

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. (2 Cor. 1:3-5)

We should support one another. We should encourage one another. But that doesn't mean we have to announce with a trumpet how bad we have it, how everyone has mistreated us, and how deserving we are of sympathy. God has called us to a better mindset.

Ultimately, we are responsible for ourselves. Even the most reprehensible oppression one must endure does not have to determine who we are, what we do, and how we see our lives. Paul

taught, **“let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load”** (Gal. 6:4-5). Perhaps what you have had to face presents some obstacles to you that are much more challenging than what I have ever faced. I am so sorry! But you have a choice how you will let that shape your life going forward. Will you view yourself as a helpless victim or will you take the reins of who you are, how you will act, and what your life will be from here on out?

The Christian is not a victim, but a conqueror! We once were **“slaves of sin,”** (Rom. 6:6), but in obedience to the gospel of Christ we have been **“delivered”** (Rom. 6:17) and **“set free from sin”** (Rom. 6:22). Now, God **“leads us in triumph in Christ”** (2 Cor. 2:14). That would lead Paul—the very man we saw who suffered so many things, to write:

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:37-39).

We don't have to be victims. In Christ, we can be conquerors, an even **“more than conquerors.”** Thanks be to God!



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CHRIST

Resisting the Victim Mentality

By Kyle Pope

Why do we do certain things? What made us have the strengths or weaknesses we do? If I am not what I should be in some area of life, is it my choice and my responsibility? Or am I helpless to shape my own character, behavior, and disposition?

This world certainly has more than its share of horror stories about souls who have suffered the abuse, mistreatment, disrespect, and exploitation of life circumstances or treatment by others. Living through such pain leaves scars, wounds, and obstacles that may never go away. This can make the path to happiness, healthy attitudes, and righteous living far more elusive for these injured souls than for those who have not endured such nightmares. Far too many people can look back on such a dark history in their lives. These victims deserve our kindness, love, sympathy, gentleness, and patience. The Hebrew writer urges Christians to, **“strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed”** (Heb. 12:12-13, NKJV).

Unfortunately, there have been times when our world failed to acknowledge the importance of support for those who have suffered such horrid things. Victims were ignored, abuse was “swept under the rug,” and those who had faced such mistreatment were stigmatized and shamed if they openly acknowledged what they had endured. They were looked down upon if they sought help to overcome what they had been through. While this may still happen at times, the willingness to address these realities is making this neglect less common. Yet, with this increased spotlight

Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM

9:30 AM

10:30 AM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Patrick Ledbetter

Brady McAlister

Jeff Nunn

Deacons:

Ben Hight

Blake McAlister

Walker McNear

Sam Nunn

Lance Purcell

Justin Smiley

Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

