

Intro:

God wants you to know today that:

- You are no ORDINARY person... In an ORDINARY place... Doing ORDINARY things...
- NO – you are in an EXTRA-ORDINARY place... Among EXTRA-ORDINARY people... Serving an EXTRA-ORDINARY God... And you are about to do EXTRA-ORDINARY things for Him

We are part of a generation DESTINED...

- For powerful manifestations of God’s glory...
 - These are the LAST DAYS... the END TIMES
 - And – He has promised that...

“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” **(Acts 2:17-21)**

- I am not talking about POMP and CIRCUMSTANCE... we are a people who:
 - Want to see Jesus... Want to see God move in every area of our lives...
 - READY to cross the Jordan!!!
 - We are READY to settle in the promised land...

This morning we stand in the middle of a battlefield...

- For 10 years... IHOPs been waging war here in Tallahassee
 - You have DENIED yourselves (by fasting)... FOCUSED yourselves (in prayer)
- NOT to be a sensationalist... but it all comes down to right now
 - **This** is the moment we have waited for...
 - **This** is when the timing is right...
 - **NOW** is when we step into the river...

READ Joshua 6:12-16

Maybe these past 10 years have felt like Israel’s first 6 days...

- Each day seemed like the day before...
 - They were going round and round...
 - They had no idea what was about to happen...
- BUT – today is like the LAST day they got up...

I checked the gift for 10th Anniversary this morning...

MODERN... diamonds

TRADITIONAL... aluminum

- Dad flew in bomber in WW2
- Made of aluminum
- Faster, farther, took hits and kept flying

- (v.15) "On the seventh day, they got up at daybreak and marched around the city seven times in the same manner... **except** ...that on that day they circled the city seven times."

It was like all the other days... "EXCEPT"

- *except... only... but... although... however... nevertheless*
- Any way you say it – that day WAS different...
- And I say that TODAY is a day like THAT day...

"The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the city!... When the trumpets sounded, the people shouted, and at the sound of the trumpet, when the people gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed; so every man charged straight in, and they took the city." (Josh 6:16,20)

What we can see in those people – were "OVERCOMERS" ...

- They are like those who John Mark describes in:
(1 John 4:4) "You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world."
 - It was their belief in the Lord God... Jehovah Elohiym
 - That gave them the faith to stand that day...
- It has to be that SAME belief rising up in us... will cause us to become OVERCOMERS, too...

Which brings up a good question:

- "Is it faith – or excitement – that makes me an overcomer?"
 - As ALWAYS – the answer is found in scripture...

READ Revelation 12:7-11

- There are 3 things here that show us how we OVERCOME...
 - In these three things all of our history is held...

1. "The blood of the Lamb"...

This shows us that – for us – the work has already been done...

- Jesus stated very boldly to the Disciples in John 16:33...
"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."
 - "nike" (Gk) to subdue, overtake, conquer, prevail

SO – eternally, our victory HAS BEEN secured ...

- It was through JESUS' sacrifice that we are OVERCOMERS... We see that it is through what JESUS has done...

- It could not be stated any plainer than what we see in:

(1 John 5:11-12) "And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life."

The critical blow to Satan... came when the Lamb shed His blood for our sins...

- SEE – the victory was won – AND IS WON – through sacrifice...
- Jesus' victory on the cross didn't just come when He cried out, "It is finished!" ...
 - It began when Jesus prayed in the garden:
 - "If there's any other way – let this cup pass from me... NEVERTHELESS... not my will, but YOURS be done"

Which brings us to the SECOND part of OVERCOMING...

AGAIN... (Rev 12:11) "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony..."

2. "and by the word of their testimony" ...

Not only is our victory secured because of what Jesus DID...

- It is secured by what you and I ARE DOING...
- We overcome – not just by the sacrifice that WAS made... also by the sacrifices that ARE BEING made...

Am I saying that it is by what WE do that brings us salvation?

- NO – I am saying that Jesus ALONE secured our victory...
 - But He invites us to take part in "cleaning things up" ...
- James 2:22 says that... "our faith is made complete by what we do..."
 - And in vs 26... "As the body with the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead"

God will bless your home, marriage, and family...

- NOT on the basis of how much you've prayed...
- NOT because of how good you've been...
- BUT – on your understanding of the power and sufficiency of the sacrifice... Jesus Christ

"What is my testimony? What has the Lord done for me?" (biggest struggle for people on mission trips)

- You can say what David stated in Psalm 40: "He rescued me from a horrible pit... brought me out of a miry clay... and He set my feet upon the Rock"

Every cult... every false religious system has MAN reaching up to God...

- Whether it be knocking on doors... selling magazines... or being baptized in holy underwear....

