

## Determined Salmon

In all of nature, I don't know of a more determined creature than the North Pacific salmon when it is returning to its place of birth.

Born in fresh water, these particular salmon migrate to the ocean and return to their birthplace three or four years later to reproduce. That may sound simple enough, but in fact the journey, which can be as long as 2,000 miles (about 3,200 kilometers), is unfathomably difficult.

No one knows for sure how the salmon know how to get where they're going. Some researchers believe they are guided by a magnetic field, while others believe it is the salmon's keen sense of smell or an imprint in their brain of the chemical makeup of the water at their birthplace. However they find their way to the exact spot where they were born, their Creator has equipped them for the task.

When they reach the mouth of the river where they entered the ocean years before, their journey becomes even more difficult and perilous. It's all against the current now. As the river narrows to a tributary and then to a stream, at times the salmon must force their way over rocks and through raging rapids.

Then there are the bears that line up along the shallow, narrow, rock-filled streams to grab and eat as many salmon as they can, one after another. And bears aren't the only predators. There is also a gauntlet of humans with nets and hooks. But the salmon will not be deterred as they struggle to clear every obstacle between them and their goal.

I greatly admire the salmon's do-or-die spirit, and I remember them when my own energy wanes or some goal seems to be slipping away. I remind myself that I too have been equipped by my Creator to take on life's challenges.

I too am destined to return to the birthplace of my spirit, Heaven, and my Creator has given me an inborn homing device to help get me there. It's not like the salmon's auto-pilot-like system in that I have to choose to switch it on, but my link with Him through prayer is just as sure and His guidance is just as clear and specific. He promises in the Bible, "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know," and, "Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it.'" [[Jeremiah 33:3; Isaiah 30:21]]

I also have to do my part. I have to keep swimming and fight the current, even when it would be so much easier to turn around and float downstream. But as I keep going in the right direction, that voice gets stronger. "Don't stop! You're almost there. You're going to make it. You're doing great!" As long as I listen to and obey that voice, my inspiration and strength are renewed. Like the determined salmon, I'm going to keep going until I reach my destination!

### Don't Quit

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,  
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,  
When the funds are low, and the debts are high,  
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,  
When care is pressing you down a bit,  
Rest if you must, but don't you quit.  
Life is queer with its twists and turns,  
As everyone of us sometimes learns,  
And many a failure turns about,  
When he might have won had he stuck it out;  
Don't give up though the pace seems slow,  
You may succeed with another blow.

Success is failure turned inside out,  
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,  
And you never can tell how close you are,  
It may be near when it seems afar;  
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit,  
It's when things seem worst, that you must not quit.

--*Edgar A. Guest*

"Results! Why, man I have gotten a lot of results. I know several thousand things that won't work."--  
*Thomas A. Edison*

"Fall seven times, Stand up eight."--*Japanese proverb*

"There is always another chance. This thing called 'failure' is not falling down, but staying down."--  
*Mary Pickford*

"A minute's success pays the failure of years."--*Robert Browning*

"For every failure, there's an alternative course of action. You just have to find it. When you come to a roadblock, take a detour."--*Mary Kay Ash*

"Triumph is 10% try and 90% umph!"--*Author unknown*