

FINDING SENSE IN SUFFERING

Power Struggle Series - Part 7

Dan Burrell

Good morning Life Fellowship. It is great to see you and it is great to know that there are many folks that are watching on the Internet this morning as we get back to our new version of normal step by step with Kid Life starting today and then also double services. And today we are going to be continuing our series on 'Power Struggle.

First, I want you to understand that my heart breaks when I am in those moments that I am just praying through our church. Those are the times that I specifically say I am going to disconnect; I am going to turn my phone off and leave it in the other room. On purpose I just want to disengage and I just want to think about the people in our church. And I will tell you that often as I do that, several emotions sweep across me. Sometimes it is deep pain, other times it is an overwhelming sense of gratitude. To be frank sometimes it is a sense of just simply being flat out overwhelmed.

And it is because when you have as many people who call a church their home as this church has we always have people going through tons of different things and different challenges. I think about the ladies in this church who right now are dealing with the shock of having a husband say, '*I don't want to be married to you anymore.*' I think about the young couple who recently was excited about the birth of their first child only to find out a few weeks later that they have miscarried.

I think about the individual in this church who sometime in 2020 in the midst of all the Covid and all the angst going on in our country went to the doctor and found out he has a life threatening illness. I think about the young couple who changed jobs one week before the Covid shutdown, and as a result have known incredible need because the job they thought they had was not there anymore, and the job they left didn't want them back. And I think about what they have suffered during this time.

I think about the young people who are confused, those kids that are supposed to be in college right now, or they are at college, but they are sitting in their dorm room. And 2020 was supposed to be THE year. '*Yay, we are the class of 2020.*' And they are wondering what their future is going to look like, and do they even have a future at all. I think about the people in this church whose home is facing foreclosure and they are facing eviction. I think about the elderly lady who lives up in Moorsesville who has basically not left her house except to go to medical appointments since March 1st, and she is all alone. And to some extent I am afraid she feels she is forgotten.

I think about the people who have had family members in this church who have passed away and they didn't get the closure that a funeral provides. I think about the people who own businesses who do not know whether they are going to survive this. I think about several ladies in our church who are widowed and on their own. In some cases they are raising kids and the pressure that is on them to be provider, parent, mother and father. I could go on and on and on and that is why this morning we are talking about spiritual warfare as it relates to suffering. And that is because in human existence

FINDING SENSE IN SUFFERING

Power Struggle Series - Part 7

Dan Burrell

it is not a question of whether or not you will suffer, it is a matter of when you are going to suffer.

There are people in California this morning who have lost everything because of wildfires. There are people in California this morning who upon going to church may be arrested, or may see their pastor arrested in front of them for simply going to church. There are people today who are outside of nursing homes waving through the windows at their elderly parents wondering if they will ever be able to hug them even one more time before they die. There are people today who will have to make the decision about whether to plug in or unplug a family member who is suffering in their last days of their life.

We know that suffering is a consequence of living, it is a consequence of aging, and it is a consequence of war. And as such the greatest war in the universe is that war between Satan and God which leaves suffering in its path. It is absolutely a part of spiritual warfare which is why we are addressing it this morning. Suffering is the consequence of sin. Were there no sin there would be no suffering, but because there is sin, there is suffering.

The blame for suffering does not lie at the feet of God; it lies at the feet of Satan. There are many who would say, *'Well, if God is all powerful and He is all knowing why does He not end suffering?'* And that is not the question, instead it is, *'When will He end suffering?'* And that is because when He does end suffering it also ends this window of grace that we live in whereupon we can obtain redemption. And when that window is closed there is no further remedy.

So God in His grace allows suffering to continue that we might be drawn to Him. And the reason suffering is here is not because that was God's will, but it is because it is Satan's consequence. Everything that Satan intends for evil, however, can and will be used by God for our good and for His ultimate glory. And as such we have to realize that God then uses suffering for His purpose even in the midst of spiritual warfare.

