora for a midnight showing of the new Batman movie on July 20, 2012. He became one of dozens of victims of one of the worst public shootings in U.S. history.

"I was shot in the lower back, and my mother was shot in the leg," Patria said. "I didn't feel much pain, because of the adrenaline. However, I dealt with another issue, which was mostly mental."

In the months and years that followed, Patria tried to forget. He did his best to whitewash the tragedy from his memory, but daily routines offered unsettling reminders. He had trouble being comfortable in large crowds. During school assemblies that featured loud noise, Patria discovered a sense of panic that couldn't be eliminated through sheer force of will.

It was then that he decided to address the issue head-on, and he's seen plenty of good results from his determination. Patria has worked to deal with the mental scars left by the tragic events of 2012, and he's even incorporated his recovery into his plans for post-graduation.

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"Fortunately, I persevered and I continue to achieve," he said. "I plan to study nursing at the University of Colorado Denver."¹

Pressures abound in virtually every home. As men of God, we have the ability to climb higher. Not only do we have the ability to climb higher, we have the ability to lead our families to a place of progress and enjoying God's favor. We can learn from one family in the Bible who faced tremendous adversity that resulted in a deeper dependence on Him.

¹ "Students tell stories of overcoming adversity on the path to graduation," Cherry Creek Schools, April 20, 2015, <http://www.cherrycreekschools.org/News/Pages/Students-tell-stories-of-overcoming-adversity-on-the-path-to-graduation.aspx> (accessed July 6, 2017).

COURAGE

C1: Write no more than one page on the way you were raised as a child.

C2: Think about where you and your family are today. What is your desire for your family?

C3: Write out a plan for you to get your family to where you desire it to be and where you feel the Lord is directing you to lead your family.

STRENGTH

S1: It is not a matter of if, but when adversity will come to your family. Read and answer the following.

2 Kings 4:1–4 (ESV)

- From these verses, what are four instructions or observations you have?
- Mosaic Law permitted those who had uncontrollable debt to give their children away in order to pay towards debt. What are your thoughts on this law?

S2: God can give us men great things, but His best gifts come when we express desire. Read and answer the following.

James 1:6–8 (ESV)

Ephesians 3:20 (ESV)

- What are your observations from these verses?
- Dad or as a future dad, what do you desire to see in your home?
- Dad or as a future dad, what kind of legacy will you leave your family?

S3: God is looking for empty vessels he can fill every day. Read and answer the following.

2 Kings 4:1–4 (ESV)

- What do we need to empty from ourselves daily?
- What do you think the greatest enemy of desire is?
- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being not very complacent and 4 being very complacent, rate yourself on how complacent you are. Write out a plan to improve in this area.

ENDURANCE

E1: Desire for something is one thing, but confident expectancy is another. Read and answer the following.

Mark 11:23–24 (ESV)

- From these verses, what do you gather about expectancy?
- Describe a time in your life where you were expectant. What were you feeling? Sensing?

E2: If we desire for the Lord to fill our lives with His glory and move in the lives of our children, we must be obedient and treasure His instruction.

- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate yourself on how well you are obedient to His instruction. Write out a plan to improve in this area.

E3: We must learn not to negotiate with God. He is the greatest giver. Read and answer the following.

2 Kings 4:5–7 (ESV)

- From these verses, what are two things you learn about obedience?

Mark 10:29–30 (ESV)

- From these verses, what are two things you learn about obedience?