



Courage to Overcome

Adapted from “Courageous” series by Wayne Murray

It is not a matter of **if** we will have difficult or hard times in our life, but a matter of **when** these things will enter our lives. When we face a crisis, it affects more than just us. God helps us overcome the crisis in our life. However, knowing that God helps us and walks with us in the midst of a crisis does not make going through it any easier.

Consider the following story:

Yesterday, we witnessed yet another national tragedy. A 26-year-old man walked onto a community college campus in Roseburg, Oregon, with several guns and opened fire—killing 10 people and wounding another seven.

Like Charleston earlier this year, according to reports, this shooting brazenly targeted Christians. One of the wounded students told her father that the gunman, Chris Harper Mercer, entered her classroom at Umpqua Community College, shot her professor pointblank and ordered students to stand up and identify whether or not they were Christians. From CNN: “And [students] would stand up and he said, ‘Good, because you’re a Christian, you’re going to see God in just about one second.’ “And then he shot and killed them.”

This event represents pure evil, and it leaves us shocked and brokenhearted. And for many of us who follow Christ, it raises serious questions: “How could God have let this happen?” and “Does God even exist?”

If you think about it, the question, *Why does God allow people to suffer?* is really not a question at all. It’s a protest. It’s an angry declaration that says, “People shouldn’t have to hurt like this!” or, many times, “I shouldn’t have to hurt like this!”

Pain is what people protest. It is pain that people find so problematic. Though we might think we’re blaming God because God has power to stop things, the thing we want Him to stop is the insult of our pain.¹

¹ Sarah Sumner, “Where is God in Tragedy?,” *Relevant Magazine*, October 2, 2015, <https://relevantmagazine.com/current/nation/where-god-tragedy> (accessed September 6, 2017).

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COURAGE

C1: Describe a time in your life when you experienced a difficult or a hard time? What did you do? Where did you get the courage to overcome?

C2: Read and answer the following.

Job 1:1–3 (ESV) There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. He possessed 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 female donkeys, and very many servants, so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east.

- From these verses, list three things you can ascertain about Job.

Job 1:13–19 (ESV) Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and there came a messenger to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "The Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you." While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you."

- From these verses, did the fact that Job feared God and was blameless keep him from experiencing tragedy?

- Why do you think Job experienced tragedy?

C3: What do you think is the key to overcoming tragedy?

STRENGTH

S1: Read and answer the following.

Job 1: 18-19 (ESV)

- From these verses, what tragedy came to Job?
- How many children did he lose?
- How would you deal with this type of pain?

S2: Read and answer the following.

Job 2:7-8 (ESV)

- From these verses, what was Job stricken with?
- Describe a time in your life when you or someone in your family had a sickness that affected the entire family. How did you overcome?

S3: Read and answer the following.

Job 1:13-17 (ESV)

- From these verses, what did Job lose?

- Describe a time in your life when you had to overcome financial hardship. What was the process and the effect?

S4: Describe a time in your life when you had to overcome a mistake you made? How did this affect you and your family? How do you move forward when the scars are there?

ENDURANCE

E1: Read and answer the following.

Job 2:9-10 (ESV)

- From these verses, how did Job respond?
- What can you learn from his response?

E2: When the enemy comes and whispers in your ear to quit, think of three reasons why you should not?

E3: It has been said, "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." Do you agree with this statement? Describe your experience.

E4: Read and answer the following.

Psalms 23:4 (ESV)

Romans 8:38-39 (ESV)

Philippians 4:12-13 (ESV)

Hebrews 13:5 (ESV)

- From these verses, what can you glean about God in the midst of your life?
- How can or have you applied these verses in your life?

E5: Read and answer the following.

Job 42:10- 17 (ESV)

- From these verses, what happens at the end of Job's life?
- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being much and 4 being not very much, if God did not forsake Job, how much comfort and assurance can you take that God will not forsake you? How can you improve your trust in God?