We see this throughout Scripture from the promise suffering of Jesus found in Genesis Chapter 3, to the suffering of the nation of Israel, to the suffering of the prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah and Hosea, to the suffering of innocents, to the suffering of Job. The collateral damage of suffering is etched in every book of our recorded Scripture. And we read and we hear the lamentations. Our breath is taken by the scope of the tragedies. We hear the stories that outrage us about martyrdom. We reel even personally under the threat and reality that suffering may come our way. And ultimately while you and I will at some point experience some level of suffering, make no mistake in the midst of this, it can be for our good and for God's glory.

Now there are many reasons for suffering. It is the consequence of sin. By the way if we think we can sin and never have ramifications on that, then we are just foolish

FINDING SENSE IN SUFFERING

Power Struggle Series - Part 7

Dan Burrell

because it is promised by God. *“The wages of sin is death,”* and death certainly is suffering. And everything this side of death that is suffering has its roots in sin. When it is our own sin we might assume that it is deserved. But more problematic in how we process suffering is we know that when others sin sometimes those who are without blame also suffer as a result. And that offends our sense of justice. And for some it causes them to question whether or not God really cares and really does love us. We know that suffering comes to generations, it comes to nations, it comes to communities, it comes to families and yes, it comes to individuals.

It can be emotional, it can be physical, it can be relational, it can be spiritual, it can be temporary, it can be permanent, it can be chronic, it can even be fatal. But it is a part of our human existence. Job is perhaps the ultimate example of suffering and unjust suffering at that. And he said this: *“For affliction does not come from the dust, nor does trouble sprout from the ground, but man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.”* It is just a rule of the universe. We are born, we are suffering, just like we look at a fire and the sparks go up.

So let’s look at II Corinthians Chapter 12 this morning. Let me give you a little bit of context about the passage we are going to read and then we are going to pull some principles from it. Paul is writing the second letter to the church that he founded in the City of Corinth. And frankly this church was a mess. It was being influenced by Judaizers, and it was also being influenced by people who were teaching a false doctrine. There was disorderly conduct in the church. They were making a mess of the ordinances. They were celebrating sin.

They were twisting the gospel and more and more Paul was trying to address these issues. And even in the midst of him trying to address these issues, he had people saying, *‘Oh look at Paul. How dare he preach to us. Think of all the things he used to do. And now he comes back here and he is bragging to us. He is boasting like he has authority over us.’* They weren’t actually receiving his message in the spirit in which he was trying to offer it as the founder of that church.

So in Chapter 11 Paul uses a bunch of hyperbole and self-deprecation kind of to make his case. He is basically saying for those who thought he was a loser, or that he was foolish, or a braggart, he would give them whatever evidence they needed for all of that, and he would just say he was guilty. But then he told them not to let the fact that he was a broken vessel, a messed up man, don’t let the fact that he might possibly be the worst messenger that could deliver what he was about to say keep them from the truth he was about to tell them.

And this is an important principle because I don’t know about you but I am sick of people who are spiritual leaders who preach the message and then later you find out their walk is inconsistent with their message. Paul reminded us over and over again that

FINDING SENSE IN SUFFERING
Power Struggle Series - Part 7
Dan Burrell

we are earthen vessels, and earthen vessels get cracks in them. So the bottom line is this - all of us are just a bunch of cracked pots. (*Laughter.*) We are just a mess.

But that does not in any way change the value of the message we carry because when you are dying of thirst and you get the drink of water that will keep death away it doesn't matter if it is from a cracked pot or a crystal goblet, as long as you get the water. And I am telling you right now that if you are hearing a man present the gospel you may be getting it from a Solo cup, a Tupperware tumbler, or the leftover Styrofoam cup from Cookout, that is what you are getting it from. We are not crystal goblets, we are cracked pots. But the message will save your life and it will save your soul.

