**Resiliency**

**We are distressed in every way, but not overwhelmed;**

**we are harassed on all sides, but not conquered;**

**Persecuted, but not forsaken;**

**cast down, but not destroyed.**

***(2 Corinthians 4:8-9)***

**For Hank Aaron, breaking the most celebrated record in American sports was more than a matter of physical prowess – it was also a feat of psychological resilience. As the Atlanta Braves slugger approached Babe Ruth’s record of 714 home runs in the early 1970s, he was bombarded with hate mail and death threats from people outraged that a black man might surpass a white baseball icon. “My gun is watching your every black move,” read one letter. It didn’t stop him. On April 8, 1974, Aaron hit his 715th homer, smashing a slider over the left-center field fence at Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium. Baseball’s new home run king received an 11-minute ovation and a hug at home plate from his mother, who later said she was shielding her son from potential gunmen. The 20-time All Star retired from playing in 1976 with 755 career home runs, a record that stood for more than 30 years, but remained scared by the racism he’d endured during the Ruth chase. “It really made me see for the first time a clear picture of what this country is about,” Aaron said in 1994. “They carved a piece of my heart away.” *(The Week magazine, February 5, 2021)***

**A good half of the art of living is resilience. *(Alain de Botton, writer)***

**A young bald eagle has made a miraculous recovery after crashing through the windshield of a semi-truck that was traveling at more than 60 mph. Wiegle, short for “Window Eagle,” survived the impact in Bear Lake, Idaho, but suffered internal bleeding. After a month of rehab at the Teton Raptor Center in Wyoming, Wiegle was able to fly, eat, and navigate all on her own, and now has been set free. “This return to the wild qualifies as the most remarkable among our success stories,” said Amy Brennan McCarthey, the center’s executive director. *(The Week magazine, March 18, 2011)***

**From Bunker Hill to the Tea Party rebellion against the British, our vibrant, defiant city has served as the cradle of America’s liberty, said The Boston Globe. Perhaps we were attacked because the marathon takes place on Patriots’ Day, or perhaps it was simply that the marathon finish line made such “a vulnerable target for a bomber – all those people in such close quarters.” But Bostonians have “a resilient spirit” that enabled us to face down 18th-century tyrants, and will enable us to defy 21st-century terrorists. *(The Week magazine, April 26, 2013)***

**One-term Democrat Jimmy Carter was unpopular after Ronald Reagan crushed him in 1980. But in 1982, he established the Carter Center, devoting himself to humanitarian causes, monitoring 103 elections in 39 nations, and leading a campaign to eradicate guinea worm disease in Africa. He was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 2002. *(The Week magazine, January 27, 2017)***

**If ever there was a failure designed to kill a career, Sergio Zyman's was it. In 1984 Coca-Cola gave him responsibility for reversing Coke's decline versus Pepsi. Zyman's strategy was to replace Coke's formula, label it "New Coke" and blare the news. His error, which some attribute to ego, was failing to keep old Coke on the market. New Coke was the most disastrous new product launch since the Edsel. Within 79 days, old formula Coke was back on the supermarket shelves, as Classic Coke. A year later, wounded, Zyman left Coca-Cola. Failure. Personal, humiliating, image-wrecking failure. But it's not as bad as you think. Just seven years later, Zyman bounced back to Coca-Cola, his ego intact and his job expanded. *(Patricia Sellers, in Reader's Digest)***

**It’s utterly ridiculous that powerful, resilient women are portrayed as dangerous, whereas in my experience it’s the predatory men who are the real threat. *(Joan Collins)***

**Coyotes are so resilient that killing them, even in great numbers, just doesn't have much effect. Decades ago, several Western states tried to reduce coyote numbers through poisoning, trapping, and bounty hunting. But wildlife officials found that 70 percent of the entire population had to be killed every year to make a dent in the numbers -- an impossible target. Coyotes also have a biological mechanism that triggers larger litters whenever their numbers drop*. (The Week magazine, July 17, 2015)***

**When you hit a wrong note, it's the next note that makes it good or bad. *(Miles Davis)***

**Resilience. It's when you decide to give up on giving in. *(Todd Carmichael, Haiti Coffee Academy cofounder)***

**The failure of Alice slowed him only temporarily. Walt Disney hocked his life insurance to raise $100,000, then paid a draftsman out of his own pocket to lay out the first plans. In 1955, Disneyland opened in Anaheim, California. *(John Culhane, in Reader's Digest)***

