

You can be an Overcomer

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[0:00] Amen. The soul winning force.

Romans 12 verse 21. Romans 12 verse 21. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for your word, for our gathering together unto it, for the encouragement we've already had, and Lord, for further comfort from your scriptures, Lord, Lord, encourage us, lead us, fill us, overflow us, Lord, use us, make this word live in our hearing, in our living, in our lives, Lord.

Let it walk in our shoes this week ahead. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good. Now there's a choice here.

Be overcome or be an overcomer. Be defeated or be victorious. If we are to be an overcomer, we must have something to overcome.

[1:37] Isn't that so? How can you be an overcomer unless you've got things to overcome? Now I could have a whiteboard here and ask you to rattle off a whole list of things. You could probably give me lots of things.

Things that we can overcome. Maybe shout some out. Eating. Eating. Oh, I like eating. No, sometimes it can be a problem. What about other things?

Fears. Idleness. Idleness. Yeah. Doubt. Doubt. Anxiety. You've got things I don't have on my list. What other things?

We could think temptations. The evil one. Overcoming our ego. Overcoming anger. Depression. Past failures and setbacks we've had.

Discouragement. Grief. It's a whole host of them, isn't there? So many things. And just think, to be an overcomer, we have to have those things. So we can overcome.

[2:38] Amen? So let's not be discouraged by those things, but let's see how we can use them for God's glory and our good. Some preacher has said this. Adversity is Satan's favourite weapon.

Because it is common to everyone and causes us to focus on ourselves and doubt God. Adversity. Focus on yourself. Doubt God. That's not the purpose of God for such things for us.

We can't expect to have trials. We see, for example, 1 Peter 4. You might want to flick there 1 Peter 4. Trials. Testing. It's ordained for us as God's people.

We'd like to think it otherwise, but yet he does send those things our way to grow us. 1 Peter 4 verse 12. It reads, Beloved, think it not strange.

Concerning the trial. It's not a strange thing. Which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice. But rejoice. Inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings.

[3:43] That, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. Think it not strange. Think it not strange. Brethren, beloved.

Concerning the trial. It's not a strange thing. It's not unusual. It's not out of the ordinary. That's the norm. The fiery trial, which is to try you.

It's not some strange thing that happens to you. But rather, respond with rejoicing. Inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's suffering. Be glad with exceeding joy.

Overcome evil with good. We can yet rejoice. We can find joy and overcome. How are we to overcome?

That's a big question. When you face all those big long lists of things that you rattled off and I name anger, depression, temptations, fears, failures, discouragement.

[4:41] How can we overcome? I put to you how we can overcome. Believe. Believe God. Believe God. He will deliver you.

There's a story told of a king in Africa. And he had a close friend with whom he grew up. And this friend had a habit of looking at every situation of life that ever occurred in his life, positive or negative, and he remarked, this is good.

This is good. How often do you say, this is not good? But what's going on? But this is good. That was this man's phrase that he used. And one day the king and his friend were out going on a hunting expedition.

And the friend would load and prepare the guns for the king to fire. And the friend had apparently done something wrong with the gun. And one of the guns, after the king took hold of it, the king fired it and his thumb was blown off.

And examining the situation, the friend remarked as usual, this is good. This is good. To which the king replied, no, this is not good. And he proceeded to send his friend to jail.

[5:52] Now about a year later, the king was hunting in an area that he should have known to stay clear of. Cannibals captured him and took him to their village. You know, some, they got a bit hungry, feeling a bit hungry.

And they tied his hands and stacked some wood and they set a stake and bound him to a stake. They roped him up and tied him to the stake. They got the fire ready.

And as they came there to set fire to the wood, they noticed the king was missing a thumb. And being superstitious, they never ate anyone who was less than whole.

So, untying the king, they sent him on his way. And as he returned home, he was reminded of the event that had taken his thumb away. And he felt remorse for how he treated his friend.

And he went immediately to the jail to speak with his friend. And he said, you were right. It was good that my thumb was blown off. And he proceeded to tell the friend all that had just happened.