And Paul was emphasizing that to this church. And then he kind of tells them what he has been through unless they think he takes this casually. Unless they think he is doing it for some kind of personal gain. In Chapter 11 he tells them, *'By the way I just want you to know this. If you want to call it bragging, call it bragging. But I have been beaten five times with 39 lashes, I have been beaten three other times with rods. I have been stoned once, shipwrecked three times, and actually spent twenty-four hours in the sea wondering whether I was going to be rescued. I have traveled dangerous roads, I have crossed dangerous rivers, I have faced dangerous robbers, I have experienced hatred from my fellow Jews, and experienced hatred from the Gentiles.'*

'I have faced danger in every city that I have spent the night, danger in the countryside, danger at sea, danger from phonies. I have worked hard, slept little, hungered, thirsted, and was cold. I even escaped a city in the middle of the night from the governor who was trying to kill me by having someone drop me over the wall of the city in a basket. And in the midst of all of that, I still care about you. I still care about the church at Corinth. I still care about the gospel. In the midst of everything I have been through, I don't know how to tell you any more clearly, with any more evidence than my testimony of what my life has been. Jesus matters. The gospel is real. Truth is your foundation. And in the midst of all you have seen me go through, in the midst of what you are going through, put your feet where it belongs and that is in the gospel.'

He told them that he was a mess, he was worn out, burned out, weak, and some would think he was pretty stupid, but he would own it. By the way, all of this happened before he was imprisoned, put on trial, and executed. So things didn't really get better for Paul after this. Right? The worst was yet to come.

So now we are in Chapter 12. And that was the context of what he said in Chapter 11 that he is building on in Chapter 12. So listen as I read beginning in verse 1. ***"I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man,"*** By the way this is a literary device he is saying, like 'I'm asking for a friend. Have you ever asked an awkward question and said, 'But I'm not asking for me, I am asking for a friend?' This is what Paul is doing here. So when he says, 'I know a man,' Paul is talking about himself.

FINDING SENSE IN SUFFERING
Power Struggle Series - Part 7
Dan Burrell

“I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven -- whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into paradise -- whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows -- and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses -- though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth; but I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me.”

“So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

I don't know what you are going through right now, but I guarantee you that if I asked everybody to take out a piece of paper and a pencil, and to write down something that has happened in your life that has been difficult, that every person in this room would write something down. Maybe you are thinking, ‘*Yeah, but there are kids here.*’ And some of our kids go through a lot at school. Some of them are seriously bullied. Some of them go through a hard time at home. Some of them are struggling with things that mom and dad don't even know about, so they are going through it privately because they don't want to share it yet.

Maybe you think it wouldn't be true of everyone, because some people are rich and live on the lake, or some people have a big business, or some people have a great education, or some people were born with a silver spoon in their mouth, but oh no, no, no, that does not exempt anyone from knowing suffering.

So what do we do? Why does God allow suffering? How can God use it? No matter what situation you are in right now, whether you are praying for a baby that hasn't come yet, whether you are facing a year of recovery from chemo, or something serious health wise, whether you don't know if you will even have a job next month, whether or not your marriage is on the rocks, whether or not there is a secret addiction in your life that is absolutely tearing you apart that no one knows about, whether or not you are so depressed that you can barely crawl out of bed every morning, whatever it is that has its teeth in you, I want you to hear hope in this war that you are engaged in and in which suffering is a part, because God can use your suffering for your good and His glory.

Here is the first thing that Paul teaches us. God uses suffering to teach us humility. Look in verse 7 again where it says: *“So to keep me from becoming*

FINDING SENSE IN SUFFERING
Power Struggle Series - Part 7
Dan Burrell

conceited.” Now what God repeats in Scripture He does so for emphasis. He wants us to pay attention to it. And in verse 7 that shows up twice. The sentence starts with it and the sentence ends with it: *“to keep me from becoming conceited.”* Now by the way, I grade hundreds of papers every month. I am a grammar teacher by background and that drove me nuts when I saw this in this verse. *‘Dude, you already said it once and you don’t need to say it twice, particularly not in the same sentence.’*

But why God had this in here for us was to make a point that He doesn’t want us to miss. Suffering creates humility, and all of us need humility, because the thing that will blind us most from the influence of God in our lives is the opposite of humility and that is pride. And when we have pride we don’t look for God, we don’t listen to God, we don’t even want God because we think we have everything we need.

And it is not until the humility that comes with knowing want, knowing need, knowing desperation, knowing tragedy, knowing suffering, it is not until that moment arrives that we cry out to someone greater than we are for help. And it is at that moment we can see the face of God and we can hear the voice of God. In the midst of our national suffering can you imagine what would happen if the people of this country would break and say, *‘God, how did we get in this mess? And what do we need to do to get out of it?’* But national repentance won’t occur any faster than individual repentance. Until we get to a point where we are desperately crying out for God in our own lives, we are foolish to expect it to get better across the 50 states. We just sang, *‘Just Give Me Jesus,’* and just give me Jesus is what we need. But if we don’t think we have any need, we won’t ask for His help.

