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Overcoming The Storms Of Life
“Celebrating With Those Who have Overcome”
(Part 5)

Intro: Read story: Potato / Egg / Coffee bean

When we face the storms of life, no matter where they come from, I believe God has designed us to be the coffee. He has designed us to overcome, and in the process, we are changed and so is the water...so are the circumstances. Something brand new is created. There is a transformation that takes place. Today is the day we celebrate this truth. Today we celebrate all that God has done to help us overcome and also rejoice with those who have overcome the storms in their lives.

- Look with me what God has done for us so we can overcome!

I. We Are Destined To Overcome

Ps. 73:24 “You will keep on guiding me with Your counsel, leading me to a glorious destiny.” (NLT)

Jer. 29:11 “For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.” (NLT)

A. God has a glorious destiny for each person

1. Your current or past circumstances do not change the fact that God has a plan for your life that you can experience. God has a glorious destiny for each of you.
2. The full experience of your destiny is played out in eternity, BUT it begins here. We begin to experience who we are and what God has designed us to do in this life. God made each one of you in a way so that you could fulfill His destiny for you. (Have you ever wondered, “Why am I like this?”) Destiny!
3. He gave you just the right personality / right talents / gifts / passions / God designed you with His purpose in mind...with your destiny in mind. (Tool design = purpose)
4. God doesn't have a destiny for just a select few; He has a destiny for everyone. This is why you and I are destined to overcome. It is God's desire for us to walk in it.

B. No storm can rob you of God's destiny for your life

1. God's purposes for your life are stronger than the storms of life. No matter how devastating the storm may be, it cannot steal God's destiny away from you.

2. God will use the storms to change us; He will use the storms to redirect us. We may think we are getting blown off course, but God will use a storm to get us where we need to be.
- I would have never started Foothills if it wasn't for a storm. There are certain qualities in my character that were developed because of the storms.
 3. You may think that the storms of your life have robbed you of whatever God had for you...it's too late. OR, Because many of your storms were self-inflicted, you may feel you don't deserve any kind of destiny. I've messed up too bad for God to use me. (Divorce / D & A / Bankruptcy /
 4. Whatever you give to Jesus, He resurrects. If you give Him the broken pieces of your storm battered life, He brings new life to it. The storms may have been strong, but God is stronger!
- You are destined to overcome!

II. Jesus Came So We Could Overcome

John 16:33 "...Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, I have overcome the world." (NLT) Because Jesus overcame, so can we!

Matt. 16:18 "...upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not **conquer it.**" (NLT) No storm can destroy my work! You're part of His work!

Heb. 2:14 "... he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might **destroy** him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—(NIV)

A. Jesus came to conquer our enemies (He came to overcome!)

1. Jesus conquered our three enemies in this fallen world...sin, Satan, and death. These three enemies create plenty of storms in our lives. BUT, because of what Jesus did on the cross, He conquered them. (Death / burial / resurrection)
 - Sin no longer has the power to control us. The power of sin was broken. We now have a choice how to live. It's no longer our master.
 - Satan no longer has any authority over us. Satan has no right or power to hold us captive in any way. All his authority was removed. (I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me!)
 - Death no longer has any fear and dread upon us. Why should we fear death? To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. Jesus gave us the promise of eternal life. Death isn't the end; it's simply a door into eternity!
2. All the sources of my storms have been defeated in Christ. This doesn't mean I will live a storm free existence. What it does guarantee, is that I can overcome whatever the storm is. WHY?

B. We can overcome because Jesus did

1. Jesus promised storms in this life, but He said to take heart because He has overcome the world. I'm stronger than any storm you face.
2. As long as we stay connected to Jesus through the storm, we will overcome no

matter how severe the weather.

3. In Matt. 7, Jesus tells us how to survive storms. It's all about listening and obeying Jesus through them. (Jesus compares 2 types of people – share)
4. As long as we have the right foundation our life is built on, no storm can destroy us. WHY? Because our lives are built upon the foundation of the ONE who overcame.

- Picture of lighthouse in the storm – This picture says it all!
- Because Jesus overcame, and our lives are built on Him, so can we.

III. We've Been Forgiven So We Can Overcome

I Cor. 6:9-11 "...Those who indulge in sexual sin, who are idol worshippers, adulterers, prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, greedy people, drunkards, abusers and swindlers – none of these will have a share in the Kingdom of God. There was a time when some of you were just like that, but now your sins have been washed away, and you have been set apart for God. You have been made right with God because of what the Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of our God have done for you."(NLT)

A. Jesus set us free from our past

1. Our identity is no longer connected to our past life / past mistakes / past storms. Our identity is connected to what Jesus did for us. Notice these terms: But now... you are washed / set apart / made right (You were...But now...!)
 2. Our identity is no longer determined by our past mistakes and failures, but by our new identity that comes from forgiveness in Jesus.
 3. How can we overcome if we are still dragging around our past like a big ball and chain? If we identify more with our past than with the forgiveness we've been given in the present?
 3. If you are identifying more with your past, you can never overcome. WHY? Because it is a weight around your life. It would be like trying to swim with a 50lb. backpack on. Impossible! You sink every time!
 4. If you're stuck in the thinking..."I'm a loser / reject / something's wrong with me / no good / good for nothing / stupid / unlovable / unforgivable / unacceptable. In Christ, these all disappear!
 5. You were...BUT NOW! (Slide) I am God's child / Christ's friend / member of Christ's body / a saint / complete in Christ / citizen of heaven / salt and light of the earth / I am God's workmanship / I am completely forgiven
- It is this thinking that lets us overcome! You can only live what you believe. What do you believe about yourself today? The answer to that question will determine if you overcome. We are not only forgiven...

