

# We Are More Than Conquerors

by Zac Poonen

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**Scripture:** Matthew 26:51, Luke 4:29, John 7:32, Romans 8:28, Hebrews 13:5, 1 John 4:17, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Philippians 4:19, Matthew 6:25

**Topics:** "Trusting God's Provision", "Strength in Trials"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting in God's provision and sovereignty, drawing parallels from biblical accounts like Peter's denial of Jesus and Job's trials. It encourages believers to seek God's kingdom and righteousness, knowing that God will provide all their needs. The message highlights the power of God's grace in our weakness and the assurance that God's presence and help will never leave us, even in the midst of trials and difficulties.

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## Transcript

Let me begin with a verse in Matthew 26. This is the time when Jesus was in the garden of Gethsemane and the soldiers had come to arrest him. And it says Peter took out his sword to defend Jesus and cut off the servant's ear in Matthew 26 and verse 51.

And Jesus said, verse 52, put your sword back to those who take the sword will perish by the sword. And then listen to this verse 53, Matthew 26, 53. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my father and he will at once put at my disposal more than 72,000 angels to come and defend him? He just had to speak a word.

But the father did not allow Jesus to speak that word and Jesus did not speak that word because it was not the will of God. And then when we see all that Jesus went through after that, all that suffering and difficulty and finally the crucifixion, humiliation, it could all have been saved. He could have been saved from all of that if he had just asked the father to send even one angel.

72,000 angels were ready to come. Sometimes when we face some difficult situations, we can wonder, isn't God able to come and deliver me from this right now? Can't I just pray and God will immediately come and solve that problem immediately? Well, if you're walking in the will of God and your whole life is

surrendered to Christ and you desire nothing in your life but the will of God for your life, I can tell you one thing, God will determine when to come and intervene in a situation and when to let you go through it to make you a stronger person. See, that is total submission to God's will.

There were other times when we read that people gathered together to kill him. For example, let me show you Luke chapter 4. There it says, after Jesus preached in the synagogue, while he was preaching, they pulled him down and they, Luke 4, 29, they took him, they drove him, it says. They got up and drove him out of the city.

Can you understand the meaning of that word drove? It's almost as though they were using a whip and pushing him out of the city. The whole lot of them, I don't know, maybe 200 people pushing him out of the city, led him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built to throw him down the cliff. Did the father do something then? Yes, because it says, he passed through their midst and went his way.

That's amazing. I thought about how did that happen? How can 200 people gang up and push a person right up to the edge of a cliff and not be able to throw him down and he quietly walks away? 200 angry people. I think it was because God intervened there and perhaps made some of them have a discussion among themselves as to which cliff they should throw him over.

Some said this one, some said that one, some said the other one. And while they were discussing, Jesus walked away. Who arranged that? The Lord.

We read another time in John's gospel that it says they could not capture him because his time had not yet come. That's an amazing verse. Once we read in John chapter seven that the Pharisees sent, verse 32, the Pharisees sent John 7, 32, a number of officers to seize him, John 7, 32, when he was preaching in the temple.

And they couldn't do it. They came back saying, no, we couldn't catch him because no man ever, verse 48, 46, no man ever spoke like this man. What is the reason? His time had not yet come.

So we believe that Jesus is our elder brother. And there's a particular promise in scripture that if we seek to live in that verse, Jesus is your elder brother. That's how I understood it in Romans 8, verse 28 and 29.

See, we have such wonderful promises in the new covenant, which people just didn't have in the old covenant. Romans 8, 28 is a well-known verse. God causes all things to work together for our good if we love him and we are called according to his purpose.

God has a purpose for your life and my life. And if my will is aligned with his purpose for my life, everything will work for my good. And the purpose is mentioned in the next verse.

The purpose is that God might conform us to the image of Jesus, his son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers, so that he might be the eldest brother among all brothers and sisters. So if my goal is the same as mentioned in verse 29, to be conformed to the likeness of Christ, that means my aim in life is not to make money. My aim in life is not to be a famous person, not a famous preacher or well-known or build my own house or anything like that.

