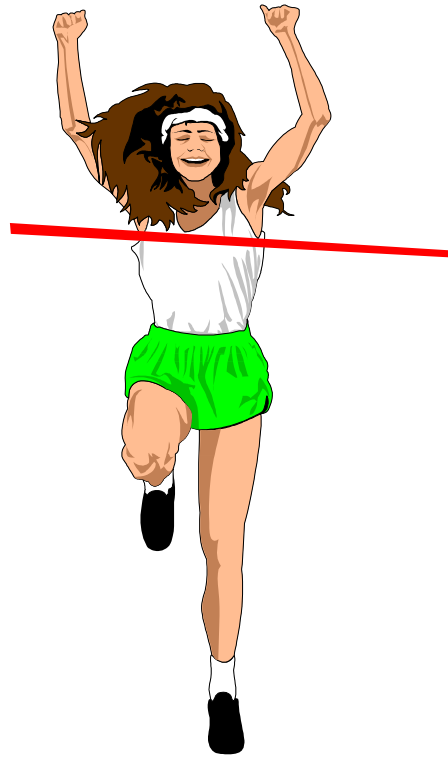


OUR VICTORY



*A Bible Study on Overcoming
Life's Battles*

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CHAPTER 1

Page 3

INTRODUCTION. Life has a way of defeating us at times. Past memories, present difficulties, future fears can all weigh heavily on us. Praise God, as Christians we have the ultimate resource in the Bible. The Bible has real answers for your individual situation. As people we share our struggles, though the individual circumstances may be different. You can overcome whatever is dragging you down. This present chapter deals with despair, hope, and suffering as we look at Acts 27.

QUESTION 1. Read Acts 27. Where was Paul going? Was it his choice? The pronoun 'we' is used throughout the chapter. that means the writer of Acts was with Paul. Who wrote Acts and accompanied Paul on this journey? What did Paul warn the centurion and ship crew about?

QUESTION 2. Read again v13-20. few of us are in literal stormy weather with rain and wind, but many of us have social, personal, or emotional storms that sweep down on us. What is your storm? Write your answer down; it will make the rest of this chapter more relevant to you. Do you ever feel like the people on board that ship felt? (v20)

QUESTION 3. Did Paul have a choice of being in the storm? Did he want to be in the storm? Sometimes the storms come without any of our doing and against our desires, but the storm would have been just as rough if Paul had desired to go on the ship.

QUESTION 4. How long did the storm last? (v27). What did Paul do after the storm had raged for many days? (v21-26) In whom did Paul place his confidence?



QUESTION 5. Paul had the knowledge from God that they would make it safely through the storm. Did anyone else on board have this knowledge, that we know of? What did they believe?

QUESTION 6. List the human efforts and solutions the sailors tried:

v17

v19

v29

v30

list the things you have done to try and conquer your storm.

QUESTION 7. Have you ever wanted to run away from your storm? What did the soldiers do to keep the sailors from running away? (v31-32) Does running away usually solve a problem? Why do you say that? What did Paul do to help them with their problem?

QUESTION 8. What did the sailors see that gave them hope? (v39) How do you think that they must have felt when they struck the sand bar? (v41) Sometimes our hopes get dashed because we place our hope in the wrong answer or solution-maybe we're hoping some person will come through for us. Hope placed in any earthly thing is likely to be dashed; only hope placed in the sure rock of Christ will be secure. The sailors tried to bring the ship to shore; they thought that was God's answer. What will happen to your hopes if God does not solve your storm according to your expectations?

QUESTION 9. How did they get to shore? (v43-44) What had God told Paul? (v24, 34)



QUESTION 10. Has God revealed how He will solve your storm or problem?

What has He promised you?