B. Jesus set us free from the guilt from our past

1. The reason our past sticks to us in the present is because of guilt. Therefore, Jesus not only forgives us, He removes all our guilt as well.

Ps. 32:5 “Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, “I will confess my rebellion to the LORD.” And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.” (NLT)

2. Guilt ridden people just can't overcome. Why? Because they are too busy beating themselves up for past mistakes to ever believe they can move forward.
 3. Jesus came to forgive us and remove the bondage of guilt from our lives. It is guilt that will keep us from embracing our new identity and our destiny. Guilt keeps us trapped in the past.
 4. Living under the cloud of guilt is like living in the deadness of winter (everything is dormant in your life – it's cold and dark.) Whereas releasing yourself from guilt that Jesus has already forgiven changes the seasons in your life. It's like stepping into that first warm day of Spring. (It's warm and there's new growth everywhere.)
 5. If you've confessed your failures to God, it's time to let go of your guilt. It's time to say, “All my guilt is gone!” It's time to overcome!
- We have been forgiven so we can overcome.

IV. We Are Empowered To Overcome

II Cor. 4:7-9 “But this precious treasure – this light and power that now shines within us – is held in perishable containers, that is, in our weak bodies. So everyone can see that our glorious power is from God and is not our own. We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed and broken. We are perplexed, but we don't give up and quit. We are hunted down, but God never abandons us. We get knocked down, but we get up again and keep going.” (NLT)

A. God places His power inside us to overcome

1. God doesn't expect us to face the storms of life on our own and with our own power. We did that before Christ and it was disastrous! Now, He places His supernatural power in us.
 2. We are still pressed / crushed / perplexed / knocked down, BUT because of the power of Jesus in us, these storms do not destroy us! We get to tap into a new power source. We are empowered to overcome.
- When we give our lives to Jesus, we are re-wired to tap into the eternal. We go from DC power (Dead in Christ) to AC power (Alive in Christ) Before Jesus, we didn't have the spiritual wiring for the power of God to flow. Now we do. We are wired for power!
 3. The Christian life is one that is lived supernaturally not naturally. It is spiritual not fleshly. It is heavenly rather than earthly.
 4. This is why Scripture says we overwhelmingly conquer through Christ who loves us! When we live this way...

B. God's power in us is a witness to the world

1. II Cor 4 says, “so everyone can see...” When we live God's power in the midst of the storms of life, everyone can see that it is not us, but God. The storms that were

- sent to destroy us are now used as a testimony to the world of the reality of God!
2. Some of you are a testimony to this fact. The storms of life devastated your lives / your marriages / your hopes and dreams / stole your future / BUT you've allowed Christ into your lives and now you have overcome. He's reversing the damage!
 3. I have always believed that the greatest miracle and testimony to a fallen world is a changed life. How does one argue with that? Here in a few minutes we are going to celebrate with those who have experienced God's power to overcome.
 4. Next week we are going to listen to another man's story of God's power to overcome. Next week we have a man with us named Amon who survived the killing fields in Rwanda Africa.
- We are empowered to overcome.

V. We All Have A Choice To Overcome

Deut. 30:19-20 " Today, I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh that you would choose life... Choose to love the Lord your God and to obey Him and commit yourself to Him, for He is your life..." (NLT)

A. Overcoming is a choice not chance

1. Our lives are not about luck / chance / fate / or good fortune. We actually get to choose life. We can choose a path that will result in negative consequences or choose a life that God blesses. (Still with storms, but with Him helping us)
2. We can choose to believe that we can overcome the storms of life ourselves...believe we have the resources to handle it / the strength to endure / and the wisdom to figure it out. OR...
3. We can humble ourselves before God and let Him be our life. HOW? Look at what it says; "love the Lord your God / obey Him / commit yourself to Him." This is the choice we all are faced with. This choice = life.
4. If you're tired of your life, there's just a great way to get a brand new one. Give it to Jesus. If you will do this...

B. Overcoming can be your reality

1. There is a false belief that Jesus came and started a new religion. Jesus did NOT come to start a new religion. He came with the same offer His father has always given...Life. Unfortunately, many people reject it.

John 5:40 "You are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life." (NASB)

2. The life that Jesus gives us overcomes any storm this world has to offer. There are plenty of people here who have taken Jesus up on His offer and they have experienced new life. They have overcome life's devastating storms. They have overcome and they are still in the process of overcoming. Through Him
3. If for some reason all this sounds too good to be true, maybe seeing God's power in the lives of others will cause you to reconsider that God can do this in your life as

well. As for the rest of us, we are going to rejoice and celebrate with those God has helped overcome. We all should have a story...a testimony

4. We're going to sing a song, and then we are going to have what is called a Silent Testimony / Cardboard Testimonies (Explain) May God use this to encourage you today!

- Song
- Read Romans 8:37
- Silent Testimony
- Closing prayer / Song