All those things are secondary. We can do all of those things. But my primary aim in life is to become like Christ.

Everything else in life is secondary. I believe that's what a truly wholehearted Christian is like. His one goal in life is to become like Christ.

Everything else is secondary. He looks after his family, he does his work faithfully, and maybe he spends 12 hours a day working. There's probably very little time even to read the Bible, but he's got one goal in life throughout his life, 24 hours a day, his goal is to become like Christ.

Now, if you're like that, then Jesus is your elder brother. Even now, God has designed that he should be our elder brother. And since there is no partiality with God, whatever God did for his elder brother, for his eldest son, rather, he'll do for us.

I mentioned this many times that John 3.16, God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. Jesus was the only begotten son when he came to this earth. But after his resurrection, he's called the firstborn.

When a person has got only one son, he's called his only son. When he has more than one son, that son is called the firstborn. At what point did Jesus become the firstborn? That's in John's Gospel, Chapter 20.

At the resurrection, for the first time in his life, he addresses his disciples as his brothers. He told Mary Magdalene at the tomb in John's Gospel, Chapter 20, and he said, go, we're 17, to my brothers. Earlier on, just three days earlier, at the Last Supper in John 15, he said, you'll be my servants, but now you're my friends.

Servants, friends, and now he was going even higher. So you're my brothers. He never specifically said that these disciples were his brothers.

He mentioned earlier, who are these, who are my mother and my brothers, those who hear the word of God and do it. But now he was specifically referring to his disciples as my brothers, and my father is your father. Something unique happened at the resurrection.

It's the first time he refers to the father as my father and your father. Otherwise, it was always either my father, or sometimes your father, sometimes my father, sometimes your father, throughout the Gospels. But after the resurrection, it was my father and your father.

We have become one family. And my brothers. So something unique happened at the resurrection.

Jesus became the elder brother of all those who passionately desired to fulfill God's purpose and to become like Christ. Now, if that is true of you, and I want it to be true of all of us, then we can be absolutely sure, since there's no partiality with God, what God did for Jesus, he will do for you. It's an amazing truth that changed my life when I was gratified about 40 years ago.

What God did for Jesus, he will do for you. I've never heard anyone say it like that anywhere. The things I heard was what God did for others, he'll do for you.

But what God did for Jesus, he will do for you changed my life. Because I say, Lord, that's wonderful. The way you cared for Jesus, you'll care for me.

The way you provided for Jesus, you'll provide for me. Jesus never had to starve. No.

And I never had to starve. The father never forsook Jesus, even when he was being beaten and stripped. The only time he forsook him was when he was on the cross.

And that's because he was bearing the punishment for our sins. That's never happened to us. Those three hours on the cross were unique in the history of humanity, where Jesus had to bear the sins of the world.

But that will never be true of us. His promise to us is I'll never leave you, nor forsake you. If you don't know where that promise is, all of you, please turn to Hebrews chapter 13.

It's a wonderful promise. In Hebrews 13, and verse five, middle of verse five, be content with what you have. And I tell you, that's a very relevant word for the time in which we are living now with all the pressures and shortages and difficulties and trials and people being laid off and people not able to earn as much as they could at other times.

It's so easy to grumble, murmur, to be discontent with something or the other. It's almost as if God's completely forgotten about us. Let me ask you straight.

Do you want God's purpose to be fulfilled in your life, whatever God's purpose is? You say, Lord, whatever the price, I want your purpose to be fulfilled in my life. I'm not asking for comfort. I'm not asking for fame.

I'm not asking for money. I'm asking that your perfect will will be fulfilled in my life. That's all I want.

You go to God like that and mean it every day. And I'll tell you something and that proves that you're content with what you have. Here is this promise.

I will never desert you. Hebrews 13, five. I will never forsake you.

Don't you want that? I want it in my life every moment. Almighty God telling me, I will never desert you. I will never forsake you no matter what happens, no matter what happens in the world around, no matter what viruses are flooding this world, 10,000 viruses flooding this world and flooding all around me, people all around me infected.

My comfort is this, that the Lord says to me, I will never leave you. I will never desert you. I will never forsake you.