**How did they recover so fast? Nature, not man, deserves most of the credit. “The environment is amazingly resilient, more so than most people understand,” says deep-sea biologist Luis Soto. Sunlight and heat evaporated much of the oil on the sea surface, oil-eating microbes consumed much of the oil suspended below the waves, and tides and storms washed away most of the tar on the shoreline. The asphalt-like remnants sank to the seabed, where they provide nesting grounds for crustaceans and other bottom-dwellers. Those natural forces cleaned up far more oil than containment booms and other man-made technology. “If you can contain and recover 20 percent of the oil,” says off-spill expert Dec Doran, you’ve reached the maximum efficiency of booms and skimmers.” *(The Week magazine, July 23, 2010)***

**The ability to bounce back, to turn bad breaks into opportunities is a trait nearly all successful people possess. Such people will simply not be defeated. Some years ago a buggy salesman had saved a thousand dollars. He and a partner with half that amount planned to make rubber tires for buggies. Competitors, however, prevented them from getting a patented welding machine needed for making the tires. It seemed they were stopped even before they got started. The salesman would not give up. With the help of a mechanic he devised a better and cheaper way to embed wire into rubber. Later, when he started to make tires for the new horseless carriages, another patent monopoly prevented his making the “clincher” type of tire. Undiscouraged, he set out to develop the “straight side” tire. Henry Ford liked the young man’s idea and placed an order for 2,000 sets. The young man’s name was Harvey Firestone. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**The holy city of Jerusalem has known the hosts of 36 wars. She has been reduced to ashes 17 times. Jerusalem has risen out of these ashes 18 times. *(Josef Blumenfeld, in Plain Truth magazine, 1989)***

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**Abraham Lincoln kept his sense of humor in defeat, which made him seem undefeated and, in a way, unbeatable. After he lost to Stephen A. Douglas in the Illinois Senate race in 1858, Lincoln was asked how he felt about this setback. He answered, "I feel somewhat like the boy in Kentucky who stubbed his toe while running to see his sweetheart. The boy said he was too big to cry, and far too badly hurt to laugh." Despite this defeat, Lincoln refused to lower his aspirations. "I have an abiding faith," he wrote to an old friend on December 12, 1858, "that we shall beat them in the long run." Two years later, Abraham Lincoln was elected president of the United States. *(The Wit & Wisdom of Abraham Lincoln, edited by Alex Ayres, p. 55)***

**It’s a rare person who doesn’t get discouraged. Whether it happens to us or to an associate we’re trying to cheer up, the answer centers around one word: perseverance. The value of courage, persistence, and perseverance has rarely been illustrated more convincingly than in the life story of this man: At age 22, he failed in business; at age 23, he ran for legislature and was defeated; at age 24, again he failed in business; at age 25, he was elected to legislature; at age 26, his sweetheart died; at age 27, he had a nervous breakdown*;* at age 29, he was defeated for Speaker; at age 3l, he was defeated for Elector; at age 34, he was defeated for Congress; at age 37, he was elected to Congress; at age 39, he was defeated for Congress; at age 46, he was defeated for Senate; at age 47, he was defeated for Vice President; at age 49, he was defeated for Senate; and at age 51, he was elected President of the United States. That’s the record of Abraham Lincoln. *(Bits & Pieces)***

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**You are not born with a fixed amount of resilience. It's like a muscle; you can build it up. *(Sheryl Sandberg)***

**Good week for: Nature's resilience, after scientists reported that the radioactive "exclusion zone" around the Chernobyl nuclear power plant is now teeming with wildlife, including elk, deer, wild boar, and wolves, and now rivals the world's most abundant nature preserves. *(The Week magazine, October 16, 2015)***