[6:51] And he said, and so I'm very sorry for sending you to jail so long ago. It was bad for me to do this. And no, the friend replied, this is good. What do you mean this is good?

How could it be good that I sent my friend to jail for a year? And he said, if I had not been in jail, I would have been with you. So, you know, he could have been the cannibal stew.

But no, so this is good. Because in a way of looking at life and seeing brother or sister, we can have that heart of this is good. You know, all things work together for our good.

For those who love God. To those who are called according to his purpose. We can be overcomers. We can overcome evil with good. The Christian life is a fight, though, isn't it?

It's a fight, not a picnic. And it tells us in the word of God, fight the good fight of the faith. It's a good fight. We don't need more faith. We just need to exercise the faith that we have.

[7:55] Don't we? Sometimes we think, oh, how I need more faith. I need to believe more. Exercise the faith that you have. Even if it's just a mustard seed.

You can move mountains. We overcome by faith. We overcome by believing. Now, sometimes it can seem like the whole world is against us.

In 1 John 5 verse 4. You might want to turn there. We've got a few scriptures in 1 John. It seems like the whole world can be against us.

In 1 John 5 verse 19. It reads, and we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. So it is true. This world is wicked. It's rotten to the core.

This world is oftentimes against God, and against those who are the people of God. The world is against us. In 1 John 5 verse 4 it says, For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

[9:14] So we overcome by faith, by believing. And this world we know is in bondage. And many in this world, people are in bondage to the world.

They're firmly under its control. We know the Bible speaks of the world in this sense as being that unbelieving people.

The unbelieving people, spoken of as the world, and the influence of the world, the way of living that is outside of God. And some people are firmly under this worldly control, under the spirit of the world.

Worldly things predominate and preoccupy their mind, their thinking. It's all they think of that they cannot spare a thought for God. They're obsessed with the ways of the world and worldly thinking.

And the world, that unbelieving spirit, possesses people. And it gets a grip on people. It's such that that is all their frame of reference.

[10:21] That the world is such and God is outside of it. That God doesn't feature in their thinking. It says of the lost that God is not in their thoughts.

John 16, 33. The Lord Jesus says to us, These things I have spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation.

But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. Our Lord says, In me you have peace. In this world ye shall have tribulation. Guaranteed.

The Lord says you're going to have it. Tribulation. But, he says, Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. Our Lord says, Be of good cheer. Take heart.

Overcome evil with good. He says, In me you have peace. Might be trouble and chaos and calamity all about you. But in Christ, in Christ, in Christ, you can have peace.

[11:24] Peace that passes all understanding. That keeps our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Peace. Perfect peace. The peace of God.

You can know that peace. The peace of God and peace with God. Peace. Perfect peace. Shalom, shalom. Peace. Perfect peace. So be of good cheer.

Take heart today. He says, I have overcome the world. And in me, you can have peace. And so, again, there's that encouragement from the scriptures, from our saviour, that we can overcome evil with good.

We can know God's peace. In a world that is on a rollercoaster ride to destruction, we can know God's peace. Deep, deep within.

Overwhelming peace. Overwhelming. Just superlative peace. Peace that passes all our comprehension, all our understanding. We can overcome evil with good.

[12:30] We can counter our evil with good. The grace of God can overcome.

And he can give you peace, no matter the turmoil of your present circumstance. No matter the storm that you're in. If Christ is in the boat, he is your peace.

He will see you through that storm. Romans 12, 14, we see it says, Bless them which persecute you. Bless and curse not.

Even the ones who are harassing you and causing you strife, bless them. Bless them and curse not. In Matthew 5, 44, our Lord says likewise, Love your enemies.

Bless them that curse you. Do good to them which spitefully use you and persecute you. You know, that one is getting under your skin. Bless them anyway.

[13:30] Bless them anyway. Overcome evil with good. You know, the circumstances that we have done just that. We sent a blessing to someone, sort of anonymously. Someone who's had it in for us and we just sent them a blessing.