What's the condition? I say, Lord, I want your purpose to be fulfilled in my life. It may mean suffering. It may be in discomfort.

It may be tight circumstances. Through it all, you will teach me something. I will be content with whatever you give me, whether it's little or much.

I will never compare my lot with somebody else's. It's a tremendous temptation at this time to compare our lot with somebody else. Maybe it's somebody else in the church.

And you can ask yourself, why is it he has it so easy and we have it so tough? Yeah. Then this promise is not for you, that he'll never desert you because you're discontent, you're grumbling, you're complaining. This promise is for those who are content with what they have.

Be content with what you have. Hebrews 13 five, and he says, I'll never desert you or forsake you. And you'll be able to say, verse six, the Lord is my helper.

I will not be afraid. Hebrews 13 six, what man can do to me, what my boss decides in the office, I'm not going to be afraid. What circumstances can do to me, impossible.

I will not be afraid. What is the basis for that statement? I will not be afraid. The Lord is my helper.

And he has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. Imagine that the president of your country was your personal friend and your helper. And I said to you, listen, if you have a problem, just give me a phone call.

I'll pick up your call. I'm on your side and I'll help you. I'm your personal friend, a president or even a governor of a state.

You think some comfort will come into your heart? What about if Almighty God, the ruler of this universe says to you, I'm your helper. I will not leave you nor forsake you. There are times when he can send 10,000 angels, but he doesn't send them.

There are times when he can remove that thorn in the flesh, but he doesn't remove it. We read that Paul prayed three times. The point is not three times.

He prayed until he got an answer. In his case, he prayed three times and the Lord said, don't pray again. That thorn is not going to leave you.

I permitted it in your life to fulfill a purpose, to keep you humble because I want to give you my grace. And he stopped praying. And if he had not heard the answer after the third time, he would have prayed 300 times.

And he would have said, I prayed 300 times. Finally, I heard God say, you're going to keep that thorn. The point is he prayed until he got the answer.

And the answer was my grace is enough for you. So we see that God allows circumstances to come our way. But like they say, his eye is on the sparrow.

He knows every little thing that's happening. Even the sparrows don't fall to the ground without your father knowing it. It's an amazing word that Jesus said.

If you don't know where it is, here's another. This is a time when you should know where these promises are. And it's good, you know, in my first Bible, I used to color these with a red pencil or mark them so that I could easily spot them because I didn't know the Bible so well in those days.

And Jesus said in Matthew chapter 10, verse 29, you can buy two sparrows for one cent and not one of them falls to the ground apart from your father. The point is, it's like buy one, get one free. You go to the market to buy one sparrow and says, well, we're selling, buy one, get one free.

You get one sparrow for one cent. But if you buy it, here's another one worthless sparrow, you can have it. And then Jesus says, even that worthless sparrow which you got free will not fall to the ground without your father knowing.

That's the one you didn't even pay for. Even that does not fall to the ground apart from your father knowing. Imagine that.

How can a child of God ever be worried if he believes this to be the word of God and believes these to be the words of Jesus? This is the time when we need to go back to the Bible and get down to these promises of God and read the conditions attached to these promises and say, Lord, I want to live in the good of these promises. And I want to come through this time of trial, not defeated and grumpy. And then when things get better, I become a conqueror again.

There's no grace in that. The wonderful thing is to go through a time of trial and be a conqueror in the midst of that trial and come out triumphant. That's why God allows these things.

He allows these things to show the devil, look at my people, nothing can crush them. Nothing can crush them. They'll be true to me no matter what the circumstances are.

See what the apostle Paul said in Romans chapter 8. In Romans 8, he says things like, verse Romans 8, 35, who can separate us from the love of Christ? That's his question. Romans 8, 35. Who can separate us from the love of Christ? Can tribulation, that is opposition from people, distress.

Distress is by circumstances. Persecution is from people. Distress is from circumstances.

It could be sickness. It could be difficult circumstances. Persecution from people or famine.

Famine means a shortage of something. And we find when you go to the stores now, there's a shortage of a number of things. It's not a big famine, but it's a sort of famine of certain items.

