

Summer at Freedom Week 9 Study Guide

7-20-25 "Overcoming Adversity"

Key Points

- **Adversity is Universal:** Everyone faces challenges from external sources (family, work, society) Ascending) and internal struggles (self-doubt, negative self-talk).
- **Sources of Adversity:** Family, work, environment, social media, personal responsibilities, spiritual battles (Satan).
- **Definition of Adversity:** From Latin "to turn towards" with hostile intent (Old French influence).
- **Biblical Examples:**
 - Noah: Faced ridicule and the immense task of building the ark.
 - Joseph: Experienced hostility from family, masters, and Pharaoh.
 - Moses: Struggled with self-doubt.
 - Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego: Faced cultural and spiritual pressures as captives.
- **Reflection:** "What happened to you is not what matters. How you respond does."

Why Adversity?

Adversity serves two main purposes:

1. **Correction:**
 - **Addressing Behavior:** Adversity may result from poor decisions or misalignment with God's will (e.g., financial struggles from lack of discipline or covenant giving; relational issues from neglect).
 - **Proverbs 15:10:** "Whoever abandons the right path will be severely disciplined."
 - **Hebrews 12:11:** Discipline is painful but yields a "peaceful harvest of right living."
 - **Rerouting:** God may use adversity to redirect you to the right path (e.g., Acts 16:6-10, Paul and Silas redirected by the Holy Spirit to Macedonia).
2. **Education:** Adversity teaches lessons. Focus on "What is God showing me?" rather than "Why?" (e.g., Acts 9:11-16, Saul's adversity prepared him for his mission).

How to Respond to Adversity

1. **Do the Basics:**
 - **Prayer:** Moves focus from emotions to God's will.
 - **Study the Word:** Reminds you of God's faithfulness, reducing anxiety.
 - **Worship:** Shifts focus to Jesus, fostering peace (Isaiah 26:3).
 - **Benefits:** Protection (Isaiah 59:19), peace amidst trials (John 16:33).
 - Resource: www.freedomdl.com/basics
2. **Engage Godly People:**
 - Community is vital for support and success (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).
 - Isolation can lead to frustration or apostasy (e.g., Judas' betrayal due to isolated adversity vs. Peter's restoration after voicing struggles).
 - Share struggles with trusted individuals to avoid facing adversity alone.
3. **Fight Back:**
 - Not physically, but spiritually, against Satan's schemes (Ephesians 6:10-18).
 - **Armor of God:** Helmet of salvation, breastplate of righteousness, belt of truth, shoes of peace, sword of the

Application

1. **Daily Spiritual Practices:**
 - Commit to daily prayer (5-10 minutes) to seek God's will and surrender your emotions.
 - Read one Bible verse or passage daily, focusing on God's faithfulness.
 - Create a worship playlist or practice gratitude by listing three ways God has been faithful each day.
2. **Build a Godly Community:**
 - Identify 1-2 trusted, godly individuals to share your struggles with this week.
 - Join a small group or accountability circle to discuss challenges and pray together.
 - Schedule a regular check-in (weekly or bi-weekly) with a mentor or friend to avoid isolation.
3. **Assess and Respond to Adversity:**
 - Write down current areas of adversity and evaluate: Is this due to sin, disobedience, or God's teaching/rerouting?
 - If sin or disobedience is present, repent and take one actionable step toward obedience (e.g., adjust spending habits, apologize in a relationship).
 - If under attack despite doing right, memorize and declare James 1:2-4 or Ephesians 6:13 to stand firm.
4. **Spiritual Warfare Preparation:**
 - Memorize one piece of the Armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18) each week to prepare for spiritual battles.
 - Identify one personal temptation "trap" (e.g., social media, anger) and create a practical boundary to avoid it (e.g., limit phone use, pause before responding).
 - Pray daily for discernment to recognize Satan's schemes and respond with faith, not emotions.
5. **Steadfast Endurance:**
 - When feeling overwhelmed, take a "new grip" by journaling how past adversities strengthened your faith.
 - Share a testimony with someone of how God helped you through a trial to encourage perseverance.
 - Revisit 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 weekly to remind yourself: "afflicted but not crushed, struck down but not destroyed."

Discussion Questions

- How have you experienced adversity in your life (external or internal), and what has been your typical response to it?
- Reflecting on the biblical examples (Noah, Joseph, Moses, etc.), which story resonates most with your current challenges, and why?
- How can you distinguish between adversity meant for correction (behavior or rerouting) versus education? Share a personal example if comfortable.
- Why is engaging in prayer, studying the Word, and worship critical for facing adversity? How can you practically incorporate these "basics" into your daily life?
- Why is community (godly people) essential in overcoming adversity? How can you build or strengthen your support system to avoid "isolated adversity" like Judas?