Ps 28:7

Ps 31:24

Ps 40:1-3

Ps 121

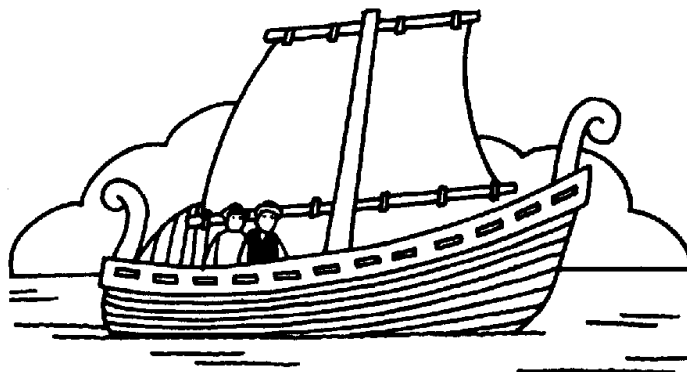
Is 40:31

Philippians 4:19

Hebrews 13:5-6

How could you express your hope and confidence in these promises? What would you say in prayer?

Do you see your way to calm water?





CHAPTER 2

Page 6

INTRODUCTION. The foundation for all confident Christian living is a certainty of God's love for you and your infinite worth to Him. Perhaps we know the Bible teaches this, but are we certain of it in our own lives? Lets explore.....

QUESTION 1. Read Ephesians 1:3-14. Reread verse 3. Who has blessed us? How many spiritual blessings did He bless us with?

TIP: For this question and those that follow just don't get the answer and write it down. No, think on the answer, savour it like your favourite lolly, and let it sink down deep into your heart!

QUESTION 2. Read verse 4. When did God choose us? What was His purpose in choosing us? Is God more interested in making us happy right now, or holy (like Jesus Christ)?How should the fact that He wants to make us holy, affect the attitude to the problems that come into our lives?

QUESTION 3. Read verse 5. What does it mean to be adopted? Since God adopted us what does that imply about His love for us? When God adopted us, He made a choice; how is this choice described in this verse?

QUESTION 4. Read verse 6. Have you ever been rejected? How does it feel to be accepted? How does it feel to be accepted by the King of kings and Lord of lords? Is this verse really saying we are accepted by God?



QUESTION 5. Read verse 7. What does redemption mean? What does it mean when it says ‘we have redemption through His blood’?

QUESTION 6. Verse 7 also says we have forgiveness. Have you forgiven yourself for the sin that God has forgiven? What are the obstacles to us feeling God’s forgiveness? Do you think God wants us to experience His forgiveness? (More on forgiveness another time)

QUESTION 7. Read verse 11. What is the inheritance that we have obtained? Why do you think God wanted us to have this inheritance?

QUESTION 8. Verse 11 continues to talk on God’s will. How much of what happens in our lives is God’s planning? What is the God like who you worship? Would he ever be unkind to you? Would He really treat you like a little pawn that doesn’t matter?

QUESTION 9. Read verse 13. What does it mean to be ‘sealed’ in Christ? What confidence should this give for the future?



QUESTION 10. Notice that in these 11 verses Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are mentioned, and certain works are credited to each. List each of their works as described in the passage.

a. Father, verses 3-6

b. Son, verses 7-12

c. Holy Spirit, verses 13-14

QUESTION 11. Write down all the verbs (action words) in this passage and mark next to them the tense of each (Past, present, or future). When did most of the action take place? What significance does this have for our personal worth?

QUESTION 12. Make a list of the things from this passage that you have never seen before.



QUESTION 13. List, say, five areas in your life that should be different as a result of having studied this passage.



Can your Heavenly Father show you any less love than the best of earthly fathers? In Ephesians 1:3-14 your Father embraces you with a heavenly love. Enjoy it. He wants you to enjoy His love for you!!



CHAPTER 3

Page 10

INTRODUCTION. In chapter one we looked at suffering and in chapter two God's love for us. Now we bring these together, looking at God's love, purpose, and concern in our suffering. We must understand He hurts with us or our reactions may be wrong. This will give us confidence in God despite our circumstances.

QUESTION 1. Read John 11. Re-read verses 1-4. Who are the 4 main characters of this story?

In verse 3 the account records that Jesus.....

What was the end or purpose of the sickness? (see verse 4)

Does knowing that God has great purposes for suffering help at all?

QUESTION 2. Read verse 5. What were Jesus feelings to Mary, Martha, and Lazarus?

Read verse 6. What did Jesus do when He heard that Lazarus was sick?

How do we often interpret delays to answer of our prayers? Is that interpretation the reality?