I'm going to bless them anyway. Amen? That's what I'm going to do because I believe God. I believe God and I believe what he says to do. Bless them which persecute you. Bless and curse not. You know, even as much as we might be inclined to say a bad word about them, bless them and curse them not.

Don't let them eat up your heart with bitterness and hate and malice. Don't let them do that to you. You know, don't let them occupy your brain space with feelings of hate or ill will.

Bless them. Do good to them which spitefully use you and persecute you because it's overcoming evil with good and you'll feel better for it. Amen?

You'll feel better for that. There's probably nothing better that you can do than bless those who curse you. Amen? 1 John 2.13 We see God calls us to be overcomers.

[14:38] 1 John 2.13 John writes, I write unto you fathers because you have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you young men because you have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you little children because you've known the Father.

How do we become an overcomer? Know God. It starts with knowing the Saviour, the Lord Jesus. To know him and to know is life eternal. He says, you've overcome the wicked one because you've known the Father.

Know God. Know him. 1 John 2.14 It goes on, I have written unto you fathers because you have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you young men because you are strong and the Word of God abideth in you and you have overcome the wicked one.

How do we be an overcomer? When the Word of God abides in us. Stick it inside your shirt. In your heart. Amen. In your heart. Amen.

That's why we need it, don't we? Yeah, I've got to tuck myself in now. We've got to abide. Don't let the Word of God abide in us, don't we? Don't we need the Word?

[15:43] The Word of God? Abide in it. Put it in the brain box somehow. My ear's not big enough to put it in the ear hole. But we've got to let it go into the brain box, into the heart box, into the soul, into the spirit.

Make it live. You are strong because the Word of God abideth in you and you have overcome the wicked one. If we just put the Word of God in our heart, if we treasure it, if we hold it, if we keep the Word.

You know, the Church of Philadelphia kept the Word. They kept it. They treasured it. They loved it such that they held it dear. And when we see believers through history going through great trouble and tribulation, we see the great trials of people locked up for their faith.

What holds them steady and strong is when they've memorized the Word of God. And it puts it in your heart. Like our brother was sharing, when you want to present the Gospel to someone, have those Scriptures embedded, embedded in the psyche, in the mind, in the heart, such that God can bring them forth to your remembrance.

Even as you start to lose the grey cells, you know, like people get grey hair, you lose the grey cells. But God will help you to remember what matters. The Word of God.

[16:59] Amen? How do we be an overcomer as the Word of God is abiding in us? And we look through history at those who are overcomers from God's people. You know, one of the greatest hymn writers of the faith is a woman called Fanny Crosby.

Fanny Crosby. Got a tongue, tongue twisted there. Fanny Crosby, she wrote over 9,000 hymns. And many of them are in our songbook tonight. To God be the glory.

I know it's my mum's favourite. To God be the glory. Great things he has done. Tell me the story of Jesus. And probably the best known blessed assurance. Jesus. Jesus is mine.

And one biographer called her one of the greatest in America and gave her the title The Hymn Queen. The Hymn Queen. She was such a prolific writer of the songs of the faith.

And one thing you may not know about Miss Crosby is she accomplished all of this totally blind. Totally blind. She lost her sight due to an illness at six weeks of age.

[18:01] and she was never bitter. One preacher told her he thought it was a great pity that God would give her so many talents but not give her sight. She said quickly do you know that if at birth I could have made one request it would have been to be born blind.

Why? asked the surprised preacher. She said because when I get to heaven the first face I'll see will be my saviour. Amen. At age 95 she passed away and there's a simple headstone with these words blessed assurance Jesus is mine.

Oh what a foretaste of glory divine. She was an overcomer. She had some tough things. How tough can it be? She overcame by God's grace.

1 John 4 verse 4 it tells us Ye are of God little children and have overcome them for greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

Ye are of God. How do we be an overcomer? By placing our faith in God's power. Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. Trust God for your deliverance like Daniel did in the den of lions when God muzzled those hungry lions like I was saying this morning he stopped their mouths you know they hadn't eaten for a while and Daniel looked pretty tasty but they didn't get a bite of him because greater is he greater is he greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

[19:36] How do we be an overcomer? Have faith in God. 1 John 5 verse 5 it says Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God.

