

Welcome to group session 5 of OVERCOMER Bible Study. Begin by asking for responses to last week's personal study.

What stood out to you in last week's personal study? What truths or answers did God reveal?

Take two minutes and list as many emotions as you experience in a given week.

Then take turns reading your lists.. When identical ideas are presented, place check marks beside the ones on your list. When it's your turn again to share, read only new items that haven't been previously named. I'll start frustration.

Emotions are incredible gifts from God. He bestows them for His pleasure and to give us ways to know and express ourselves and relate to others. Unchecked, however, emotions can become barriers to our true identity. Sometimes our senses and feelings deceive us, leading us **to believe lies and establish an identity that deviates from God's promise for our lives.**

It's one thing to know your identity is in Christ. It's another to be prepared for the

attacks that will come. We learned from Peter that being firmly rooted today doesn't guarantee success tomorrow.

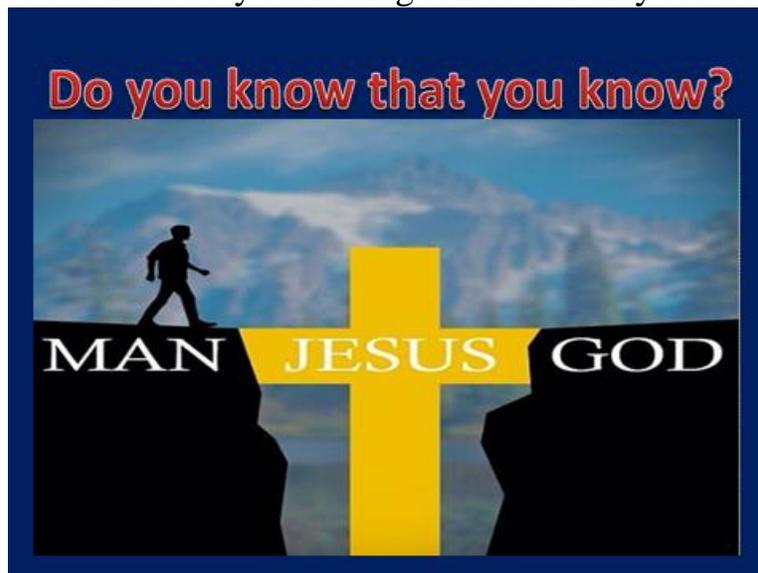
Question: How important is boldly declaring who you are in Christ directly to the enemy when he erects an unforeseen barrier in your way or brings a personal attack against you?

Answer: It is critical for us to be able to identify Satanic attacks and enter into prayer, placing those attacks at the feet of Jesus

Are you prepared to contradict your feelings and act from your true identity?

How important is boldly declaring who you are in Christ directly to the enemy when he erects an unforeseen barrier in your way or brings a personal attack against you?

Are you prepared to contradict your feelings and act from your true identity?



Watch video clip

Summary

The Hannah we see in this week's clip is decidedly different from the young girl we encountered two weeks ago. Armed with faith in Christ, Hannah confidently begs for the question, ready with her answer. Hannah is certain of her worth because her identity is no longer rooted in the father who deserted her, the asthma that plagued her, the sin that followed her, or the sport that defined her. She now boldly declares her relationship with Christ and her citizenship in heaven. Her identity is wrapped up in Jesus.

How is Hannah different?
What changed?
What spiritual truth revealed by Hannah in this segment do you resonate with most?
What part of her declaration did you need to hear most?
What are you still wrestling with in regard to your Identity?

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What are you still wrestling with in regard to your Identity?

What still competes for God's prominent place in your life?

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In Exodus 32 Moses was missing. The wilderness-wandering Israelites knew he was meeting with God on Mount Sinai, but they were concerned about how long he had been gone and whether he was coming back. So they reverted to what they

would have seen and done in Egypt: they fashioned an idol and worshiped it. God was ready to pour out His final judgment, but Moses interceded and then displayed a little righteous wrath of his own.

Exodus 32:11 Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent. 12 Then Moses said to the LORD, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people!' But You Yourself have not let me know whom You will send with me. Moreover, You have said, 'I have known you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight.' 13 "Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, let me know Your ways that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your sight. Consider too, that this nation is Your people." 14 And He said, "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest." 15 Then he said to Him, "If Your presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here. 16 "For how then can it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not by Your going with us, so that we, I and Your people, may be distinguished from all the other people who are upon the face of the earth?" 17 The LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this thing of which you have spoken; for you have found favor in My sight and I have known you by name." 18 Then Moses said, "I pray You, show me Your glory!" 19 And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion." 20 But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!"

