

Thrive – God’s Call to do more than just Survive

What’s the difference? Here is the key difference as the Holy Spirit laid it out to me:

- *Survivors choose to do what it takes to remain alive or just get by.*
- *Thrivers choose to grow, flourish, and live life to its fullest.*

There are two types of Christians in the World: Those who choose to survive and those who choose to thrive. What is the difference and how do you move from one to the other? Today we are going to examine both and focus on what it takes to THRIVE.

Peter’s Story—from survivor to thriver

“Peter responded and said to Him, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” And He said, “Come!” And Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and when he began to sink, he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!”” Matthew 14: 28-30

Bodacious Peter was the first to speak and act—he had that kind of personality. In the first part of his story, we read that he wanted to be a **thriver**. He boldly called out to Jesus and stepped out of the boat onto the water and began walking toward Jesus. That is a thriver. BUT as soon as he took his eyes off Jesus, he began to sink and immediately went into **survivor** mode.

Here is another example of the boastfulness of one who wants to be a thrivers showing that when things get hard, they are just a survivor. (John 13: 37; Matthew 26: 69-74)

Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You right now? I will lay down my life for You."

*Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a slave woman came to him and said, "You too were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." When he had gone out to the gateway, another slave woman saw him and *said to those who were there, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." And again he denied it, with an oath: "I do not know the man." A little later the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "You really are one of them as well, since even the way you talk gives you away." Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know the man!"*

Survivors get by. They sometimes hang on by a thread. Barely alive. Defeated but not dead. There are times in our lives when we are glad just to survive—but those should be the exception not the rule. That is not the way Jesus intended for His disciples and apostles to live. Here are five characteristics of Christians who choose to just survive:

- Give up too easily or quit (when things get hard or they fail at something)
- Let fear overcome their faith look at the waves.
- Get overwhelmed by the world and all its evil (when the evil seem to prosper and what is sin is hailed as what is right)
- Listen to the lies of the world.
- **Settle** for whatever comes their way or the easy way out.

The Bible has many other examples of men and women who were satisfied just to survive until they had life-changing encounters with God or Jesus.

What does it mean to **thrive**? Today we are going to examine this word from a biblical perspective: The Old Testament

Hebrew and New Testament Greek. What it meant then and now and its application in our lives.

Old Testament Hebrew. The word for thrive is *tsalach*. It means to *prosper* or *come mightily; flourish, advance, break out, to cause or effect* Here is one of the best examples:

"The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, "The Lord is upright;

"He is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in Him." Psalm 92: 12-15

"He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes {them} will find compassion."
Proverbs 28:13

New Testament Greek. One word for thrive is *rhonnumi*. Meanings include: *strengthen, prosper, thrive*. Another word is *anathallo*. It means to *flourish; revive,*

*"that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, **you will do well.**"* Acts 15:28

*"But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have **revived** your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity.* Philippians 4:10

Peter the Thriver

Jesus restored Peter – turned him from a survivor to a thriver. "Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. Truly, truly, I tell you, when you were young, you dressed yourself and walked where you wanted; but when you are old, you will stretch out

your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. John 21:15-19

Peter encouraging his fellow Christians with hard, truthful words about ***thriving***.

“After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.” 1 Peter 5:10

Christians Who Thrive

- Let faith conquer fear.
- Overcome obstacles and difficulties.
- Keep our eyes on Jesus not our circumstances Heb 12.
- Stop listening to the lies of the world – listen to (read) who God says you are.
- Seek God’s plan and His best for our lives—never settle for second best.
- Know when to rest and repair but never quit—remain in the fight.

Both have known defeat but those who thrive are not defeated. One final note. Jesus sent the disciples, now apostles, out into the world to carry on His mission. History tells us they were all eventually martyred for their faith. They thrived even unto death. I hope that helps you understand the serious nature of your call if you are born-again in Christ.

For Christ’s sake,

Walter