QUESTION 3. Read verses 8-11. Why did Jesus say He was going to Judea?

Read verses 11-14. The disciples thought that Lazarus was _____ but Jesus meant that he was _____.

Read verse 15. Why do you think, Jesus said that for their sakes He was glad He was not there?

Can you expect this in your situation? In what way?

QUESTION 4. Now try and put yourself in their shoes. How did they feel? Mary and Martha?

Lazarus?

Is it likely that they wondered whether or not Jesus loved them? _____ Do you think Lazarus was disappointed that Jesus did not come? _____ How do you feel when God doesn't do what you want Him to do, and when you want Him to do it?



QUESTION 5. Read verse 17. When Jesus arrived He found that Lazarus had been in the tomb ____ days. What do you think were Mary and Martha's feelings at that time?

Have you ever felt like this?

QUESTION 6. Read verses 18-27. Whom does Martha declare Jesus to be?

Read verses 25-26. What does Jesus say about Himself?

QUESTION 7. How did Jesus feel when Mary came to Him in tears?

Why did the Jews think Jesus was weeping? (see verses 35-36)

Why do you think Jesus wept? Was it for Lazarus? Did He know Lazarus would rise again? (see verse 4, 23, 40)

How does Jesus feel when you come to Him in tears?

QUESTION 8. Read verse 39. Why did Martha object to the stone being rolled away?

What do you think would have happened if Jesus had shouted "Come out" instead of saying, "Lazarus come out!"?

Yet Christ got people involved. What two things did Jesus have the people do? (see verses 39, 41, 44)

Could Jesus have done these things Himself? _____ Why do you think He asked the people to do these things?

What implications does this have for the things that Jesus doesn't do for us?



QUESTION 9. Read verses 45-53. Did all the people believe in Jesus because of this great miracle?

What was the Jew's reaction and what did they plan to do to Him?

What does this teach about belief and life experience?

QUESTION 10. From this account summarise what you have learned about suffering.

QUESTION 11. What have you learned about emotions and weeping?

Is it alright to express deep emotion?

Is it a sign of weakness to cry?

QUESTION 12. If we follow Christ's example here how are we to react to our friends in their grief? (Also see Romans 12:15)

QUESTION 13. List at least five insights you have gained from this study in the life of Christ?



CHAPTER 4

Page 13

INTRODUCTION. The difference between victory and defeat often depends on attitude. We will look at different attitudes throughout this Bible study. This present chapter deals with submission and humility. Can you see how these are important to successful living? Well, read on....

QUESTION 1. Read John 13:1-17. Re-read verses 1-3. What do these verses say Jesus knew, and was confident of? (list three)

How did this knowledge affect the way He acted?

As a Christian can you be certain of the same things?

How should this knowledge affect you?

QUESTION 2. If we have a quiet confidence of who we are we don't have to prove ourselves to other people. Jesus was free to be a servant. After reading verses 4-5 tell, in your own words, what Jesus did.

What do you think? Do you think there was a link between the knowledge Jesus had and the submissive role He took?

What knowledge/resources would you need to help you take a submissive role?

QUESTION 3. Read 1 Peter 2:21-23. Jesus left us an example of submission in His **suffering**. This passage tells us what that example was. Express it in your own words.

Can you do the same thing Jesus did when you are suffering or when you have to be submissive?



QUESTION 4. Read verses 6-10. Explain what you think Jesus meant in verse 10.

QUESTION 5. Read verses 6-10. How did Peter react to the idea of Jesus washing his feet? Why do you think he reacted like that- what was he feeling and why?

Jesus shouldn't be serving us either, yet He has and does. What should our response be to this?

QUESTION 6. Read verses 12-17. What was Jesus trying to communicate to His disciples?

What do you learn about leadership from these verses?

What do you think the term 'servant-leader' would mean? Would such a leader be weak?

What was the example Jesus set and referred to in verse 15?

QUESTION 7. What can you learn about the marriage relationship and submission in that relationship from this passage?

QUESTION 8. List the things from this passage that you need to apply in your own life.

With who, and how will you apply these things?