Read aloud Exodus 32:11-20.

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Now let's go back to the start of the chapter
The Golden Calf

1 Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron and said to him, "Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." 2 Aaron said to them, "Tear off the gold rings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." 3 Then all the people tore off the gold rings which were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. 4 He took this from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf; and they said, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt." 5 Now when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow shall be a feast to the LORD." 6 So the next day they rose early and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

7 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, "Go down at once, for your people, whom you brought up from the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. 8 "They have quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them. They have made for themselves a molten calf, and have worshiped it and have sacrificed to it and said, 'This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!' " 9 The LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and behold, they are an obstinate people. 10 "Now then let Me alone, that My anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them; and I will make of you a great nation."

Moses' Anger

19 It came about, as soon as Moses came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing; and Moses' anger burned, and he threw the tablets from his hands and shattered them at the foot of the mountain. 20 He took the calf which they had made and burned it with fire, and ground it to powder, and scattered it over the surface of the water and made the sons of Israel drink it.

21 Then Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you, that you have brought such great sin upon them?" 22 Aaron said, "Do not let the anger of my lord burn; you know the people yourself, that they are prone to evil. 23 "For they said to me, 'Make a god for us who will go before us; for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' 24 "I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold, let them tear it off.' So they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf."

25 Now when Moses saw that the people were out of control—for Aaron had let them get out of control to be a derision among their enemies— 26 then Moses

stood in the gate of the camp, and said, "Whoever is for the LORD, come to me!" And all the sons of Levi gathered together to him. 27 He said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Every man of you put his sword upon his thigh, and go back and forth from gate to gate in the camp, and kill every man his brother, and every man his friend, and every man his neighbor.' " 28 So the sons of Levi did as Moses instructed, and about three thousand men of the people fell that day. 29 Then Moses said, "Dedicate yourselves today to the LORD—for every man has been against his son and against his brother—in order that He may bestow a blessing upon you today."

30 On the next day Moses said to the people, "You yourselves have committed a great sin; and now I am going up to the LORD, perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." 31 Then Moses returned to the LORD, and said, "Alas, this people has committed a great sin, and they have made a god of gold for themselves. 32 "But now, if You will, forgive their sin—and if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written!" 33 The LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book. 34 "But go now, lead the people where I told you. Behold, My angel shall go before you; nevertheless in the day when I punish, I will punish them for their sin." 35 Then the LORD smote the people, because of what they did with the calf which Aaron had made.



How did Moses plead with God?

Why did it matter that Moses rooted his argument in God's promises?

How did Moses discipline Israel?

How was Moses different in this passage from the Moses who made excuses in Exodus 3:11-14?

What do you think changed?

How did Moses plead with God?

Why did it matter that Moses rooted his argument in God's promises?

How did Moses discipline Israel?

How was Moses different in this passage from the Moses who made excuses in Exodus 3:11-14? But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" ¹² And He said, "Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain."

¹³ Then Moses said to God, "Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?" ¹⁴ God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

What do you think changed?

Only when we fully understand, embrace, and operate from our identity in Christ can we accomplish the tasks God has planned for us. That requires life change along the way. Because Moses cited God's promise in His people's defense, he was declaring that he knew and accepted God's call on his life as a leader and God's purpose for His rescued people. Moses understood that this plan was part of the promise God had made ages before.

Judges 7

CHAPTER 7

Gideon's 300 Chosen Men

1 Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him, rose early and camped beside the spring of Harod; and the camp of Midian was on the north side of them by the hill of Moreh in the valley.

2 The LORD said to Gideon, "The people who are with you are too many for Me to give Midian into their hands, for Israel would become boastful, saying, 'My own power has delivered me.' 3 "Now therefore come, proclaim in the hearing of the

people, saying, 'Whoever is afraid and trembling, let him return and depart from Mount Gilead.' " So 22,000 people returned, but 10,000 remained.