How do we be an overcomer? Faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Faith in Christ. Put your faith in him. Put your trust in him.

Put your trust in Christ. How do we be an overcomer? Of the overcomers in Revelation 12 it says Revelation 12 11 it says of these overcomers these saints of God it says and they they overcame him the evil one by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Revelation 12 11 the blood of Jesus gives us victory doesn't it? His precious blood that was shed for our saving brings victory it brings liberty it brings deliverance it breaks the chains it breaks the the snare it sets us free the blood of Jesus and the word of our testimony join the witnessing crew your witness is an overcoming it's an overcoming work of God in you as he opens your lips and you testify to his saving grace it's an overcoming it's a mark of your being an overcomer through the word we see many instances of overcomers by faith trust God like Gideon did Gideon God used Gideon in this most unlikely army of his to overcome what seemed like insurmountable odds impossible odds were against him and God called Gideon a mighty man of valour this was while he was kind of hiding away trying to keep a low profile but God said you are a mighty man of valour humanly he didn't feel like it he certainly didn't look like it he didn't look brave and courageous as he was kind of keeping out of the limelight and just trying to just do something fairly out of the fairly ordinary he wasn't down at the battle zone he was in the comfort zone but God called Gideon out and Gideon had some 32,000 that rallied to the cause but God didn't use the army of 32,000 he used the 300 the 300 as overcomers and sometimes

God just blows their mind doesn't he that he doesn't use what we would reckon with human invention with human thinking and mindset but he works in surprising ways through this surprising army of just 300 300 willing and able but 300 with just clay jars and trumpets with horns nothing humanly scary just some clay pots and some lamps and they had horns or was it just Gideon had a horn I'm not sure on that point but certainly they it was just very they were just very feeble implements clay pots!

[23:32] that's alright I'm already mixed up no you're testing me out that's right no I'm wrong again no the 300 were overcomers I mean that's the point and God uses available people in simple ways such as simple me God uses simple people to do simple supernatural things for him it's about being available isn't it you know our brother didn't have five minutes to get ready tonight he told us about the testifying and God used him to encourage the saints here tonight God can use us you know speak a word in season and out of season it means just get ready just jump up and do it and God will use whatever is in your hand as we're available for God to use us to do what we can to use what we have for example David had a sling and a stone that was something pretty feeble wasn't it something pretty ordinary something pretty limited as human thinking would put it against this huge giant a sling and a stone what's that against this warrior this seasoned veteran this daunting massive giant of a man but God was with

David wasn't he and David was an overcomer what about Samson and a donkey's jawbone what kind of weapon is that I was down the back paddock lately and I saw the jawbone of a kangaroo and he must have had pretty good his teeth looked pretty good they were starting to rot away you could just see the skeleton lying there and I could see his jawbone and Samson just grabbed this donkey's jawbone off of some pile of bones and he started to kill people with it for the glory of God you know he was used of God to do an amazing work as he slew the enemies of God by the power of God Samson was an overcomer with something very ordinary and limited what about the little boy and his five loaves and two fish amongst the multitude what you think that that will feed this multitude this thousands and thousands and thousands of people with just a little boy's lunch five loaves and two fish but God is in the overcoming of that which we would limit him

God is unlimited by our limitedness God is unlimited and God can use your availability your willingness to be willing and available to be used of God what about Moses as he was backed up against the Red Sea and it seemed like all hope was lost just before the waters parted and Moses was an overcomer by faith in Exodus 14 33 Moses said unto the people fear ye not stand still and see the salvation of the Lord which he will show to you today for the Egyptians whom you have seen today you shall see them again no more forever he saw the Egyptians coming with their chariots and you know their spears and swords and shields all glistening in the sun and the armor

and the impressive colors and sounds and their yelling and screaming and their bloodthirsty rage against the children of Israel now