CHAPTER 5

Page 15

INTRODUCTION. One of the common problems in our society today that prevents a full abundant life is the matter of guilt (not having forgiveness or not feeling forgiven). It is imperative for every person to experience freedom from guilt; only then can victory and joy be experienced.

QUESTION 1. Read Psalm 32:1-2. Whom does the psalmist say is blessed?

QUESTION 2. Read verses 3-4. What happened when he kept his sin a secret?

QUESTION 3. Read verse 5. What did God do when he confessed his sin?

What does the New Testament say about confessing our sin? (See 1 John 1:9)

How much unrighteousness will He cleanse from you?

Have you confessed your sin to God?

How much sin is left?

Should you feel guilty then?

David wrote this psalm. It may surprise you just how much he had sinned and how much God forgave. You can read of his sin and repentance by going on to question 10; or you may wish to finish this psalm first.

QUESTION 4. Read verse 6. What does the psalmist mean?



QUESTION 5. Read verse 7. Put it into your own words.

QUESTION 6. Read verse 8. What does God say He will do for you?

QUESTION 7. Read verse 9. Why do you think the writer used the horse or mule of an illustration of what you should not be?

QUESTION 8. Read verses 10-11. What does the writer tell you to do in verse 11?

How do you respond to this instruction?

QUESTION 9. SUMMARY. The Psalm is written by a man who has repented and received forgiveness.

Read the psalm again and describe how you think he feels.

Is there any reason you could not experience the same thing?

What would you say to someone who has confessed their sin to God but still feels guilty? How could you encourage them? What would David (who wrote the psalm) say to them, do you think?



QUESTION 10. Read 2 Samuel 11. (In a study group it may be sufficient to read verses 1-5, 15) Does David's sin surprise you? Would you forgive David?

QUESTION 11. Read Psalm 51. We could summarise the psalm by saying it is a prayer of _____. What part of David's life does the title relate the psalm to?

Would you expect these kind of words from someone who had done what David did to Uriah and Bathsheba? Do you think that David is genuine?

QUESTION 12. Read 51:1-2. What is David requesting?

QUESTION 13. Read verses 3-6. What is David doing here as the basis of his request in verses 1-2?

Hadn't David sinned against Uriah and Bathsheba, his wives and children, and even against his nation? Well then what does he mean by verse 4?

In verse 5 David doesn't mean he was illegitimate. What does he mean?

Why does David include verse 6 as part of his confession?

QUESTION 14. How does a guilty person feel? And how does a forgiven person feel?

GUILTY

FORGIVEN

v3b

v7, 10

v8

v9, 11

v12

v14a



QUESTION 15. What does David expect to be the outcome of God's answer to his prayer?
v13
v14b
v15b

Do you think David's expectation was important to his recovery?

QUESTION 16. 2 Samuel 11 tells of David's great _____.
Psalm 51 tells of David's great _____.
Psalm 32 tells of David's great _____ in God's

forgiveness.

Was David forgiven?

Did David feel forgiven?

Can you be forgiven for your sin?

Can you feel fully forgiven?





CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION. So far this Bible study has dealt with overcoming the circumstances of life. Now we start to deal with overcoming sin. As promised earlier we will be looking at ‘**attitudes** that overcome’, in this present chapter; specifically, attitudes that overcome sin. Are you ready? These attitudes will be successful if there is mere sin, the sin has become a habit, or the habit has become an addiction.

QUESTION 1. Read Psalm 36:1-2. Now read the verses again in the NIV: *(Psalms 36:1-2) ... An oracle is within my heart concerning the sinfulness of the wicked: There is no fear of God before his eyes. ^A{2} For in his own eyes he flatters himself too much ^Bto detect or hate his sin. ^C*

An oracle is something God has shown. What three reasons had God shown David for men continuing in sin?

A.

B.

C.

If these are the reasons for continuing in sin, what opposite attitudes are needed to overcome sin?

A.

B.

C.

QUESTION 2. Fear of God. What does it mean to fear God? Well, let’s explore.....According to Job 1:1, 8 what are the characteristics of a man or woman who fears God?

In Exodus 15:6 what word is used in parallel to fear (is used to mean the same as fear)?