4 Then the LORD said to Gideon, "The people are still too many; bring them down to the water and I will test them for you there. Therefore it shall be that he of whom I say to you, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go with you; but everyone of whom I say to you, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go." 5 So he brought the people down to the water. And the LORD said to Gideon, "You shall separate everyone who laps the water with his tongue as a dog laps, as well as everyone who kneels to drink." 6 Now the number of those who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was 300 men; but all the rest of the people kneeled to drink water. 7 The LORD said to Gideon, "I will deliver you with the 300 men who lapped and will give the Midianites into your hands; so let all the other people go, each man to his home." 8 So the 300 men took the people's provisions and their trumpets into their hands. And Gideon sent all the other men of Israel, each to his tent, but retained the 300 men; and the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

9 Now the same night it came about that the LORD said to him, "Arise, go down against the camp, for I have given it into your hands. 10 "But if you are afraid to go down, go with Purah your servant down to the camp, 11 and you will hear what they say; and afterward your hands will be strengthened that you may go down against the camp." So he went with Purah his servant down to the outposts of the army that was in the camp. 12 Now the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the sons of the east were lying in the valley as numerous as locusts; and their camels were without number, as numerous as the sand on the seashore.

In Judges 7 Gideon was now leading an army. The Lord instructed Gideon to whittle down the army from thirty-two thousand soldiers to only three hundred.

Why? So that the victory would be unmistakably God's.

On the eve of the battle, God instructed Gideon to spy on the Midianite camp.

Judges 7

7:13 When Gideon came, behold, a man was relating a dream to his friend. And he said, "Behold, I had a dream; a loaf of barley bread was tumbling into the camp of Midian, and it came to the tent and struck it so that it fell, and turned it upside down so that the tent lay flat." 14 His friend replied, "This is nothing less than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has given Midian and all the camp into his hand." 15 When Gideon heard the account of the dream and its interpretation, he bowed in worship. He returned to the camp of Israel and said, "Arise, for the LORD has given the camp of Midian into your hands." 16 He divided the 300 men into three companies, and he put trumpets and empty pitchers into the hands of all of them, with torches inside the pitchers. 17 He said to them, "Look at me and do likewise. And behold, when I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. 18 "When I and all who are with me blow the trumpet, then you also blow the trumpets all around the camp and say, 'For the LORD and for Gideon.' "

Read aloud Judges 7:13-18.

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How did this Gideon differ from the one we first encountered in Judges 6:6-16?

Why do you think he changed?

Why was the conversation Gideon heard important to him?

How did he respond and invite people to respond after he heard it?

How did this Gideon differ from the one we first encountered in Judges 6:6-16?

In 6:15 he is wining about being small and insignificant.

6:15 He said to Him, "O Lord, how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father's house."

Why do you think he changed? **Now his identity is in God**

Why was the conversation Gideon heard important to him?
It gave him assurance of the victory

Vs 15 When Gideon heard the account of the dream and its interpretation, he bowed in worship. He returned to the camp of Israel and said, "Arise, for the LORD has given the camp of Midian into your hands."

How did he respond and invite people to respond after he heard it?

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Gideon still valued confirmation, and God was gracious to oblige. At the conclusion of these verses, Gideon boldly declared in faith that God would bring victory.

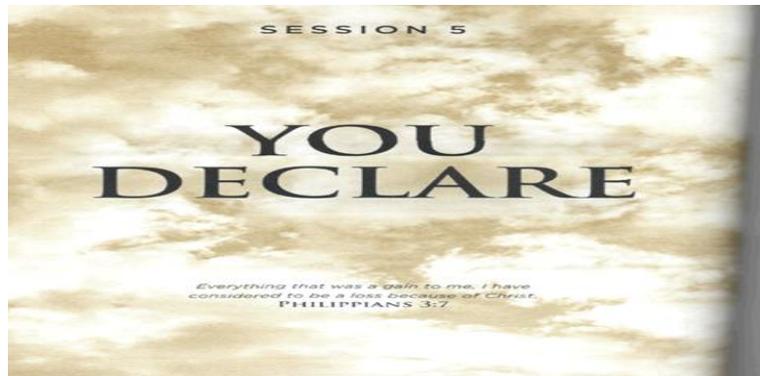
He went from defending his own fear and weakness to leading an army in confidence. Why?

He believed God.

He abandoned his old, useless identity and embraced the man God said he was.

You too are invited to work out your own identity in Christ. Then you can celebrate your bold declaration for the Lord and for His servant—you

Now let's look at your final homework



DAY 1
PAUL HAD AN OLD IDENTITY

Paul vividly described the transition from the old identity to the new identity this way:

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come! 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

When Paul wrote, "The old has passed away," he probably intended to convey the meaning of the old adage "Gone but not forgotten." We don't forget who we used to be apart from our identity in Christ. But we actively choose not to live in that identity any longer.

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Read Philippians 3:3-14. Name the reasons Paul considered himself the ideal Jewish leader in verses 4-6.

