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# WINNING THE BATTLE

## I. The Reality

- a. Our world is hurting
  - i. 1 in 4 have been diagnosed with a mental disorder
  - ii. Suicides outpace homicides 2:1
  - iii. 1.9 million kids have been diagnosed with depression
- b. What is holding us back from moving forward?

## II. Paul's Story

- a. Paul experienced many struggles on his missionary journeys.
  - i. **2 Corinthians 1:8–9** (NIV) *“We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death.”*
  - ii. Paul's challenges pushed him to the breaking point.
- b. He found hope in God's power.
  - i. **2 Corinthians 1:9** (NIV) *“But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.”*
  - ii. **Romans 8:11** (NIV) *“And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.”*
- c. The answer to our problem is found in God.
  - i. Our challenges do not define our destination.
  - ii. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead can heal our mind and emotions.

## III. God's Plan for Victory

- a. **2 Corinthians 10:4-5** (NIV), *“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”*
  - i. Paul is using military language in this passage.
  - ii. We can and should fight the enemy.
- b. Satan tries to intimidate us.

- i. **1 Peter 5:8** (NIV), *“Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”*
  - 1. We must be sober minded, which means we have to avoid irrational thinking.
  - 2. Much of our anxiety and worries are based on irrational thoughts that seem real.
- ii. Jesus brings us freedom by empowering us to take down the deceptive thoughts.
- c. We must demolish strongholds
  - i. 2 Corinthians 10:4 (NIV)
  - ii. Satan builds strongholds in our thoughts to influence us.
  - iii. We must kick him out and tear down the walls.
  - iv. Demolish carries the idea of tear it down completely “brick by brick.”
    - 1. Jesus gives us the power to accomplish that task.
    - 2. 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV), “We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God.”
    - 3. **Matthew 12:29** (NIV), *“Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man’s house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can plunder his house.”*
    - 4. Jesus is the strong man.
- d. We must take our negative thoughts captive.
  - i. 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV), “we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”
  - ii. We make them behave and follow Jesus’ rules.
  - iii. We arrest any thought that doesn’t match what we read in God’s word.
  - iv. Don’t entertain any thought that doesn’t align with what God has spoken.

#### IV. What if?

- a. What if you made a different choice?
- b. What would your life look like tomorrow?

#### V. The Future is Bright

- a. Do you believe Jesus has the power and authority to do what he says he can do in our life?
- b. Our future can be brighter than the current dark moment when we decide to fight.