The second thing Paul teaches us is that God uses suffering to position us closer to Him. Look with me if you would at verse 8 where he says, *“Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this.”* Paul had this thorn and we don’t know what it was. There were all kinds of speculations about it, and every time I preach this passage I go back and read what all the theories were. Some people thought it was his eyesight because of the Damascus Road experience and he talked about writing in large letters. And there were different reasons why people thought it might have been his eyes.

I read an interesting thing this week that some people thought Paul was possibly married and that he either had a non-believer or non-supporting spouse that was his thorn in the flesh. I will make no further comment about that analogy, I will just simply say that is a theory that someone gave. *(Laughter.)* There have been others who have thought it was something like epilepsy, while some thought it may have been an addiction of some kind. We just don’t know. We do know this, that it was bad enough that Paul begged God for relief. He did it intensely at least three times. *‘God, please spare me this thorn.’*

We will pray the hardest and we will pray the most earnestly whenever we are in the midst of suffering. We have all done it. And I am often convicted when this happens

FINDING SENSE IN SUFFERING

Power Struggle Series - Part 7

Dan Burrell

when I am in the middle of something and I feel like I am in over my head drowning, I have often been struck with the thought that here is another example of when I pray for help it is the last resort and not the first resort. And it took this to get me on my knees and humbled before God. And I think, *'How stupid are you, Dan, you are a pastor. How stupid are you? You know the Bible and you preach this stuff all the time.'*

And yet as soon as the pressure of the suffering has been relieved I will go right back to my stupidity until I find myself on my knees again in desperation. I need my thorn, I need my suffering, because apart from this I am arrogant and pride filled, selfish and self-sufficient. And every once in a while God has to come along and take me down, get me on my knees and say, *'Hey, remember me.'* Suffering is going to happen. How are you going to respond when it does? Will it position you closer to Him?

The third thing we see is in verse 9 where it says: ***"But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient."*** And suffering reminds us that we all need grace. How many times have you known someone who seemed to live the charmed life develop a critical spirit? The person who has never known bad health talks like, *'Well, they wouldn't be in that kind of situation if.....'* and then they give all their advice. If they, *'just ate healthier, if they had just exercised more....'* Or the person who has never had a problem in their home say, *'Well, you know if they had just done this,'* to the person who is going through a divorce or whatever.

Then something changes in their world. Someone gets sick, someone gets upset, something happens, and all of a sudden they are like, *'How did I get here?'* And then they want grace. They want grace. And they need grace. And suffering draws us to the realization of the power of grace in our lives. Sometimes it takes that dramatic wake-up call. *'I am driving down the street and somebody passes me and I say I hope there is a cop that will give them a ticket.'* And then I am speeding and I see the blue lights and I am like, *'Please give me grace.'* (Laughter.) And every once in a while God pulls us over with the blue lights on and reminds us that grace is sweet.

Look again in verse 9 where it says: ***"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."*** Then look in verse 10: ***"For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong."*** That part of verse 9 says the power of Christ may rest upon us. God uses suffering to reveal His power. Sometimes His power is by resolving the issue that causes the suffering, but more often His power is revealed by giving you the strength to live victoriously in spite of the suffering.

God is not a cosmic vending machine where you get to put in three prayers and get out the answer of your choice. But what God does do is He does not allow your suffering to go without benefit. And one of the things I always pray for when I am going through something is this, *'God teach me what I need to know in the midst of this trial.'* And I don't always say this out loud, but I always think it, because I don't want to go

FINDING SENSE IN SUFFERING

Power Struggle Series - Part 7

Dan Burrell

through this again. So let me learn the lesson now. And if I have to go through this let there be something good that comes from it. Let there be something positive that makes this a little bit worth it.