You can almost hear Coach Harrison exclaim in the principal's office, "I'm not a cross-country coach! I'm a basketball coach!"

What we identify as the sin of idolatry and a false identity was rooted in the persona of a devout man doing what he thought was right in the eyes of Israel's God. Paul gave a litany of qualifications that defined his identity, exposing his confidence in fleshly things, even pitting himself against anyone else as someone who had more reasons to be proud.

You've already exposed the sinful foundations of your life through this Bible study. Many of them were probably just attempts to be the best person you could possibly be.

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Phil 3:3 for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh, 4 **although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.** 7 But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus

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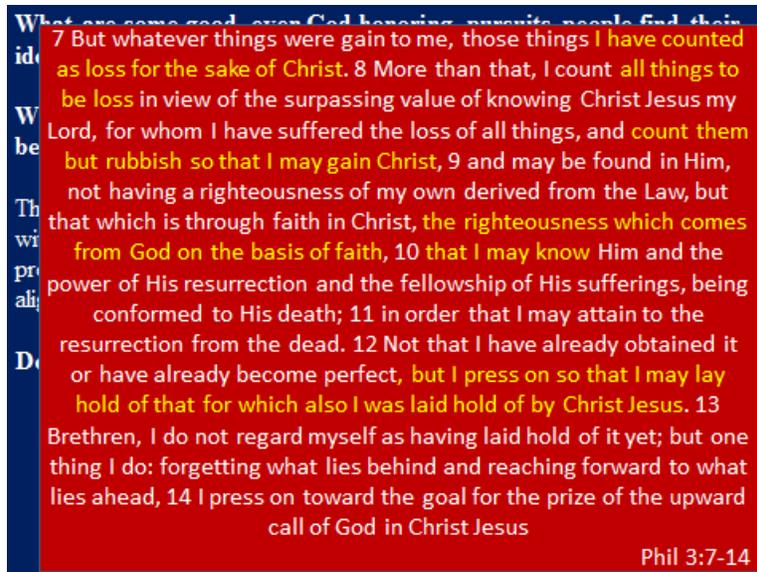
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What are some good, even God-honoring pursuits people find their identities in?

What labels are used in the church to elevate people over simply being crucified with Christ?

The misplaced priorities in Paul's life were hurdles only an encounter with Jesus could overturn. Similarly, any false identities in your life have prevented you from establishing a firm foundation in Jesus and from aligning your goals with God's purposes.

Describe Paul's new goals in life, outlined in verses 7-14.



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Record any new goals you've set for your life, based on your experiences over the past five weeks in this study.

Record a prayer asking the Holy Spirit of God to help you overcome obstacles to fully realizing your identity in Christ and to make your Christ-honoring goals a reality.

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DAY 2
PAUL FOUND AND ROOTED His LIFE IN FAITH

Moses wrote five books to express all of the mighty deeds God did to establish His people. His song in Deuteronomy 32 expressed that gratitude, along with his farewell words. Try to imagine these words put to music:

*I will proclaim the LORD'S name.
Declare the greatness of our God!
The Rock—his work is perfect;
all his ways are just. A faithful God,
without bias, he is righteous and true.
DEUTERONOMY 32:3-4*

Listen to the Song of Moses

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DEUTERONOMY 32:3-4**

Remember in Exodus 3:13 when Moses asked God for His name? Here in this song Moses proclaimed it loudly! Deuteronomy 32:3-4 sounds as if it belongs in any modern praise chorus. The rest of the song? Not so much. From verse 5 nearly all the way to the end, Moses highlighted Israel's sin as much as God's power.

This final declaration was hardly from a man who lived in fear. He passionately issued a warning to his people about the consequences of living contrary to their true identity in the Lord God.

If your study over the past few weeks could culminate in a warning for yourself and others, what would it be?

Perhaps a warning to stop PLAYING church!

