



BAND OF BROTHERS

COURAGE • HUMILITY • UNITY

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Victory is certain

"And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn, with many brothers and sisters. And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And he gave them right standing with himself, and he promised them his glory." (Rom. 8:28-30)

"I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

"God turned into good what was meant for evil." (Gen. 50:20)

"He will remove all of their sorrows, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. For the old world and its evils are gone forever." (Rev. 21:4)

"For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ." (Heb. 3:14)

"For every child of God defeats this evil world by trusting Christ to give the victory. And the ones who win this battle against the world are the ones who believe that Jesus is the Son of God." (1 John 5:4-5)

"For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." (Jer. 29:11)

"The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." (Rom. 16:20)

Jesus says, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matt. 28:20)

"I will never fail you. I will never forsake you. That is why we can say with confidence; The Lord is my helper, so I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?" (Heb. 13:5-6)

The Lord says, "I will rescue those who love me. I will protect those who trust in my name. When they call on me, I will answer; I will be with them in trouble. I will rescue them and honor them. I will rescue them with a long life and give them my salvation." (Psalm 91:14-16)

"And the Saints overcame the accuser because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of their testimony. And they were not afraid to die." (Rev. 12:11)

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good!" (Psalm 106:1)

"**Why all the pain?**" we cry out to our King in the midst of the battle. "Why is life so hard?" Answer: *He is with you now! And the Rescuer will come!* "But what about my sinful addictions, my broken relationships, my empty bank account, my physical handicap, my sickness, my family member who is hurting, my stress and anxiety ...?" *He is with you now! And the Rescuer will come!* "But what about Satan, whose mission is to steal, kill, and destroy?" (John 10:10) *He is with you now! And the Rescuer will come!*

Why will the rescuer come? Because, Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep." (John 10:11) "I will give them eternal life, and they will never perish." (John 10:28-29) The most important tenant of our Christian faith is to believe that **God is good**. However, as is stated in the book *Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis, "Aslan is not safe, but He is good." Everything hinges on this truth - everything! Trusting that God is good in the midst of the chaos, the suffering, and the battles is the key to victory in this War. Often times we all will question His goodness - for that is Satan's greatest lie! And Satan has vast circumstantial evidence from the trials and tribulations of life to convince us otherwise. Yet our King has asked us to believe in His goodness, to trust Him, and to totally surrender to Him. If we do, "overwhelming victory is ours through Christ." (Rom. 8:37)

Sometimes the cost of surrender seems too high and we should cry out for His mercy. As prayed by Jeremiah, "I know, Lord, that a person's life is not his own. No one is able to plan his own course. So correct me, Lord, *but please be gentle.*" (Jer. 10:23-25 NLT) At times we will want to give up when life feels anything but "gentle." But as we mature as warriors and lovers of Christ, we come to realize there is no "Plan B" - no other choice but to follow Christ gives us the internal peace for which we long. The core challenge then is to patiently trust our King's good plan in the midst of suffering: "We give great honor to those who endure suffering. Job is an example of a man who endured patiently. From his experience we see how the Lord's plan finally ended in **good**, for he is full of tenderness and mercy." (James 5:11 NLT) "Yes and the *Lord will deliver me* from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly Kingdom." ((2 Tim. 4:18) And God promises to be *with us* in the midst of our suffering, to hold us in His mighty arms - for "I am with you always." (Matt. 28:20) "Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or are hungry or cold or in danger or threatened with death? ... No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us." (Rom. 8: 35, 37)

The Story of Redemption. God's **good plan** for us is to transform us to "become like his Son, the firstborn with many brothers," and this process often is painful - it's a battle for our hearts, minds, and souls! As we surrender to Him, our God is sanctifying us, transforming us to become a true brother of Christ, so that God's reason for creating us will be fulfilled and He can bestow his glory upon us. And all the hardships in life that may have been meant for evil by Satan will be turned to good by our rescuer, our deliverer, our lover, and our redeemer!

Living in Freedom. We now must claim the victories that already have been won: Because of what Christ did on the cross, *any condemnation about who we are or about sins that we have committed is a lie from the pit of hell.* (Rom. 8:1) The price for freedom has been paid in full! So now we have been called to live in freedom - Not freedom to satisfy our old sinful nature, but freedom to serve one another in love. (Gal. 5:13) That is our mission - to love God and others well! Love always wins!

This life is a temporary assignment. "For this world is not our home; we are looking forward to our city in heaven, which is yet to come." (Heb. 13:14) Of course we look forward to heaven - our true home - where there will be no more pain, or suffering, or loneliness. Here on earth we are strangers in a foreign land, but the ending to this larger story has been written: "He will remove all of their sorrows, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. For the old world and its evils are gone forever." (Rev. 21:4) We are *not yet* home, but enduring the pain today and being patient for His deliverance is worth it: "For our present troubles are quite small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurably great glory that will last forever." (2 Cor. 4:17)

We don't want to miss out on a mission, life, and legacy that will echo throughout eternity. We want to finish well and be able to say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. And now the prize awaits me..." (2 Tim. 4:7) We do not fear death, because we will finish well and thereby live out the purpose for which we were created and receive the prize that awaits us. Because of our decision to totally surrender to Him, we are confident that "the day of death is better than the day of birth." (Eccl. 7:1) ***We Few, We Happy Few, We Band of Brothers*** have surrendered our lives to Jesus Christ our King and have sworn an allegiance to follow Him - *no matter the cost.* "And so, since God in his mercy has given us this wonderful ministry, we never give up." (2 Cor. 4:1) And we look forward to the great celebration and reunion that awaits us on the other side - where we discover that all of our suffering here on earth was not in vain! As asked by Paul, "You have suffered so much for the Good News. Surely it was not in vain, was it?" (Gal. 3:4) For the Band of Brothers, we will confidently respond, "Our scars were not in vain!" **Join us! ... And let's "unite the clans!"**

So what say you?

"Those were the stories that meant something, even if you were too small to understand why, but I think, Mr. Frodo, I do understand. Folk in those stories had lots of chances of turning back, only they didn't. They kept going, because they were holding onto something."

"What are we holding onto, Sam?"

"That there is some good in this world, Mr. Frodo, and it's worth fighting for."

"It is the secret signature of each soul, the incommunicable and unappeasable want, the thing we desire before we met our wives or made our friends or chose our work, and which we still desire on our deathbeds, when the mind no longer knows wife or friend or work... All your life an unattainable ecstasy has hovered just beyond the grasp of your consciousness. The day is coming when you will wake to find, beyond all hope, that you have attained it." – C.S. Lewis

Today You have called me to a glorious plan;
 To overcome the challenge, to say that I can;
 When I walk through the storm it's just for a season;
 I don't need to know the purpose or reason;
 But just to know that in You I'll overcome;
 For in every purpose and season, I know who I'm from.

Darrell Hausmann, *Poems for the Heart of God*, p. 87

"The day of death is better than the day of birth." (Eccl. 7:1 NIV)

"And they were not afraid to die." (Rev. 12:11)