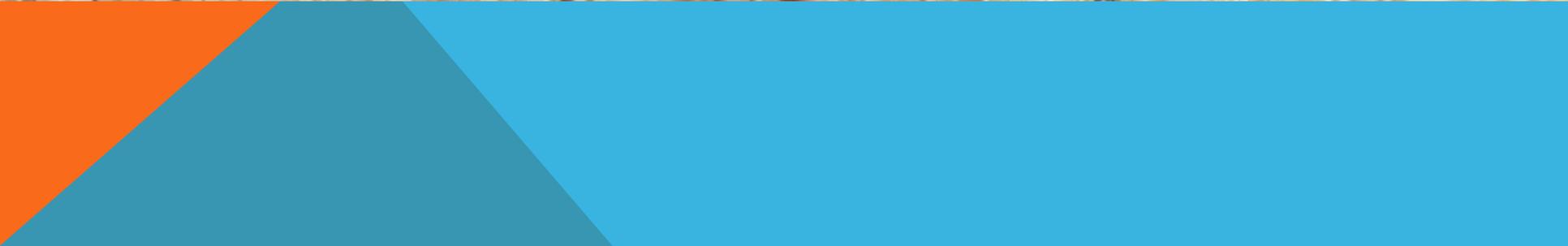


A small green seedling with three leaves is growing out of a hole in the sand. The sand is light-colored and textured. The seedling is positioned on the right side of the frame. The background is a close-up of the sand.

GROWING THROUGH OUR CHALLENGES





**TODAY: FACING THE
CHALLENGES OF GOOD TIMES**

PSALM 30

PSALM 30

I will exalt you, LORD, for you lifted me out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me. ² LORD my God, I called to you for help, and you healed me. ³ You, LORD, brought me up from the realm of the dead; you spared me from going down to the pit.

⁴ Sing the praises of the LORD, you his faithful people; praise his holy name.

⁵ For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.

PSALM 30, CONTINUED

⁶ When I felt secure, I said,
“I will never be shaken.”

⁷ LORD, when you favored me, you made my royal mountain stand firm; but when you hid your face, I was dismayed.

⁸ To you, LORD, I called to the Lord I cried for mercy:

⁹ “What is gained if I am silenced, if I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it proclaim your faithfulness?”

¹⁰ Hear, LORD, and be merciful to me; LORD, be my help.”

PSALM 30, CONTINUED

¹¹ You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, ¹² that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent. LORD my God, I will praise you forever.



OUR HAPPY TIMES...

- Are more common than our hard times
- Are times of challenge as well. We are tempted with pride and to forget God.
- “Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the LORD?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God” (Prov. 30:9).

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR GOOD TIMES

Realize God's role in blessing you and express thanks to Him.

Intentionally avoid the sin of pride and an inappropriate sense of self-sufficiency, and acknowledge your dependence on God.

Realize your continual need for mercy and see this blessing as an affirmation of God's desire to be merciful to you.



1. REALIZE GOD'S ROLE IN BLESSING YOU AND EXPRESS THANKS TO HIM.

“I will exalt you, O LORD, for you lifted me up out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me ... you healed me ... brought me up from the grave ... spared me from going down to the pit.

Three blessings are mentioned: (1) removal of shame, (2) healing, (3) deliverance from death



THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: 1 CHR. 21-22



David was motivated by pride to take a census of the fighting men in Israel.

“Everything that does not come from faith is sin” (Rom. 14:23).

Leadership in God’s house carries great responsibility

When spiritual leadership fails, people suffer

IN THE AFTERMATH OF DISCIPLINE

David realized God is merciful

He did not live in the threat of further pain, but
in the reality of God's continued faithfulness

Sorrow is a reality, but it is brief in comparison to
blessings and joy. "His anger lasts a moment
but His favor lasts a life time. Weeping may
stay for a night, but rejoicing comes in the
morning."



WHERE ARE YOU TODAY?

- **Shame:** How often has God saved you from shame? How often has He delivered you from circumstances that you brought on yourself?
 - **Healing:** (Sickness is not always a sign of God's judgment on our sin.) Consider your health today. Are you in good health?
 - **Has God delivered you from death? From danger?**
 - **Spiritual forgiveness, soul-healing, and the resurrection are part of our salvation.**
- 

2. AVOID PRIDE AND ACKNOWLEDGE DEPENDENCE

The entire problem arose because of David's pride. He lamented in verse 6, "When I felt secure, I said: 'I will never be shaken.'"

When things are going well we are tempted to forget God.

In your good times, stop and acknowledge your dependence on God. Proverbs 27:21 says, "The crucible for silver, the furnace for gold, but man is tested by the praise he receives."



WHO DO YOU CELEBRATE WITH?



Can you celebrate alone?

How have God and others helped you?

Mentors and examples?

Trailblazers, encouragers?

Providential opportunities?

Spirit and Word?

**3. REALIZE YOUR CONTINUAL NEED FOR MERCY
AND SEE THIS BLESSING AS AN AFFIRMATION OF
GOD'S DESIRE TO BE GRACIOUS TO YOU.**

Remember your earlier cries for God's help!

You still need mercy! We stand by grace through faith!

The purpose of life is to bring glory to God.

**All the blessings David had received simply gave him
the opportunity to praise the goodness of God.**



RIC WARREN WROTE:

“It is a fatal mistake to assume that God’s goal for your life is material prosperity or popular success, as the world defines it. The abundant life has nothing to do with material abundance, and faithfulness to God does not guarantee success in a career or even ministry. Never focus on temporary crowns.” (*Purpose Driven Life*, “*What on earth am I here for?*”)



WHICH IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU?



Temporary crowns
that fade?

Or...

The eternal
faithfulness of
God?

1 PETER 1:23-25

For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For,

“All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever.”



JESUS AND THE APOSTLES



The [disciples] returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.”

Christ said, “Do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

Luke 10:17-20

IN OUR GOOD TIMES...

Enjoy them! God calls us to joy!

Thank God! Thank others as well. You did not get there alone! Remember, you will always need God's help and mercy, and the help of good friends.

But take more joy in your salvation and in God's faithfulness to you. Earthly crowns fade!

Ask: How can I use this situation for God?



WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT JOY?

“You are to rejoice before the LORD you God in everything you put your hand to” (Deut. 12:18b).

“Splendor and majesty are before [God]; strength and joy in his dwelling place” (1 Chr. 16:27).

**“Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say it: Rejoice!”
(Philippians 4:4)**

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Romans 15:13).