Moses said fear ye not stand still and see the salvation of the Lord which he will show to you today for those Egyptians whom you've seen today ye shall see them again no more forever they were destroyed in the red sea as the waters swept back stand still and see the salvation of the Lord we can be an overcomer we can know God's sustaining grace someone once said that life is 10% of what happens to you and 90% of how you respond to what happens to you in the Christian life too isn't it so that sometimes it's about how we respond to life's challenges sometimes it seems impossible now I've got it on good authority here brother that the beekeeper amongst us here that there's aerodynamic evidence that says that the bumblebee cannot fly it cannot fly absolutely cannot it's body weight it's it's wingspread it just makes it impossible for a bee to fly but not aware of its misfortune the bumblebee flies anyway and manages to make a little honey in the process the impossible happens

God is able God is able with God all things are possible impossible trust God to overcome no matter how feeble you may feel no matter how limited no matter how inadequate no matter how impossible it seems to you to overcome God can make you you you you an overcomer by faith despite the circumstances that are against you why because Luke 1 37 says for with God with God nothing shall be impossible trust God trust God that he will always cause you to triumph in Christ he gives you victory now of course we know the reality of life and you might think printer you're just talking a load of a hoo-ha here and it's all just a bit of a pep talk and a bit of a psych psyching up of people here tonight but I'm just telling you what the word of God says we can either believe it or disbelieve it it says now thanks be unto

[29:40] God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ this is 2 Corinthians 2 14 through 16 now thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ and maketh every place here is a promise of God for you that you have overcoming power and it permeates the very atmosphere the environment of your life and the people around about you are emitting and if I could put this politely an odour you know it's a good odour not a bad one there is a good odour we should be such that we are air freshness for Jesus shouldn't we that's what we should be being a little bit out there tonight but we should be like there's something there's a savour there's an odour there's a transmission there's an emission of something around about you that impacts your environment even in that workplace you might think

I'm the only Christian well people probably know that you're the only Christian you stand out like a sore thumb and you're doing something for God just in being there just in being salt and I know I get these conversations at work where we're sat around the table and one of my dear female colleagues says some inappropriate pretty bad swear word and says oh sorry Andrew I'm sitting there with all the bosses and okay why are you saying sorry to me you know but there's a sense where we know we have an impact we have an influence we are salt we have an overcoming power even just being there even just being there that we permeate the world around us and we impact never dying souls it goes on verse 15 for we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ Christ his fragrance his personality his person he is manifest through you through your life you are a sweet savor of

Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish to the one we are the savor of death unto death to the other the savor of life unto life and who is sufficient for these things so to the saved we are a refreshing fragrance that we want to be amongst God's people and they want to be amongst us but to the lost we are the smell of death as it were that we are challenging them that they are in death and brother sister there is an amazing reality here that we manifest the savor we manifest that fragrance to know him to make known him to our world around a sweet fragrance of Christ and it's overcoming it's overwhelming overpowering you know you walk into some places and you see those little fragrance dispensers and someone's got a lot of perfume here there's a lot of an odour here and it's a nice odour and that's what we should be like as God's people we should be a welcoming inviting an impression on others we should make them thirsty and hungry for the gospel message that we have the saviour that we are messengers for and friends tonight

God will use you whoever you are you might think oh I'm not really anybody special there's nothing that I can claim that I'm much good out but God will use you whoever you are whoever you are do not try to be what you are not you know David refused Saul's armour Saul thought look you've got to put this armour on this is the best the money can buy the king's armour this is really nice heavy duty metal plate that's going to keep you strong and safe and David refused Saul's armour and he tried it on for a time but it just was not what God wanted for him and David took up the sling and the stone the slingshot and the stone let God use you for who you are and what you have in your hands David put his trust in God and David ran towards the giant he wasn't afraid he ran towards the giant because his faith made him an overcomer

