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THE BULWARK

NO MATTER WHAT, PRESS EVER ONWARD

No doubt we have all witnessed tenacity, perhaps without even really appreciating what was clearly evident. Stop and think, haven't you ever been walking along in an area with sidewalks, driveways, parking lots and so forth, when through a crack in the concrete or asphalt you see that there is a beautiful little flower growing up through the fissure. Amazing, that even though seemingly deprived of elements that would encourage growth, somehow the plant found enough of a footing to get itself rooted and growing.



is there, not unlike the victory seen in the precious little plant that grows out of the crack in the concrete.

"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose hope is the Lord. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor cease from yielding fruit." (Jeremiah 17:7-8)

As Christians we are called upon to grow even in difficult situations. We need to find our footing and reach ever upward. Which is exactly what Paul did in his life. Take some time and read over his account of what he faced, even before the rigors of his numerous trials and then the subsequent journey to Rome in order to stand before Caesar (see 2 Corinthians 11: 23ff). Seemingly, undaunted he pressed on; but where did he find the strength? *"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."* (Philippians 4:13) Daily we need to be reminded not to succumb, regardless of how difficult it may seem at times.

"What shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?" (Romans 8:31)

Reading further in Romans chapter eight, one comes upon the following. *"But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."* (v 37) The victory

Listen once again to the words of Paul as he wrote to the brethren in Philippi. *"Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do; forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead. I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 3:13-14) We can overcome any obstacle, provided we are rooted firmly in God. Our trust and confidence in Him causes us to press ever forward.

In the 92nd psalm, the psalmist wrote beautifully about how the righteous will prosper. *"The righteous person will flourish like the palm tree, He will grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Planted in the house of the LORD, They will flourish in the courtyards of our God. They will still yield fruit in advanced age; They will be full of sap and very green, To declare that the LORD is just; He is my rock, and there is no malice in Him."* (v.12-15) Thanks be to God for the strength He provides (wbe)