

Worship

The Battle Belongs - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=johgSkNj3-A>

Hope's Anthem - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_sfxjqXdPg

Revelation 12:10-11

¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say:

'Now have come the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God,
and the authority of his Messiah.

For the accuser of our brothers and sisters,
who accuses them before our God day and night,
has been hurled down.

¹¹ They triumphed over him
by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony;
they did not love their lives so much
as to shrink from death.

An incredible scripture – The accuser has been HURLED DOWN! We triumph over Him by our faith in Jesus blood, by the word of our testimony and by laying down our lives daily in our pursuit of Him!

In particular this morning I'd like to think about the middle bit – the word of our testimony! We all love a good testimony – have a little think about the last time you heard about something amazing God had done in someone's life ... How did it make you feel? Good right – full of faith, excitement, joy ...!? Our testimonies are not only a powerful and necessary faith booster but a key part in how we triumph over the accuser!

As human beings it is our natural pathway to forget, to move from a place of faith and find ourselves in another (less faith filled place) due to circumstances, emotions, lifestyles etc – to forget how we so strongly once believed His promises and find ourselves at times in a troubled place of doubt, regret and maybe even hopelessness. I have heard these ups and down's in life described as Mountain Top vs Valley experiences – at times feeling full of faith and the fruits of the Spirit and at other times feeling so alone and desperate!

It is good to know that the man King David, a man after God's own heart, had these exact same feelings and emotions when we read the psalms – some of pure joy, worship and rejoicing and others of desperation and crying out for help. For Joseph, his dreams led him to a place of such

excitement and faith he couldn't shut up about it only to find himself locked away in prison for 2 years. For Elijah, God answered with fire on Mount Carmel and Baal was absolutely hurled down, only for Elijah to be in such despair he wished he was dead moments later ... we could go on and on and on about the ups and downs of our heroes of faith but the point is – THEY HAD UPS AND THEY HAD DOWNS!

When you're down – give yourself a break! The accuser is good enough at his own job without needing any help from you to bring yourself down further ...

BUT

We triumph over him by: the blood of the Lamb and by the word of our testimony!! To be down and desperate, to feel weak and alone does not mean we have lost our faith – but rather that we have an opportunity to completely trust in the God of faithful promises!

James 1:2-4

² Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,³ whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Hebrews 10:23

²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

It's easy for someone on the outside of our troubles to give advice, to try and encourage or build us up in the word etc (like the three friends of Job when he was having a rather tough time) – but sometimes it just doesn't help – especially if those trying to help us are operating from their own human understanding – Friends (especially Christian friends) are amazing and so important in our Christian walk but they can never become a substitute for our own personal relationship with God through Jesus!

The word of our testimony is so often for others but I believe that first and foremost, our testimonies are for us! For *OUR* faith – they are our own personal experiences and memories of our walk with Jesus.

I searched the bible to see just how many times God reminds his people to “Remember the Lord who brought you up out of Egypt” and there are almost 100 scriptures – The Israelites just kept forgetting their testimony and slipped back again and again into doubt, fear, worry and sin ... The incredible miracles God did in freeing them from slavery were not supposed to be forgotten but sang about, talked about, remembered always to keep their faith alive – like the fire on the alter which should never go out (Leviticus 6:12).

I really like what God said to Joshua when they crossed the Jordan – to place 12 stones, one for each tribe, as a sign and a memorial to the people of Israel for ever – as a testimony to their children and their children's children of the power and favour of God!

My favourite Psalm is Psalm 84 and in it it says “As they *PASS THROUGH* the valley of weeping

they make it a place of springs and the autumn rains also cover it with pools”

We don't stay in the valley, we don't set up camp in the difficult times – as we stir our faith and remember the Lord who has done miracles for us personally, and continue to believe, to worship, to trust Him we **PASS THROUGH** making it a place of springs along the way – springs of testimonies of miracles which we return to to drink from, and yes – lead others to drink from as well ... The cherry on the cake is that “the autumn rains also cover it with pools” ... in other words, our valley of weeping is transformed through our testimonies of God's goodness but also covered with the extravagant blessing from God. When God brought the Israelites out of Egypt they didn't just receive their freedom but left with extravagant wealth, possessions, livestock etc ... God has more for us than we can possibly imagine! Let faith arise – Let hope arise!

HOMEWORK:

With a close friend, spouse or family member: Tell the stories of as many amazing things that you can remember that God has done in and around your life!

*They triumphed over him
by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony;
they did not love their lives so much
as to shrink from death.*

Revelation 7:12

'Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honour and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!'

Have a blessed week of testimonies everyone 😊

(P.S. ... Feel free to share any testimonies on our WhatsApp group too)

Ending Song:

To God be the Glory - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TD_9P9DB4pw