In Psalm 2:11 what word is used in parallel to fear (is used to mean the same as fear)?

So now, what does it mean to fear God?

Make a summary statement relating fear of God and sin.



QUESTION 3. Pride. Pride is commonly associated with wickedness, worldliness, and sin in the Scripture. Read and make notes on the following verses:

Deuteronomy 8:11-14

Psalm 10:4

Proverbs 8:13

Proverbs 11:2

Proverbs 12:15

Proverbs 15:32

Proverbs 16:18

Malachi 4:1

Many such verses emphasise the problems of pride. Is it possible to remain proud and have victory over sin?

What then must be dealt with first before any habit or addiction can be overcome?

What might have to happen in a person's life before they admit their pride?

Deuteronomy 8:3

2 Chronicles 32:24-26, 33:12

What will you do before the Lord brings trouble your way? 1 Peter 5:5-6

QUESTION 4. Hatred of sin. What reason does Psalm 36:4 give for a man continuing in wickedness?

What was the attitude of the only sinless man who ever walked the earth according to Psalm 45:7?

What command is given to Christians in Psalm 97:10a?

Will you make the commitment that David makes in Psalm 101:3?



QUESTION 4. (cont.) One of the ways to learn to hate sin is to realise its consequences. Comment on the damage of sin according to the following verses:
Genesis 3:16 f

Exodus 20:4-5

Matthew 23:33, Hebrews 2:3-4

Romans 6:6, 16-22

What modern word describes slavery to sin?

Galatians 6:7

QUESTION 5. List the motivating factors Christ gives for fully living the Christian life in Matthew 5:3-12:

What does Jesus say seeking God and holiness will do for us in Matthew 6:32-34?

What confidence can we have about life if we build our lives on Jesus and His teaching? See Matthew 7:24-27

What does Paul say his major motivating factor is in the Christian life?
2 Corinthians 5:14a



QUESTION 5. (cont.) Because of God's love for us what should we do according to Romans 12:1? How will this help toward victory over sin?

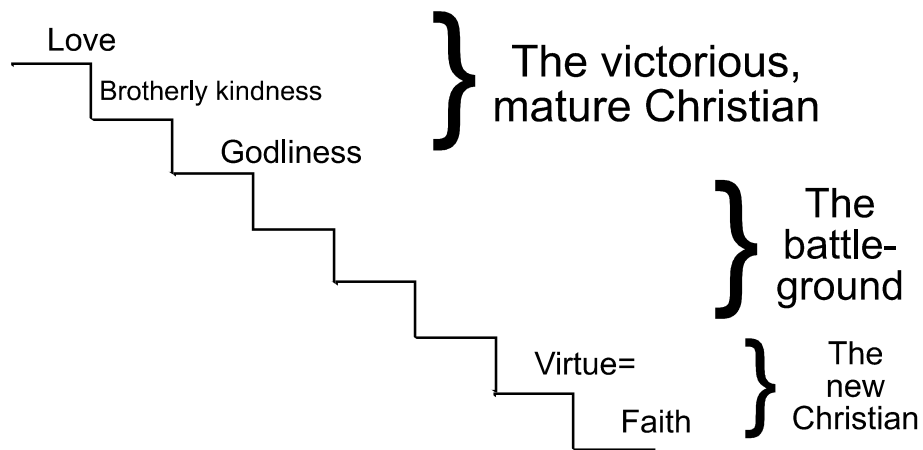
QUESTION 6. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. From that verse:
Comment on the uniqueness of the temptation you are experiencing.....

What does God promise you regarding the temptation?

What confidence does that give you in facing temptation?

QUESTION 7. OK, so far so good. However Peter deals with some other attitudes that should be present in the victorious Christian (mature Christian). Read 2 Peter 1:5-7.

Fill in the missing steps below. Faith refers to salvation, i.e. saving faith. Virtue refers to an attitude we have discussed already (HINT: see Question 5). Why would knowledge be the necessary next step? Explain discipline and perseverance and why they are important to overcoming sin and thus reaching the final steps of maturity.