And there have been some things that have happened in my life that quite frankly in my fleshly carnal way I can't think of anything that would have made it be completely worth it, but I can think of things that has happened out of the circumstances that took away the meaninglessness of my suffering. I have ministered to couples who have lost babies from a position that has grown out of my own personal experiences and suffering. So that the tears that I weep with them come from a different place than if my wife and I had never experienced this ourselves.

When someone has suicide come into their life and they are confused and they are broken and they are hurting and they are angry, because of things that have happened to me I can walk up and put my arm around them and journey with them in a way that I could not were it not for my own journey. And whatever God has allowed to take place in your life as a result of the sinful world in which we live there will come a day when you can put your arm around someone and journey with them and point them to truth and point them to Jesus because you too have walked this way. And you have walked through it victoriously. And in that there will be meaning and significance because it is His power that enables that.

The last thing is this - God will use suffering to give you strength. ***“For when I am weak, then I am strong.”*** You never know the power of your strength until you know the depth of your weakness. And in order to know what you are really made of, to know if you really believe this stuff is really true, to find out whether or not Satan cannot get you, defeat you, beat you down, you are going to have to go through the suffering. And then when you emerge from that unscathed, bruised but not broken, in pain but not defeated you can look into the face of Satan and say, *‘You gave it your best shot, but I still believe.’* And in that we get strength we never knew we had before.

So what do I do when I am suffering? Very quickly, number one - run to Jesus not from Him. Run to Jesus and not from Him. Why is it that some people when they start going through stuff the first thing they do is they head in the opposite direction like Mr. Jonah? He was supposed to go to Nineveh and instead he got a ticket to Tarshish. Don't do that, run to Jesus. By the way if you see someone running the wrong direction do you know what your response ought to be? Chase them down. You would do that if it was your kid, so do it if it is your brother or your sister, because that is who they are in Christ. Don't let people run away, chase them down, and bring them back with your arm around their shoulder step by step.

Number two - receive the lessons from the pain. I don't like some of the things I have had to go through to find out whether or not I have medical issues or not. I am at that age where when I go to the doctor it is like, *‘Okay, what is it this time - is it a*

FINDING SENSE IN SUFFERING

Power Struggle Series - Part 7

Dan Burrell

colonoscopy, or the stress test?’ Quite frankly, if they give you a sedative like they do with the colonoscopy for the stress test I would go for the stress test. (*Laughter.*) I like a good nap. I don’t like those things, but I need to learn from them. At the end of the test I get to find out if I need to do this, change that, stop that, try this, or take this. I find out the information from the bad experience. And you will become wiser, and you will become stronger, and you will become deeper because you go through the test and you learn the lesson.

Number three - remind yourself constantly a foundational truth. One of the ways Satan wars against us is when we are going through our test Satan wants us to feel abandoned by God. And I wish I had time to take us through all of this, but I don’t so this is your homework assignment, or your small group assignment. Go through Scripture and look at examples of people going through suffering, and look at how many times Satan would either feed them lies, or they would forget truth.

Remember Elijah, I talked about him two weeks ago. ‘*I, only I, am left.*’ No, he wasn’t, there were thousands who hadn’t bowed their knee to Baal. But Elijah had forgotten a foundational truth. What is the New Testament verse that we can use? “***I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.***” Nothing can separate you from the love of God. If you don’t know the Word of God you are not going to be able to fight the arguments of Satan. So fill your mind, and your heart with the truth of the Word of God so that when you are going through suffering it can come back to you, restore you and give you comfort.

Number four - record what you learn. Something that struck me this week when I was reading Chapter 11 was apparently Paul was a list maker. He knew exactly how many times he had been beaten, and exactly how many stripes he had received. He knew exactly how many times he had been shipwrecked and how long he was in the sea. He knew exactly where he was when he had to go across the rivers, and when he was let down from the wall. He was journaling. He loved writing letters. And you and I will look back on a lifetime of experiences and if we have journaled them, remembered them and recorded them in our hearts as well as in a more tangible way, not only will we benefit from those, but others will benefit as well.

I wish I was better at journaling. My wife is excellent at it. I know when she is going through something because I will see her writing in her journal. She has always practiced this and it is a wonderful thing. It is how she processes and it is also how she remembers. If you were ever to read her journals you will see her arguing with God and the Scripture that God brings to her mind. And for some of us that is a great way to process suffering.