You think that's going to separate us from the love of Christ? I may not get some of those things which make my life a little more comfortable, but remember that so many people lived in this world for thousands of years without all those things that make our life comfortable today. Don't ever forget that. For years and years, I mean, think how people lived in Old Testament times or even in Jesus' time.

They did not have a thousand things that we have today that make our life comfortable. We got so used to a life of comfort that if one of those things disappeared from the store, we say, oh boy, what's going to happen now? Well, I'll tell you, think back to how people lived 2000 years ago. Or think back to the time how your parents lived or your grandparents lived a hundred years ago.

They survived. There were many God-fearing people who lived a hundred, 200 years ago who did not have 10% of what we have today, but they did not call it shortage. No, they just learned to live with that.

And so he said, what can separate me from the love of Christ? It's when we are occupied with so many material things and we think that that's needed in order to live. That's when we begin to have attitudes in our heart that make us grumble and complain. Let's be occupied with the love of Christ that will never leave me nor forsake me.

And on the basis of that, he says in verse 32, now, if God is on our side, if God is for us, who can be against us? That's a question we need to ask ourselves in every circumstance. Okay, this circumstance looks pretty tough, but God is on my side. So who can be against me? Which circumstance can be against me? Which person can be against me? Now the apostles all said that and 11 out of the 12 of them got killed.

Only John, as far as I know, lived to the end of his life without being martyred. All the others were martyred, but yet God was on their side. God stood with them.

They could not die before their time. It's a wonderful thing. As God loved Jesus, he loves us.

And until his time came, they could not touch him. So in the same way with us, so if we realize this is one of the wonderful things that the Holy Spirit does is make the presence of Christ real to us. Now he comes and lives in us, and it's like Jesus living right there.

Think of this in the difficult circumstances some of you may be facing right now. Think if Jesus was physically living with you in your home, how would you react to that? If Jesus was physically living with you in your home, would it make a difference that you would straight away go to him and say, Lord, this is the problem right now? But do you know he is there more than in your home? He's with you. He says, I will never leave you.

I'll never forsake you. He's with us all the time. And this is a wonderful promise in the New Testament.

I'm with you always till the end of the world, till the end of the age, till the time he comes back. And this is the whole purpose of the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has primarily come to bring the presence of Christ to be with us all the time.

That is why I keep emphasizing, seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit every day and don't be deceived by all these counterfeits in the world around. The presence, the Holy Spirit is to bring the presence of Christ to us all the time to assure us that Jesus is right there. And he will get up in the morning.

You can talk to him straight away. And throughout the day, you can speak to him in any circumstance, any trial, just like you read in the gospels. Whenever they had a problem, whether it was shortage of wine or not enough food or a storm in the lake, they just had to tell Jesus and the problem was solved.

Not always in the way they expected, but he solved it. And we believe that every situation he will take us through triumphantly. So listen to these words in Romans 8. In all these things, Romans 8 37, in every circumstance, we overwhelmingly conquer, as the King James Version says, we are more than conquerors to him who loved us.

That's a great expression, more than conquerors. That's what we are supposed to be, more than conquerors in every situation, more than conquerors to him who loves us, who always loves us. So what's the use saying that if I never face a battle and I say, well, I was a conqueror.

What conqueror? What did you conquer? You conquered nothing. You never faced any battle. But if I face a battle, if I face difficult trials coming against me and I conquer them and I'm triumphant over them, not just somehow survive, but conquer them and I say I'm more than a conqueror in it, then I can come through at the end of it and say, well, the presence of Christ helped me to be more than a conqueror.

And he lists a number of things there. He says it could be, verse 38, it could be death or life, evil angels and principalities, things present, the difficulties you go through right now or things to come, verse 38, which may be more difficult or powers or height or depth, verse 39 or any creative thing, nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. My dear brothers and sisters, you need to meditate on these verses and make them yours.

Paul was not quoting a verse. Paul was not quoting verses. He was giving his own testimony.

