

# Overcoming Trials

God's will does not automatically happen in the life of a Christian. All believers are in a real war. The Bible tells us we will have trials and encounter spiritual warfare in this lifetime. So how do we come through the difficulties we all face? Jesus said in John 16:33 (NKJV), "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." And 1 Corinthians 15:57 says, "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus has already provided us with the victory. We must learn to walk in it.

As Christians, no matter what we face we will have to exercise faith. Faith is one of the most important topics in the entire Bible because we know Jesus will be looking for faith (Luke 18:8). We are told that we walk by faith (2 Cor. 5:7), we live by faith (Gal. 3:11), we are saved through faith (Eph. 2:8-9) and we can't please God without faith (Heb. 11:6).

When we face difficulties and trials, how do we come through them? First, we must understand that God is not moved by our whining or begging. We cannot receive God's help without trusting in His faithfulness to help us and standing on what His Word promises when we believe it. What does this look like?

For me, it looks like getting mad at the devil. When killing, stealing or destruction happens in the lives of those I love or my sphere of influence, I ask God for insight and wisdom. Proverbs 4:7 tells us, "Wisdom is the principal thing; *Therefore* get wisdom." There is no formula for victory. We cannot separate exercising faith from being led by God's Spirit. We must exercise obedience in both areas.

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When we are experiencing despair, discouragement or sorrow, we may need to play worship music, sit in God's presence and allow Him to comfort and strengthen us. Read Scripture that promises God's help, deliverance and strength. It is different for all of us. We must feed on God's faithfulness continually, knowing He loves us and will bring us through our trial.

Some Christians become offended when told they may not have enough faith. Remember, we are all growing in our faith. We must be humble and honest. We must ask ourselves, "Where is my faith right now?" If we know our faith is weak, we need to feed it.

How do we acquire faith? It comes by hearing, by reading His Word, by speaking it out of our mouths and by listening to good, biblical teachings. There is no other way to acquire faith. We want to feed on God's Word daily because challenges and trials are a part of life in this fallen, sin-filled world. Romans 10:17 states, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

How often many of us doubt and then wonder why we haven't received? We become double-minded (James 1:8). We use the excuse, "It must not be God's will" rather than admit that our faith may not be as developed as it should be. When the apostles asked Jesus why they couldn't cast out a devil from a man's son He said, "Because of your unbelief" (Matt. 17:20b). He wasn't placing condemnation on them. He just told them the truth. He wanted them to learn, and that's what we all should be willing to do.

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We should be able to receive correction from His Word. Jesus said more than once, "Your faith has made you whole" (see Mark

5:34, Luke 17:19). Look at the woman with the issue of blood in Matthew 9:20–22 or blind Bartimaeus in Mark 10:46–52. What about the man who was let down through the roof in Mark 2:4 or the woman from Canaan in Matthew 15:22–28? Look at the centurion in Matthew 8:5–10 and the story of Jairus's daughter (Mark 5:23).

In each case, it was their faith that brought the healing. The woman with the issue of blood didn't even ask Him for her healing. She just said to herself, "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole" (Matt. 9:21, KJV). Jesus was pleased with her faith.

We are able to appropriate the blessings of God because of Jesus. It is *His* faith that obtained the things of God for us. We simply receive them by exercising our faith in what *He* has done. Our faith is in trusting what He has already accomplished.

Be willing to examine your faith, welcome God's correction and receive His blessings. Put your faith into action today.

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