QUESTION 8. The Bible. What was the third step according to the previous question? Virtue, the **desire** to live godly must be accompanied by a knowledge of **what** godliness is. The process of gaining this spiritual knowledge is referred to as a 'renewing of the mind' by Scripture.
What command does Romans 12:2 give in overcoming the world (sin)?

How is the mind renewed according to the following Scriptures?

◆ Colossians 3:10

◆ Titus 3:5

What two things can you do to ensure renewing of your mind

QUESTION 9. Discipline. What can you discover about self-discipline from the following verses?
Galatians 5:22-23

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Titus 1:7-8

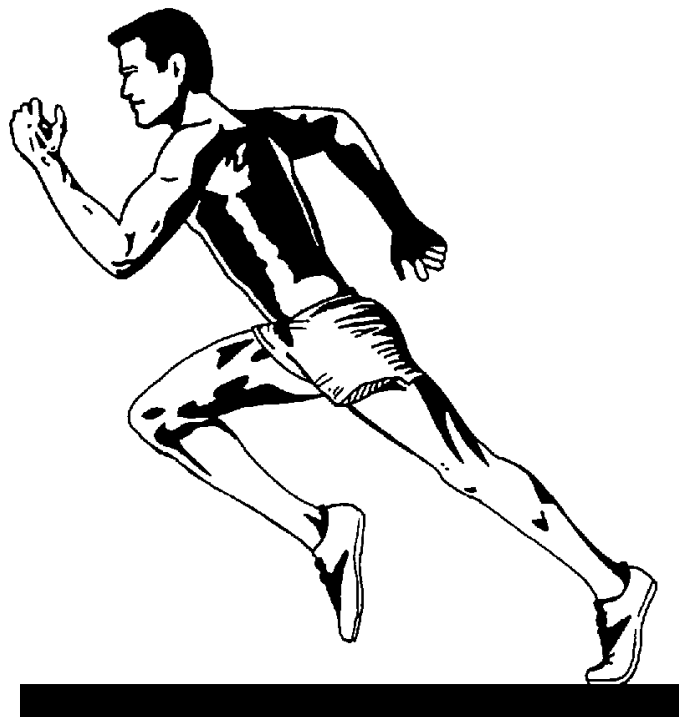
QUESTION 10. Perseverance. Read Hebrews 12:1-2, 12-17. What advice would you give to a brother or sister that was ready to give up the battle against sin?



QUESTION . So, in summary the attitudes/qualities that must be in place before any attempt is made to have victory over sin are:

- Question 2:
- Question 3:
- Question 4:
- Question 5:
- Question 6:
- Question 8:
- Question 9:
- Question 10:

We could call these attitudes the ‘attitudes of victory’ or ‘attitudes that give altitude’. Once these are there the way of victory is merely application. The attitudes won’t guarantee perfection but they will guarantee heart desire and thus final destination.





CHAPTER 7

Page 25

INTRODUCTION. Given that fear of God, humility, hatred of sin, love of God, confidence in God for victory, knowledge, discipline, and perseverance are all present, the way of victory will be desired, sought, and lived. The present chapter deals with factors involved in the way of victory. They are not so much steps as factors since they should be present together. Consider them a check-list. If you are failing to have victory and your attitudes are right as far as you can tell then just check to see which of the following are missing.

QUESTION 1. Understanding the war. What are the **enemies** that the Christian deals with according to the following verses, and how are they to be dealt with?

- ◆ Galatians 5:16-17
- ◆ 1 Peter 5:8-9
- ◆ 1 John 2:15-17

What is the **battleground** of sin according to Jesus in Matthew 15:17-20?

So what does Proverbs 4:23 advise?

What will that require according to 2 Corinthians 10:4-6?

QUESTION 2. When the disciples failed to stay awake to pray, Jesus gave them two key strategies for victory. What were they? See Matthew 26:41.

Read Mark 13:34. The word ‘watch’ is also used in that verse. Does this help to know what watching involves? Explain.

‘Watch’ is also sometimes translated ‘vigilant’. Note the following verses. What is vigilance associated with in..

- ◆ Colossians 4:2?
- ◆ 1 Peter 5:8?

Note ‘watching’ (question 2) and ‘keeping’ (question 1) are similar concepts: Stay on guard, don’t let your guard down, be alert for deceptive enemies.