And this should be our testimony, not a verse we memorize, but this should be our testimony. God is for me, so who can be against me? Turn with me to 1 John and chapter three. This is a verse that's helped me tremendously, 1 John and chapter three.

First, the letter of John chapter three. Here, the Lord speaking, sorry, not chapter three, I'm talking about chapter four, 1 John chapter four. It says here in verse 17, 1 John 4, 17, did you get the verse? The last part of it.

As Jesus is, so also are we in this world. For many years, I read that and I didn't meditate on it. But when I meditated on it, it made such a tremendous difference in my life.

They put it up on a large wooden plank at the back of our meeting hall in Bangalore. As Jesus is, so am I in this world. Meditate on that.

When Jesus was in this world, how was he? And here's a promise that says, as Jesus is, so am I in this world today. His father is my father. And he will help me just like he helped him.

He will stand by me like he stood by him. He'll allow me to go through trials like he allowed him to go through trials. He allowed Jesus to be tempted by satan.

He allowed me to be tempted by satan. And he helped Jesus to overcome. He'll help me to overcome.

As Jesus is, so am I in this world. This helped me particularly in the matter of encountering demons. I found Jesus was never scared of a demon.

Jesus is scared. Can you imagine that? Satan is a defeated foe. Demons are fled in the presence of Jesus.

Can you hear the Lord saying this to you? As you were afraid of satan for so long, satan will now be afraid of you. Do you believe that? I couldn't believe it for many, many years, but I do believe it after hearing, seeing this verse. Demons were scared of Jesus.

The devil was scared of Jesus. And I say, Lord, your word says, as Jesus is, so am I in this world. The devil's going to be scared of me.

Well, he won't be scared of someone who lives with a bad conscience. He won't be scared of someone who's proud and haughty and looks down on others and despises others. He won't be scared of such people because he's got something in fellowship with that person.

There's pride in that person, which is part of the devil's nature. He won't be scared of you then. But if you say, Lord, I want to follow you in humility, I want to esteem everyone else as more important than myself.

I'm called on earth, not to be a Lord or a master, but to be a servant. I'm called to be a servant in the church. I'm called to be the least and the lowest in the church.

I never want to think of myself as superior or better than anybody else, no matter what gifts you've given me. I want to be a nobody in the church. I want Christ alone to be exalted.

I'll tell you this, the devil won't be able to touch you. The devil's able to touch people because there's some element of pride in them. They want to show off.

I can do this better than others. Or they think I'm a little better than others in here or there or the other, something like that. Well, no wonder the devil harasses you.

Determine that you're going to walk with Jesus in humility and brokenness. And where the Lord sees that you need some brokenness, he will allow you to be attacked by the devil to be broken. Turn with me to Luke's gospel in chapter two.

You know, there's one disciple who boasted most to Jesus, even if everybody leaves you, I won't leave you. That boastfulness is what Jesus wanted to crush in Peter. How to humble this man, because the Lord had a tremendous purpose for Peter.

This is the man I want to use on the day of Pentecost to bring 3000 Jews to Christ. I need to bring one Jew to Christ. It's so difficult to try and convert a Jewish person.

Imagine bringing 3000 people to Christ in one single day with a 15 minute sermon. The Lord had that in mind for Peter, but he couldn't do it until Peter was broken. It's like when the atom is broken, that's when the power is released.

And Peter was not broken. He was very proud. The hidden pride there was, there isn't a lot of us.

You can all pretend to be very humble on the outside, but in your mind, in your thoughts, if you think of yourself as superior to others and better than others and more important than others, well, that's the thing that hinders God from using you like he used Peter. He has to crush that, he has to break it. And how did he do it? He allowed Satan to attack Peter just like Satan attacked Job.

And he may allow Satan to attack you or your family because he wants to break you and bring you to the place where he can release his mighty power through you. I think of numerous circumstances in my younger days where God took me through humiliation, trial, court cases, all kinds of things, because he had one purpose. He wanted to break me thoroughly and crush me so that his power could be released from me.

But I understood it from reading scripture. When Jacob was broken, when his thigh was dislocated, when he couldn't walk properly, when as a young man, he had to lean upon a staff to walk. That's the time the Lord told him, now, Jacob, you're Israel, a prince of God.

