**When You Feel Like Giving Up**

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**By Patrick Morley**

When I worked in business, I felt like giving up about one day a week. But now that I’m in ministry, I don’t feel that way anymore. Now it’s *two* days a week.

Do you ever feel that way at work or in ministry? Or even in your own personal walk with Christ? Life is hard. It’s not just that everyone else is wounded, but we are wounded, too.

My personal calling is to take God’s message of love to a broken generation. For whatever reason, God has continued to put into my life on a daily basis, men who are wounded—who feel like giving up.

For many of these men, their aches can be summed up by one of the following struggles I identify in my book [Man Alive](https://www.amazon.com/Man-Alive-Transforming-Powerful-Spiritual/dp/1601423861). They might say, “I just feel like I’m in this alone,” “I don’t feel like God cares about me, personally,” “I don’t feel like my life has a purpose. It feels random,” “I have these destructive behaviors that keep dragging me back down,” “My soul feels dry,” “My most important relationships are not healthy,” or “I don’t really feel like I’m doing anything that’s going to make a difference and leave the world a better place.”

Does one of these resonate with you? Many of the men at your church are undoubtedly experiencing one of these inner aches, and some of them feel like giving up—on God, on church, on relationships, or on life itself.

Peter wasn’t a stranger to this feeling. Jesus told Peter, “Before the cock crows, you’re going to deny three times that you even know me.” What happened? When everything was on the line, Peter denied three times that he knew Jesus, and the cock crowed. Peter went outside and wept bitterly, overwhelmed by the pressure to give up.

But how did Jesus respond? “Don’t worry, Peter, because I have prayed for you, and when you come back, help restore your brothers.” Restore his brothers? Why would they need restored? They were Jesus’ disciples after all, our model group! And yet, they deserted Jesus. They fled in fear. You see, everyone comes under pressure to give up. Everyone does.

Because of this, I regularly have my antenna up for scriptures like this that speak to men who are in despair. And there is no shortage of these verses; here are just a few:

* “A bruised reed he will not break and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out…” (Matthew 12:20)
* “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion…” (Philippians 1:6)
* “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” (Hebrews 13:5)
* “All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.” (John 6:37)

What these scriptures show us is profoundly life changing—

***THE BIG IDEA:****Even if you do give up on Jesus, He will never give up on you.*

He did not give up on Peter. He did not give up on the disciples. He does not give up on a bruised reed. He does not give up on a smoldering wick.

If you believe the scriptures are true, then you can have confidence when you feel like giving up. We have the ability to face adversity, trouble, discouragement, burnout, and loss because we understand that no matter how bad it gets, Jesus is not going to give up on us.

**How do we keep our composure and stay the course?**

If we can rest in this truth, then how do we keep our composure and stay the course in light of it? We find help in 1 Peter 5:6-10 through four practices.

The situation that called this text into existence was the severe persecution of Christians that was happening in the Greco-Roman world. Peter is writing to Christians who are suffering—who are probably having days when they feel like giving up. Here is his advice to them. Here is his advice to *us*.

**1. Humble yourself.**

The first way we keep our composure is to humble ourselves. Peter writes in verse six, “Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.”

How do we humble ourselves before God? We bring ourselves into the presence of the Almighty, and we bow down, worship Him, and remind ourselves that He is the Creator and we are the creature. He is the One who is going to lift us up, faithfully. Even if we give up on Jesus, He will not give up on us.

We don’t have to worry about lifting *ourselves* up. This does not depend on some self-willed effort. Instead, we simply bring ourselves into the presence of God with an understanding that we really don’t have the power or strength that we need, and because of that, we’re going to turn to Him in humility so that He can lift us up in due time. We humble ourselves by worshiping God.

**2. Cast your anxiety on Him.**

Peter writes in verse seven: “Cast all your anxiety on him because He cares for you.” That’s the second way we can keep our composure and stay the course. We cast all our anxiety on Him. Why? Because He cares for you.

Do you ever struggle with how to really do that? Scripture clues us in through Philippians 4:6-7: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” He’s given us a tool here to keep our composure—to stay the course when we sense anxiety—and that is to pray. We humble ourselves by worshiping. We cast our anxiety on Him through prayer.

When we are consumed with worry, we’re demonstrating that we believe we must solve all the problems in our lives in our own strength. It’s a form of pride, and it’s futile because we *can’t* solve all the problems. Nothing will leave you feeling like you want to give up faster than that! But when we cast our worries on God, we are acknowledging that He is sovereign and we trust in Him.

Ask yourself: *Am I anxious because I’m the person who has to solve this?* No, you’re not the person that has to solve this. Peter doesn’t write: “Cast all your anxiety on Him so that He can give you the power in your own strength to resolve that.” No: “Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.” Humble yourselves. Cast all your anxiety on Him. He’s the one who cares for you.

**3. Be alert and of sober mind.**

In verse eight, Peter writes: “Be alert and of sober mind.” Why? Because, “Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”

When you watch a National Geographic special about life on the Serengeti and see the lion stalking the herd, you’ll notice the lion never goes after the herd. The lion goes after the weak one that has become isolated from the group. In the same way, when the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour, if you are in a group of brothers, he’s not looking for you. He’s looking for an easier target.

Whether you are a men’s leader, a pastor, or a new believer, you’re going to get beaten up. You’re going to feel like giving up. God has given you a powerful resource to help you stay alert and stay the course: *friends*. Humble yourself through worship, cast your anxiety on Him through prayer, and stay alert with the help of community.

**4. Resist the enemy.**

Peter, referring to the enemy, writes in verse nine: “Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.”

There’s a spiritual world that is trying to overcome us—desperate to see us give up—and in Ephesians 6, we’re admonished to put on the whole armor of God in order to resist the devil: the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

When you feel like giving up, remember that a real enemy is aiming for you. But you aren’t alone in your suffering. Stand firm in the faith with other believers, and resist the devil.

**Will it ever end?**

These four helpful practices are things that we can do to *cooperate*, but what truly delivers us is God Himself, and we see that in verses 10 and 11: “And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever.”

When you’re in a season where you feel like giving up, it’s natural to wonder, *Will this ever end?*

The St. Johns River flows not too far to the east of our Man in the Mirror offices. It begins down in Indian River County and runs to Jacksonville, Florida. In the early life of the river, the river is narrow and the water runs fast. Then about halfway up to Jacksonville, all of those little droplets of water empty into a big lake called Lake Monroe. All of a sudden, the water loses its velocity and begins to spread out.

But here’s the thing. Every drop of water will eventually come out of Lake Monroe due to the flow of water, and eventually, the riverbanks of the St. Johns River will regather all of those water drops until they regain velocity and direction.

Everybody gets stuck in the lake from time to time and feels like they’ve lost direction, but because God is good, He is coming along, and as the scripture says, “after you have suffered a little while, [He] will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast.”

Whatever you’re going through, the Lord is going to gather you back up again. **Even if you do give up on Jesus, He will never give up on you**.

To him be the power for ever and ever.

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