QUESTION 3. Prayer. The subject of prayer is huge in the Scripture but here we look at prayer in regard to warfare. Jesus not only taught, (Matthew 26:41) "**Watch and pray**, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.", but He also modelled it.

- ◆ According to Matthew 26:39 what was the temptation that Jesus was facing on this occasion?

How did he handle that temptation according to the same verse?

What was Jesus state at the time according to verse 37?

And what is remarkable about Jesus' prayer according to Luke 22:44?

What implication does this have for our warfare praying?

- ◆ Read Psalm 44:1-4. What is the Psalmist doing in these verses? What is his specific request in verse 4?

What pattern does verses 1-3 set for us as we pray for victory?

- ◆ What pattern do you see in Psalm 40:7-8 that will help in having victory over your sin?

Whilst our enemies are the world, the flesh, and the devil (and our warfare is thus spiritual) the way Israel went about fighting her enemies sets a pattern for us. In Psalms alone the psalmist prays for deliverance 50 times. Prayer for God's help over the enemy is a very common theme.

For more on prayer and its relationship to victory over sin go on to question 4.



QUESTION 4. Armour. What is needed for victory over sin according to Ephesians 6:10?

For more on spiritual power see question 6. What is needed for spiritual victory according to Ephesians 6:11, 13?

What is the reason we need SPIRITUAL armour according to verse 12?

Read Ephesians 6:14-17. What armour is needed in spiritual battles and why?

Soldier's Equipment	Spiritual Parallel	Reason for Equipment
Girdle-		see also question 5
Breast-plate-	_____	
Shoes-		
Shield-	_____	
Helmet-		
Sword-	_____	see also question 5

Look at how Paul ends this passage in verse 18. What advice does Paul give for victory that Christ gave as we saw before?

What extra detail does Paul add that will help us?



QUESTION 5. The Bible. Read Matthew 4:1-11. fill out the following table.

Temptation	Satan's Strategy	Christ's Defense
#1	_____	
#2	_____	
#3	_____	

What implications does Christ's way of victory have for us? What should we do for victory?

What Scripture would it be a help to you to memorise?

QUESTION 6. Power. What is needed for victory according to Ephesians 6:10? (See question 4).

Where does spiritual power for the Christian come from? Read Acts 1:8, Romans 15:13.

How much power can we hope for according to Philippians 3:10?

What will block the Spirit's power in a believers life according to 1 Thessalonians 5:19?

How might such a thing occur? (HINT: An associated verse is Ephesians 5:30. What problems does Paul list in context that might grieve the Holy Spirit? Ephesians 4:25-32)



QUESTION 7. Replacement Principle. Sinful habits need to be replaced by godly habits. What is the danger if this is not done according to Matthew 12:43-45?

Read Ephesians 4:22-32 and Colossians 3:8-14 filling out the following table as you do so.

Reference	Put off..	Put on..
Ep 5:22-24		
verse 25		
verse 26		
verse 28		
verse 29		
verses 31-32		
Col 3:8-9, 12-14		

What are you struggling with? As you seek victory what is it that God would want you to replace it with?



QUESTION 8. Summary. From chapters 6 and 7 you should now be able to develop a personal strategy for overcoming whatever weight is stopping you from running with vigour the Christian race.

***(Hebrews 12:1-2)** Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, {2} looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Tick the items in this check-list if you can. If any are left unticked you may have discovered why full victory has eluded you..

- I have a healthy fear to disobey God
 - I have humbly owned my sin
 - I have learnt to hate my sin
 - I love my Saviour and don't want to do anything to hurt him
 - I have wholly given myself to the Lord, the best I know how
 - I have filled my mind with the Scripture's and learnt by heart verses relevant to my problem
 - I am exercising self-discipline
 - I am determined not to give up
 - I understand that the war I am in is spiritual
 - I am alert to my sin, and can sense when I am being tempted
 - I am quick to pray when tempted
 - I know how to use the Bible for victory
 - I understand the spiritual armour I need and have put it on
 - I draw on God's strength for victory
 - I am seeking to replace my sin with godly habits
-