God helped him he helped David to overcome and brother sister here tonight you may face some floods or fire yet we can know great victory tonight just to wrap up a couple more scriptures Isaiah 43 is an encouraging one which speaks to Israel but yet these scriptures are for our learning and we can take this same encouragement today here in Australia as much as it's for Israel in this reference and if we could just think this is our God our creator speaking face to face one to one with you it's talking about thee which is you individually but now thus saith the Lord that created thee O Jacob and he that formed thee O Israel fear not for I have redeemed thee

[35:40] I have called thee by thy name thou art mine when thou passest through the waters I will be with thee and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burnt neither shall the flame kindle upon thee for I am the Lord thy God the holy one of Israel thy saviour he's created us he's formed us he's purposed our living he knows the past the present and the future for you he says thou art mine he says when thou passest through the waters I will be with thee through the rivers they shall not overflow thee when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burnt neither shall the flame kindle upon thee what a blessing what a promise of God it's telling you you can be and you are by faith an overcomer it's telling you that

God will take you through the storm through the struggle through the pain through the disaster zone through the war zone through the battle zone and you can be an overcomer our faith will be stronger for the battles that we get through it's called the good fight of the faith after all isn't it if your faith isn't fighting there's probably something wrong so I don't want to sound flippant here but your fighting is your faith in action fight the good fight of the faith fight it lastly James 1 2 to 3 tells us my brethren count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience this is probably one of the hardest scriptures to swallow isn't it my brethren count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations count it all joy what the human part of me is saying what count it all joy knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience we can overcome evil we can even to the point where we count it all joy we can even find the joy of Jesus in our pain

I know I've been talking to some folk lately the whole body's wracked by pain it's hard to tell someone count it all joy isn't it when someone's feeling like that yet God tells you to he tells you to he tells you count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations many trials and tribulations he says count it all joy knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience it's going to make you stronger for Christ it's going to make you fervent it's going to help you sharpen and strengthen your faith a recent survey just I believe it's just a worldly survey found 87% of people surveyed said a painful event such as a death illness breakup divorce a painful event caused them to find a more positive meaning in life it's actually sometimes it's even worldly speaking there's a benefit and the trying of your faith can make it stronger still whether those trials be financial physical relational emotional whatever they be friends we started tonight with that scripture that says be not overcome with evil but overcome evil with good make that your motto for life make it that motto that you will say I will not be overcome of evil but I will overcome evil with good by God's grace and strength I'm going to rejoice in trial I'm going to find God's strength I'm going to know his empowerment with my feeble inadequacies that God can use me such as I am that I can stand still and see the salvation of the Lord that God will make known through me the fragrance of Christ that I will always triumph that I can overcome the adversary by the blood of the lamb by the word of my testimony and I can know the peace of God that I can know his call to me be of good cheer I have overcome the world and to know him to know the trying of my faith is going to produce something great and

eternal but friends tonight I must implore you tonight put your trust in him that's where it begins that's the that's the starting line isn't it of that running race is putting your faith in him putting your trust in

Christ as your only savior as your only hope of salvation putting your faith in Christ knowing that he has died on the cross for your sin rose again he's ever living he welcomes those who will trust him trust him now don't delay and that race of your life starts then the gun goes off and bang you're on that running track running the race of your life the race the marathon event of the Christian race and a fighting of your faith too it's the fighting the good fight of your faith don't shy away when trial comes it's all the more reason to trust him the trial is all the more reason to trust him let us pray lord we thank you that your word urges us to have faith to know your saving grace lord to know the wondrous work of the cross the blood of jesus shed for us that gives victory in present and future and every circumstance of life lord help us to put our trust in you and lord to know that the good fight of our faith we must keep pressing faster and harder in that fight knowing that your strength keeps us going knowing your enabling as we think of our loved ones our family people on our hearts tonight we think of your people the children of israel such as they're astray at this time lord that in all of it all that you will always cause us to triumph to manifest that savour that fragrance of your presence wherever we go about in our lives use us lord for your praise and glory may we be a people willing and available and you will make us able in jesus name to be overcomers by your peace by your love in jesus name amen