He became a prince of God when he was broken. It's the same principle throughout scripture. And here you see in Luke 22, the Lord tells Peter something.

Job did not know this. When Job was being attacked by the Sabians and the Chaldeans and fire came down and burnt up his house and his children all died. He did not know that before that happened, Satan had gone to God and asked for permission to attack Job's property, to attack Job's children, and later on to attack his body.

Job did not know that. He did not know what is going on in the heavenlies. He lived on the earth.

He lived before the old covenant even. He was ignorant. But now we read the book of Job, we know that none of those things could happen to Job till God gave Satan permission.

There was a hedge around Job and in his family and his property. And only when God little by little opened up that hedge, you read that in Job 1 verse 11, as God opened up that hedge little by little, that's when

they could come in. And so here also, see this, verse 31, Simon, Simon, Luke 22, 31, Satan has asked for permission.

In the margin of my Bible, it says, Satan has obtained permission from God by asking for it. Satan has obtained permission from God by asking for it to sift you like wheat, to attack you. And did God give permission? Yes.

Did God give permission to Satan and Job's time? Yes. But the principle still applies. 1 Corinthians 10, 13 still applies.

He will never allow you to be tested beyond your ability. Whatever trial you're going through right now, remember 1 Corinthians 10, 13, God will never allow you to be tested beyond your ability. But in that trial, it says there, he'll make a way for you to come through it triumphantly.

And so what does Jesus pray? In Job's time, what, I mean, if somebody, a godly man were to pray for Job, who knew God's ways, he would not pray that these things should not happen. He would only pray, Lord, if there was a godly man who knew God's mind in Job's time, how would he pray for Job? He would pray like this, Lord, I can see that you have permitted him to lose his children and his property. Help him to come through this triumphantly.

I'm not asking you that you'll protect his children or his property. Help him to come through a triumphantly. Now, Lord, sickness has come into his body.

I'm not asking you to keep away that sickness, but help him to come through a triumphantly. That is the godly man's prayer in Job's time. A man who does not understand God's ways and say, Oh Lord, just heal him.

Don't let him go through this trial. Don't let him go through this difficulty. Don't let his children go through this difficulty.

It's a lot of difference in the way godly people pray. See, because a godly person knows that the most important thing is to become like Christ, not to escape all the trials and problems in the world. That's a carnal Christian who says, Lord, save me from all the trials and problems in the world.

A spiritual Christian says, I don't care how many trials and problems I have to face, Lord, I know you'll be with me. Make me more like Jesus Christ through it. And so, what did Jesus pray for Simon Peter? Luke 22, verse 32.

He says, I'm praying for you. What? That Satan should not tempt you, should not test you. No, I'll never pray for that.

I'm going to pray that you'll overcome, that your faith will not fail. You know what Satan is praying for us in these, sorry, what Jesus is praying for us in these times when Satan may be tempting some of you in different ways, or trials may be coming upon your life. What is Jesus praying for us? You want to hear it? Hear the word of the Lord.

Jesus is saying to you, I am praying for you. Luke 22, 32. That in this time, your faith will not fail.

That your faith will be strong. Not that you won't have any trial. Not that Satan will not be permitted to sift you.

If he does sift you, what will get thrown out of your life? The chaff. The wheat will remain. You can be sure of that.

God won't allow one grain of wheat to fall away. He'll let the chaff fall away, but not one grain of wheat. He will preserve it.

So, his prayer is that your faith will not fail. That means when you finally, Simon, when you finally hit rock bottom and you let me down terribly by denying me, I hope you will remember in that moment, when you're down at the bottom, that your father in heaven still loves you. He will not leave you.

And that's what I want to say to all of you, my brothers and sisters. When you feel that everything's failing around you, don't let your faith fail you. Say, Lord, I don't understand what's happening.

I don't know what the future is. I don't even know what tomorrow holds, but I know one thing. You're my father, and you love me.

Lord Jesus, you're my elder brother, and you're going to lead me through this triumphantly. I'm not going to come through somehow scraping my way through this. No, I'm going to come through this with my head held high.

