

**NOW WHAT? April 8, 2018** “Getting through hopelessness, loss, & heartache”

**John 16:33** I’ve told you all this so that you may have peace in Me. **Here on earth you’ll have many trials & sorrows.** But take heart, because I’ve overcome the world.”

**2 Corinthians 4:18** **We don’t look at the troubles we can see now;** but, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.

**James 1:2** ...**when troubles of any kind come your way,** consider it an opportunity for great joy.<sup>3</sup> For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. <sup>4</sup> So **let it grow,** for when your endurance is fully developed, you’ll be perfect & complete, needing nothing. <sup>5</sup> If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, & He’ll give it to you. He won’t rebuke you for asking. <sup>6</sup> But when you ask Him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Don’t waver, a person w/ divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that’s blown & tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> Such people shouldn’t expect to receive anything from the Lord. <sup>8</sup> Their loyalty’s divided between God & the world, & they’re unstable in everything they do.

**\*\*A step to getting through hopelessness, loss, & heartache is to know, speak, & live the Word of God.**

**Proverbs 3:24** You can go to bed without fear; you’ll lie down & sleep soundly.<sup>25</sup> You need not be afraid of sudden disaster or the destruction that comes upon the wicked, <sup>26</sup> for the Lord is your security...

**Psalms 91:1** Those who live in the shelter of the Most High will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. <sup>2</sup> This I declare about the Lord: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; He’s my God, & I trust Him. <sup>3</sup> He’ll rescue you from every trap & protect you from deadly disease. <sup>4</sup> He’ll

cover you w/ His feathers. He'll shelter you w/ His wings. His faithful promises are your armor & protection. Don't be afraid of the terrors of the night, nor the arrow that flies in the day. 6 Don't dread the disease that stalks in darkness, nor the disaster that strikes at midday. 7 Though a thousand fall at your side & ten thousand are dying around you, these evils will not touch you. 8 Just open your eyes & see how the wicked are punished. 9 If you make the Lord your refuge, if you make the Most High your shelter, 10 no evil will conquer you; no plague will come near your home. 11 For He'll order His angels to protect you wherever you go. 12 They'll hold you up w/ their hands so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone. 13 You'll trample upon lions & cobras; you'll crush fierce lions & serpents under your feet! 14 The Lord says, "I'll rescue those who love Me. I'll protect those who trust in My name. 15 When they call on Me, I will answer; I'll be w/ them in trouble. I'll rescue & honor them. 16 I'll reward them w/ a long life & give them My salvation."

**Psalm 23:1** The Lord's my shepherd; I have all that I need. 2 He lets me rest in green meadows; He leads me beside peaceful streams. 3 He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to His name 4 Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I won't be afraid, for You are close beside me. Your rod & Your staff protect & comfort me. 5 You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You honor me by anointing my head w/ oil. My cup overflows w/ blessings. 6 Surely Your goodness & unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, & I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

**Psalm 145:13b** The Lord always keeps His promises; He's gracious in all He does. 14 The Lord helps the fallen & lifts those bent beneath their loads. 15 The eyes of all look to You in hope; You give them their food as they need it. 16 When you open your hand, You satisfy the hunger & thirst of every living thing. The Lord is righteous in everything He does; He's filled w/ kindness. 18 The Lord's close to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth. 19 He grants the desires of those who fear

Him; He hears their cries for help & rescues them. 20 The Lord protects all those who love Him, but He destroys the wicked.

*Your greatest testimonies will come from your greatest tests.*

*Failure is not final. Failure is not the end. Failure can be the “hinge on the doors” of God’s grace, & His grace swings wide open for you.*

**Jeremiah 17:7** But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him.

*I’m not nervous, God’s got a purpose. I’m not nervous, God’s got a plan.*

*Your ability to handle adversity will decide how far you go in life. When you know God’s plans for overcoming, the obstacles don’t seem too big.*

**\*\*Another step to getting through hopelessness, loss, & heartache is to have the right identity.**

*\*\*Who or what defines your identity? Your sense of self; who you are; how you see yourself & your life; your self-image; & your self-worth.*

*\*\*It may not have anything to do w/ truth or reality. But it’s what we see, feel, think, & are told.*

**2 Corinthians 5:16** We’ve stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know Him now! 17 This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! 18 And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to Himself through Christ...

*“We must find our identity in Jesus to get through the hopelessness!”*

Parents, family, religion, school, media, & environment, all teach us how to think about ourselves. \*\*\*Some of us view ourselves through:

*Race/family/nationality; money; education/career; Past successes or failures; college sports; divorce; abuse; bankruptcy; Clubs: groups; dog clubs; divorce groups; Sports teams; Images: tattoos; piercings; styles*

\*\*\*Many people build their identity w/ their problems:

**My** temper; **my** diabetes; **my** debts; **my** divorce; **my** addiction

\*\*\*Many people-the negatives of life become their whole identity:

**My** family has always been poor; **I** have a history of addiction/disease/anger, etc. in my family – It's their identity.

When your problems, past failures, & weaknesses become part of your identity, you'll never be free from them.

\*Your subconscious believes you & you **need** those things to be who you are. \*They become habits that you learn to live with, never overcoming.

Come back next week and discover how to have the right identity in God as you look to Him and trust in Him!