The last thing is this - remember that suffering is temporary. It is temporary. It will not last forever. I started doing this years ago, and I don’t like doing it now, because the time span gets shorter and shorter. But when I was younger I would say, ‘*Well, I am*

FINDING SENSE IN SUFFERING
Power Struggle Series - Part 7
Dan Burrell

twenty-five so in seventy-five years I won't have to worry about this anymore.' And then I got to be thirty and it would be seventy years, and then at thirty-five it would be sixty-five years. Maybe you wonder how many years I am saying now. Well, I am not going to tell you, but it isn't a long time. It won't be a long time until all of these issues are not going to be a problem for me, because I know they are temporary. We will look back a million years from now on this little time that we had on this planet and it will seem but a blip at that time. But as we live it in the middle these are the most important seconds of our life because during this time the rest of our eternity hinges. So let's get it right. Paul said that Satan means suffering for evil, but God will use it for good.

My question for you this morning is in the spiritual warfare of suffering are you embracing your thorn, are you looking to Him, are you winning the battle? Our heads are bowed and our eyes are closed as we close out this time. I am going to guess that whether you are watching right now on the Internet, or you are in this room right here that someone somewhere is saying, *'How did he know? How did he know what happened to me week? How did he know what is going on in my life?'*

And I will tell you that I didn't know, but God did. Some of you are in the midst of the battle of your life right now. It is so deep and so horrific that you don't even want to talk about it, and you are carrying it by yourself. May I urge you this morning to double down on faith, double down on truth, double down on perseverance, double down in opposition to Satan. Straighten your back, throw back your shoulders, lift your chin and look into the face of despair and suffering to Satan and say, *'Not today. Not today.'*

"Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world." I will not quit, so that God may be glorified. In the midst of my thorn, in the midst of my pain, in the midst of my tears, in the midst of my sorrows, Lord, if nothing good happens to me every again, may the last words that are said over me be: *'He was faithful to the end.'* Satan wants to use suffering to destroy you; God wants to use Satan to build you up. Satan wants to use suffering to glorify himself; God will use suffering to glorify Himself above all else. And in our weakness, and in our pain, and in our sorrow God has made a way of escape that gives meaning and purpose and relief, and most importantly life everlasting.

If you don't know Christ as your Savior in a moment we are going to stand and sing a couple of songs. And then we are going to be dismissed. As we leave there will be a table out front that you can go to and there will be someone standing there if you want to pray with someone. Maybe you are going through something and you want to pray with someone. We are going to be praying after the second service for some people over in the prayer room.

If you ever want the elders to come and pray around you, please call our office, that is what we are here for. If you want the prayer team to pray with you, they will be here. You can also come over here to your left under the big screen and someone will be glad to pray with you there as well.

FINDING SENSE IN SUFFERING
Power Struggle Series - Part 7
Dan Burrell

Whatever you do, if you are carrying something, or if you have questions, don't leave here and think that no one cares because we do. And my urging to you is to go and ask questions on how to have a relationship with Christ, or how do to get victory over pain and difficulties, or how to have hope in the midst of what you are going through.

We have a counselor here on our team and you can call the church office and we will get you in connection with him if you need someone to talk to about your spiritual journey, and going through the pain and suffering of your past or your present. But do not walk alone, reach out to God and He will be glorified.

We are going to sing, and if you need to pray come up here. We are here for you. And above all grab hold of truth and never let it go. Let's stand together and pray.

Father, we love you and we love your Word. Thank you for giving us hope in the midst of suffering. Thank you for giving us peace in the midst of the storm. Thank you for giving us direction whenever the clouds encompass us and make it seem like we are lost without hope. Father, I pray in this ongoing power struggle between Satan and you, and Satan and us that we would emerge stronger and more victorious with real joy, walking into victory that was claimed at Calvary, and that we possess today who follow you. For it is in Christ's name I pray. Amen.

The preceding transcript was completed using raw audio recordings. As much as possible, it includes the actual words of the message with minor grammatical changes and editorial clarifications to provide context. Hebrew and Greek words are spelled using Google Translator and the actual spelling may be different in some cases.