I'm not going to be drowning in the sea with just my head above the water. No, I'm going to be walking on top of this sea because I look at you. I'm not going to look at the wind and the waves.

I'll sink if I look at the wind and the waves around me. But Lord Jesus, you told me to look at you, and you said you'll never leave me, so you're praying for me. I believe the Bible says Jesus ever lives to intercede for us.

What's he praying for us? I believe he's praying the same thing as he prayed for Peter, that your faith will not fail, that you will live on earth as he lived. As Jesus is, so are you in this world. Which circumstance did Jesus face where he began to scratch his head, oh no, what happened to me? What has the father done? Never, no circumstance.

Everything that happened, he knew the father had a purpose in it and would find an answer for it. So in the same way, as Jesus is, so are we in this world. We are not foolish to boast like Peter, Lord, even if you all deny you, I won't deny you.

No, no, no, Lord, I'm very weak, but you'll fill me and strengthen me with the Holy Spirit that I'll come through this trial triumphantly. And maybe you can say, Lord, and I look around at other believers, they seem to be stronger than me, but I'm weak, Lord. So I need your power.

I'm the weakest, so I need your power more than anybody else. Turn with me to 2 Corinthians chapter 12, well-known words. What is grace? Here is one definition of grace that God, Jesus himself gives to Paul when Paul was praying for the thorn in the flesh to be removed.

Sometimes we can face irritations and circumstances which are like a thorn in the flesh. Imagine if a thorn got into your hand and it's not coming out, it's causing you so much pain. Say, Lord, get rid of it, get rid of it.

It's quite an expression, a thorn in the flesh. That's what Paul uses there in 2 Corinthians 12. And he prayed that the father would remove it.

And Jesus said, no, no. Prayed again, no. Have you experienced things like that? You pray for something that's really painful, difficult, you pray and pray and pray, and nothing happens.

It's not removed. And the Lord says, no, I'll do something better. I will make my grace abound towards you because my power is made more perfect when you're weak.

The weaker you are, the more opportunity I have to manifest my power. That's something I learned many years ago, that God has to make me weak to manifest his power. So he has to bring me down to zero.

I believe God in all his circumstance, all the way he allows circumstances in our life is to bring us right down to zero. And when we get there, he can manifest his power to us. So grace is, according to 2 Corinthians 12.9, God's power manifested in my weakness.

So all the circumstances that's happening around you, look at them as God's plan to make you weak. Make you weak with what purpose? To give you his power so that you can be an overcomer, so that you can come out of it and say, I'm more than a conqueror through it, not by myself. God's grace helped me be more than a conqueror.

And when Paul understood this, that God was allowing this thorn in the flesh to make him weak so that the power of Christ would dwell in him, then he says, I'll boast about my weakness. Can you boast about the circumstances you're going through? Can you say, praise the Lord for this circumstance. Praise the Lord for this shortage and this difficulty in this trial, because now I can know the power of Christ.

This weakens me. It reduces me to zero so that God's power can be manifested. And so he says in verse 10, 2 Corinthians 12.10, a good verse for all of us to remember.

I'm perfectly content with weaknesses, insults, distresses, persecutions, difficulties, because when I am weak, then I'm strong. And I want to tell you brothers, the bad news is we are all very strong. We think we are humble.

We're not. We are very strong people. Every last one of us.

And God has to do things to crush us, break us so that we become weak, to bring us down to zero so that he can manifest his power to us. And I believe every single circumstance has been designed by God to make us weak so that he can manifest his power to us. And in these circumstances, he'll make a way for us to escape.

He'll never leave us nor forsake us. The promise of God is still true. If we see God's kingdom and his righteousness, everything we need will be added to us.

Don't you think this verse is very appropriate for our time? Matthew 6, verse 25. Matthew 6, 25. Apply it to the time in which you're living right now.

For this reason, I say to you, don't be worried about your life as to what you're going to eat, what you're going to drink, or for the needs of your body. It may not be clothes. It may be medicines.

It may be treatment. It may be protection from viruses. Don't be afraid about your body.