- Religion says, “I can make it to heaven by MY OWN efforts...”
- BUT – we know that the accuser of the church is silenced ONLY when Jesus’ blood is applied... AND
 - ONLY when the testimony of God’s GRACE is shared...

If you’re still trying to impress God with anything you do or don’t do...

- The enemy will beat you EVERY time...
 - Because all we are doing is relying on ourselves...
- A TRUE testimony is one that says...
 - “I do what I do only through the grace and power of God that lives inside of me...”
 - “AND... I do it all for HIS glory, not mine!”

BUT – we still have to remember – to have a testimony we have to be willing to step out of our comfort zone...

- It’s the same with us... as those who’ve gone before:
 - **Noah** had to build the ark... **Abraham** had to offer up Isaac on an altar...
 - **Moses** had to talk to Pharaoh... **Esther** had to approach the king...
 - **Shad, Mech, and Abed** had to step into the fire... **Daniel** had to pray in the window...
 - **Peter** had to step out of the boat... **Paul** had to stand up to preach...

SO – in REVIEW:

(Rev 12:11) “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb... and by the word of their testimony... and they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.”

3. “that we do not love our lives so much as to shrink from death” – DYING TO SELF...

AGAIN – we are dealing with 3 levels of sacrifice here...

1. That the sacrifice that WAS made – Jesus – secures our victory
2. That the sacrifice that IS BEING made – our testimony...
 - Gives us the victory each and every day...
3. And now... our WILLINGNESS to sacrifice...
 - That we come to that place where we are willing to lay ANYTHING down for the sake of Christ...

There is so much FREEDOM when we let go... (like with those who have heart to give)

- When we don’t worry about protecting that thing in our hand...
 - We don’t worry about keeping it... watching it...
- Why not? Because we don’t look at it as OURS anymore... It is now GOD’S responsibility...

The Apostle Paul had an incredible understanding of this...

(Phil 3:10-11) "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead."

- Did Paul have a death wish? NO... he had perspective
 - He wanted to stand out in the crowd...
 - He wanted God's power to distinguish him from the rest of the world...
 - WHY? So that the world would see Christ in him...
- Paul's priority was NOT himself... but knowing CHRIST:
 - With that priority comes power... resurrected life
 - With that power comes pain... sharing in sufferings
 - So – how did Paul deal with Pain?
- He gained a new perspective...

OPEN TO... *(Phil 3:12-14)* "Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."

Paul realized he couldn't change his past – but Christ could...

- He also realized he didn't have it all figured out yet... knew every day was going to be a struggle...
 - This is why he says in Galatians 2:20...

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

- Paul's is the perspective that every one of us should have:

(Phil 3:17-20) "Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ..."

- WOW – he labels these people, "enemies of the cross of Christ"
 - Their destiny is destruction... Their god is their stomach...
 - Their glory is their shame... Their mind is on earthy things...
- BUT – he tells us to live our lives "in the light of eternity"...
 - With the assurance of the promise of heaven...
 - That THIS world is NOT our home...

Close:

I want you to listen as I read to you an old news account...

- You may or may not recognize the name of Florence Chadwick

In 1952, Florence was the first woman to attempt to swim the 26 miles between Catalina Island and the California coastline. As she began this historical journey, she was flanked by small boats that watched for sharks and were prepared to help her if she got hurt or grew tired. Hour after hour Florence swam, but after about 15 hours, a thick, heavy fog set in. Florence began to doubt her ability, and she told her mother, who was in one of the boats, that she didn't think she could make it. She swam for one more hour before asking to be pulled out. As she sat in the boat, Florence found out she had stopped swimming just one mile away from the California shoreline, her destination. Florence explained that she quit because she could no longer see the coastline-there was too much fog. She couldn't see her goal.

Two months later, Florence got back in the water to try her task once more. This time was different. She swam from Catalina Island to the shore of California in a straight path for 26 miles. The same thick fog set in, but Florence made it because she said that while she swam, she kept a mental image of the shoreline in her mind. She didn't lose sight of the shore because she focused on that image of the coast in her mind, and in this way, she reached her goal.

As you walk the Christian walk – it's going to get foggy...

- You're going to wonder how you will make it...
 - But if we keep the right perspective... our eyes on Jesus...
 - This will keep our eyes on the goal...
- That EVERYTHING that we do is about Him...
 - Our jobs... conversations... the way we live our lives...
 - Our worship... our sacrifices... our victories...

THIS is how we overcome:

(Rev 12:11) "... by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; and they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death."

- Are you ready to become an OVERCOMER today?
 - Are you ready to show the enemy you aren't afraid to die to yourself?

"The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the city!... When the trumpets sounded, the people shouted, and at the sound of the trumpet, when the people gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed; so every man charged straight in, and they took the city." **(Josh 6:16,20)**

SHOFAR