

How Christ's Triumph Changes Our Struggle

Christ called you to fulfill a **destiny**. Yet sometimes it feels like everyone and everything is working to thwart that destiny.

We know that we **wrestle** not against flesh and blood, but we still have to wrestle. Wrestling isn't congruent with being **vulnerable**. In fact, it is easy to take a protective stance as we drive toward our **calling**.

As we celebrate **Advent** this year, one of the things we need to consider is how our anticipation of Christ's arrival changes our struggle.

Christ came as a babe. More than that, He came as a babe to an unwed mother. He was the most vulnerable of the vulnerable—and His life changed the world. It is interesting to consider what vulnerability might look like as a follower of Christ.

Honesty. We are tempted to look better than we are. We want to make Christ look good, but in reality, we are faking it. Honesty doesn't mean we have to put our private struggles on public display. Real honesty means you are aware of your humanity and don't try to hide from it. We walk out our faith in honesty.

Humility. Mary was called to something far greater than she could even anticipate. Her response to the angel—"Be it unto me according to your word"—is our example. God called you, He will get you where you need to be. He will open the doors. It is tempting to try to find your own way, but humility will keep you focused on Jesus, waiting for Him to move things into place.

Provision. We know what we think provision should look like. Most likely, Mary thought having a husband was her provision. God knew that bigger problems were ahead, and He provided in

ways she could not imagine. Jesus was unable to provide for Himself and was given the provision of kings—not by His parents, but by God through the wise men.

Purpose. Everyone around Jesus was looking for the Messiah. He grew up in the synagogue, hearing the expectations. Yet Jesus was able to follow His purpose without giving in to expectations. As leaders, others' expectations can determine our agenda. When we follow Christ's example, we avoid the trap of expectations and live our purpose.

Advent is a time to anticipate Christ's answers in daily life. This anticipation can help you be a better, focused and vulnerable leader. Ephesians is right. You are in a battle, and it isn't with flesh and blood. Unlike a physical battle, self-preservation is not the answer. Vulnerability means that you wrestle much like Jacob—you wrestle by grabbing on to God and not letting go. How are you anticipating Christ's presence this Advent season?

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