Don't be worried about whether there'll be enough food for you, whether there'll be a shortage of this, that, or the other. So just look up and look at the birds in the air. They don't sow.

They don't have bank accounts. They don't reap. And they say, don't gather into bonds.

It's like saying they don't have a bank account. Yet your heavenly father feeds them. He says, tell me, don't you think you're worth much more than those birds in the air? If you don't believe that, your Christianity is worth nothing.

If you don't believe that you're at least worth more than the birds of the air, your Christianity is worth nothing. I believe I'm worth more to God than the birds of the air. Confess that to God and put the devil to shame.

Say, I'm worth more to God than all the birds of the air. They're still flying around. So can worry add a single hour to your life? You're not going to add anything to your life by worry.

No. Why are you worried about clothes? Why are you worried about food and all that? God can take care of all that. Verse 31, don't worry them saying, what will we eat? What will we drink? Or many other needs.

It may not be clothing. It may be a hundred and one other things we need in our home. This is all the people around you in your city, in your county are seeking out for all these things.

But listen to this, your heavenly father knows that you need them. He knows what you need. He knows what luxuries are and he knows what necessities are.

My God will supply all your need is the promise in Philippians 4:19. Not all that you want. We are so used to a luxurious lifestyle that we think a lot of those things are necessities.

I want to tell you, they are not necessities. Many of them. We can live without many, many things we have.

When you have opportunity to get them, get them. But when we don't have them, let's be content. My father, my God will supply all your need.

Not all that you want, but all that you need. Philippians 4:19. Your father knows what you need.

Don't worry them because your father knows, verse 32, what you need. He knows exactly what you need. Just seek God's kingdom and his righteousness.

All these things will be added to you. I want to testify to that. I quit my job 60 years ago, sorry, 53 years ago, and I decided that I would trust God for all my need and through many, many circumstances, I can prove that it's true.

You'll have a testimony when you come through this period of time as well. I sought God's kingdom. I didn't get all I wanted.

Thank God I didn't get all that I wanted. It would have ruined me, but I got everything that I needed. I can say that God took me through some very trying circumstances in my life.

I mean, financial and many other ways, but he's always provided my need and he's made me a very, very happy person. Not because I got all that I wanted. I thank God I didn't get all that I wanted.

I thank God for shortages. I thank God for losses that came in my life, losses that taught me that God was more important than money, that God was more important than things. God was more important than even hell.

Lord, whom have I in heaven but you. There's nothing on earth I desire beside you. Seek his kingdom and all these things will be added to you.

And the closing word for our particular time, Matthew 6, 34, don't worry about tomorrow. You believe Jesus said that? Imagine Jesus standing right in front of you right now through the Holy Spirit saying to you personally, my son, my daughter, don't worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow will care for itself.

Today's troubles are enough for today and God will give you grace to overcome today. When tomorrow comes, that will become today. Then he'll give you grace for that.

So it's a day by day thing. God bless you. Let's bow our heads in prayer.

Heavenly Father, we confess from deep down in our hearts, you are our loving father. We confess that you run this universe. We confess that Jesus Christ has got all authority in heaven and earth even now.

We believe that everything is under your control. Everything on earth, the silver and gold in the world are yours. The birds that fly in the air, you care for them.

You care much more for us. We confess that. The devil was defeated on the cross.

He cannot touch us. We confess that every trial that you send into our life is with a purpose to give us the strength of grace and the power of the Holy Spirit to make us like Jesus. We thank you for them.

Thank you, Lord. So we're really sorry if we have ever, ever grumbled or complained about any of those things in the past. By your grace, it's not going to happen again.

We're going to give thanks for everything because we believe that they're designed by you to make us more like Christ. Not to make our life more comfortable, but to make us more like Christ. And we believe we'll come through even this period of difficulty, triumphant, unlike other people in the world who are grumbling and complaining and miserable.

We'll be triumphant. We'll be a light in the midst of the darkness because we do not murmur or complain and thus prove ourselves to be children of God in the midst of a world that's lying in darkness. Help us to be that.

Each one, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you.

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