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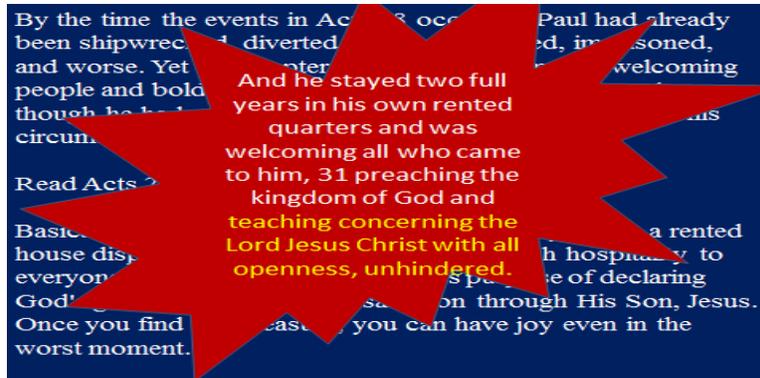
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Read Acts 28:30-31

Basically under house arrest, Paul spent two years in a rented house displaying a beautiful picture of Jewish hospitality to everyone who visited, for the express purpose of declaring God's goodness in providing salvation through His Son, Jesus. Once you find that treasure, you can have joy even in the worst moment.



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Acts 28:30-31 And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was welcoming all who came to him, 31 preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered.

Verse 31 says Paul witnessed "with all boldness and without hindrance." Copy that phrase here.

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What do you think it means to live a life that declares faith "with all boldness"? **Trusting Christ for the outcome**

What does it mean to have no hindrance?
To put your sins under the blood of Jesus!

"Without hindrance" translates the Greek word akolutos, which means "to prevent, to hinder, to forbid, to withhold, to deny."

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A. Trusting Christ for the outcome

Q. What does it mean to have no hindrance?

A. To put your sins under the blood of Jesus!

"Without hindrance" translates the Greek word akolutos, which means "to prevent, to hinder, to forbid, to withhold, to deny."

Denial. What things cause you to limit your service?

"I'm not a good speaker."—Moses

"I'm not a strong fighter."—Gideon

"I'm not a cross-country coach."—John Harris

"I'm not _____ You
(fill in the line)

We can share Jesus "with all boldness and without hindrance" when we stop denying who we are in Christ. In Jesus we can overcome any obstacles that get in our way of living fully rooted in faith and passionately sharing that faith without hesitation. Do you believe that? Does your conviction show?

Denial. What things cause you to limit your service?

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Confess your "I'm not..." statements to Jesus and leave them with Him. Praise God for making you an overcomer, not by your might but by the transformational power of the gospel

DAY 3

PAUL WAS MADE NEW

AND LED FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH

Peter wrote about faith that's refined by fire (see 1 Pet. 1:7).

The process is similar to exercise. Muscles that are unused eventually atrophy. Exercise builds muscle and strength by actually tearing down muscle fibers. When the body recovers and the muscles rebuild, they're stronger. Breaking down muscles makes them stronger.

When you consider the danger, turmoil, and difficulty Paul faced, it's not hard to see why his spiritual muscles grew strong. Though developed in difficulty, Paul's faith was rooted in his confession of faith in Jesus Christ, birthed from his life-changing encounter with the risen Lord.

DAY 3

Paul was made new and led from a position of strength

Peter wrote about faith that's refined by fire (see 1 Pet. 1:7).

1 Pet 1:7 so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

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When you consider the danger, turmoil, and difficulty Paul faced, it's not hard to see why his spiritual muscles grew strong. Though developed in difficulty, Paul's faith was rooted in his confession of faith in Jesus Christ, birthed from his life-changing encounter with the risen Lord.

Who's more inspiring to you—believers fervently following Jesus with no scars or marks of their trials or believers with deep wounds who remain radically faithful? Explain your answer.

Read Paul's words that follow.

[The Lord] said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness." Therefore, I will most gladly boast all the more about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may reside in me. So I take pleasure in weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and in difficulties, for the sake of Christ For when t am weak, then I am strong.

2 CORINTHIANS 12:8-10

Highlight each word above that conveys hardship.

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Even while Paul was in prison, people recognized Christ in him and were changed. His faith under fire was inspiring, and he leveraged it to share Christ without fear or hindrance.

Others were inspired to proclaim that same gospel, and Paul rejoiced even in his own affliction because Christ was being declared. That result makes adversity worth the cost.

Though our worldly identity can easily lead to pride, our identity in Christ exposes the sheer strength of living faithfully in spite of outside adversity and inner weaknesses. Because celebrating adversity and heralding our weakness are the opposite of the world's tendency, they're shocking.

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When you think of Coach Harrison, fast-forward and imagine the possibilities. Imagine his testimony five years later, coaching a new state-champion runner, profusely thanking God for taking away basketball and his misplaced identity.

Observing the way his faith developed in that season of fire could have a great impact on someone else who faced a trial.

Summarize any life change you've experienced during this Bible study.

What outcomes do you hope for as you leverage what God is doing to refine you and to solidify your identity in Christ?

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