**It was ten years after that day that I was introduced to the Survivor Tree, a Callery pear tree discovered a month after the collapse of the towers, crushed between two blocks of cement. All that was left was half a trunk that had been charred black, with roots that were broken and only one living branch. She was almost sent to the dump, but the young woman who found her, Rebecca Clough, begged that the tree might be given a chance. And so she went to be cared for in a nursery in the Bronx. Bringing that seriously damaged tree back to health was not an easy task, and it was touch and go for a while. But whenever you give her a chance, nature returns. Eventually the tree made it. Once she was strong enough, she was returned to be planted in what is now the 9/11 Memorial & Museum. In the spring, her branches are bright with blossoms. I’ve seen people looking at her and wiping away tears. She truly is a symbol of the resilience of nature – and a reminder of all that was lost on that terrible day 20 years ago. *(Jane Goodall and Douglas Abrams with Gail Hudson, in The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for Trying Times)***

**Nixon's final comeback: After Richard Nixon resigned the presidency in the wake of the Watergate scandal in August 1974, "his career and life lay in ruins," says biographer Elizabeth Drew. But the resilient Nixon hatched a secret plan -- code-named Wizard -- to resurrect his reputation. Determined to become "a senior statesman, a sage, " Drew says, he wrote a best-selling memoir, sat for interviews with British talk show host David Frost, lectured, and traveled twice to China. He began dispensing political and foreign policy advice to politicians in both parties, and privately consulted with Presidents Carter, Reagan, and Bush 41. In the 1980s, Nixon was voted one of Gallup's 10 most admired men in the world, and when he died at 81 in 1994, the Clintons, along with four ex-presidents and more than 100 members of Congress, attended the nationally televised funeral. In his eulogy, then President Clinton said, "May the day of judging President Nixon on anything less than his entire life and career come to a close." *(The Week magazine, January 27, 2017)***

**They said I was the fighter who got knocked down the most, but I also got up the most. *(Floyd Patterson)***

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**In time the Sanders Café grew into a 142-seat enterprise, with a motel attached, valued at $164,000. Then disaster struck. In the mid 1950s the two roads on which the restaurant stood were bypassed by new super-highways, and Colonel Sanders, whose place was isolated by the change, was forced to sell at auction for just enough to cover his debts. Faced with the prospect of trying to live on Social Security and his small savings, he struck out at the age of 66 for new frontiers. Sanders’ principal asset was his method of frying chicken. Loading up his 1946 Ford with a 50-pound can of seasoning and his beloved pressure cooker, he took to the road. “Let me cook chicken for you and your staff,” he told restaurateurs. “If you like the way it tastes, I’ll sell you my seasoning, teach you how to cook it, and you pay me a four-cent royalty on every chicken you sell.” Although business was slow at first, by 1960 Sanders had 400 franchises in the United States and Canada. *(James Stewart-Gordon, in Reader’s Digest)***

**One of the pitfalls people over forty fall into is thinking that it’s too late. It’s an old cliche but the simple fact is that it’s rarely too late for anything. Some years ago a man over sixty was offered nearly $200,000 for a restaurant-motel-service station business that he’d spent his life building up. He turned the offer down because he loved the business and wasn’t ready to retire yet. Two years later, at age sixty-five, he was flat broke with no income to look forward to but a small Social Security check each month. The state had built a new highway bypassing his business and he lost it. Most men would have been crushed by such a blow, but he refused to give up. Instead, he took stock. There was one thing he knew how to do – fry chicken. Maybe he could sell that knowledge to others. He kissed his wife good-bye and in a battered old car, with a pressure cooker and a can of specially prepared flour, set out to sell his idea to other restaurants. It was tough going and he often slept in the car because there wasn’t enough money for a hotel room. A few years later he had built a nationwide, franchised restaurant chain called Kentucky Fried Chicken. The man’s name was Colonel Sanders. *((Bits & Pieces)***

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**Sri Lanka's east coast "has good reason to feel optimistic about the future," said Henry Wismayer in The Washington Post. Twelve years ago, a tsunami devastated the region, claiming more than 40,000 lives. Reminders of that natural disaster -- and of the island's decades-long civil war -- haven't entirely vanished. But with the war over and redevelopment of roads and resorts advancing, the east is finally opening to tourism, offering a "beguiling" alternative to the more popular southwest coast. My family and I recently explored the lesser-known shore, traveling by car from the wild coast of Kuchchaveli south to Arugam Bay. Everywhere we went, we sensed "an air of resurrection." *(The Week magazine, January 13, 2017)***

**The United States greatest naval victory – Midway -- occurred only six months after its greatest naval defeat -- Pearl Harbor. *(L. M. Boyd)***

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