

Trouble and Peace
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“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33 (NIV)

Friends, some of us are dealing with heavy stuff. Life can be difficult, and Jesus comes today with a word that doesn't pull any punches! In John 16:33, He says, “In this world you will have trouble.” That's not a possibility – it's a promise. How frightening is that? That's not the kind of promise you paint on some fancy reclaimed wood and hang outside your front door. It's not some catchy phrase we embroider on a pillow to give to a friend. As troubling as this promise is, it's also a real, honest word from our Savior. Jesus reminds us that trouble is a part of life in this broken world, and following Jesus doesn't mean avoiding it. Rather, it's like we walk straight into trouble – whatever it may be!

Notice that Jesus doesn't define trouble because He knows that it looks different for each of us. For one person, it's cancer. For another, it's unemployment. Still for others, depression or fractured relationships. Maybe trouble is the slow grind of daily anxiety or the gut punch of betrayal. Trouble could be the heartbreak of watching your kids drift from the faith. Jesus doesn't minimize any of it! All of these things are trouble and each of them hurt. He simply says you will have it. Trouble is the common language we all share in a fallen creation.

But here's the twist: Jesus doesn't stop with trouble! As much as we all can relate to the promise of trouble, Jesus also continues with something greater: “But take heart! I have overcome the world.” That promise changes everything! Jesus doesn't just promise trouble; He also promises triumph. Not your triumph or mine, but His. His triumph! “I have overcome the world.” That's past tense. **Already done.** The cross wasn't a temporary fix; the resurrection wasn't symbolic. The cross and the empty tomb actually happened – and they happened **for you!** Jesus actually defeated sin, death, and the devil – **for you!**

Think about what this means: it means that the worst this world can throw at you – Jesus has already beaten it.

Sin? Forgiven.

Death? Conquered.

The devil? Defeated.

Your fears? Known.

Your pain? Redeemed.

The battle we endure feels intense, but the outcome is already decided. Jesus doesn't say you might get through. He promises, “I already have. And you belong to Me.” So when trouble comes – and it will – you don't have to be surprised. You don't have to panic. You don't have to wonder if God abandoned you. You can take heart, NOT because you are strong enough, but because Jesus IS! Not because the storm is small, but because Jesus already walked on the waves and silenced the wind. You can take heart because in everything that we struggle through, we remember that Jesus has overcome the world!

Practically speaking, this means we live in faith, not in fear. We stop measuring God's love by how easy life is. We trust in Jesus' promises more than in our circumstances. We stay in the Word. We receive His gifts in worship. We remind ourselves – and each other – daily: trouble is real, but Jesus is greater.

So take heart: Jesus has overcome the world – for you!