“We Shall Overcome”

I. Supernatural Living
Romans 12:1-2, 14-21; 2 Corinthians 3:18
Progressive Sanctification

II. What would you say to a Christian who says, “I’ve tried that and it didn’t work”?

a. God-Centered Approach to Relevance of Scripture
   Jeremiah 9:23-24
   1. Know God Personally
   2. Conform Yourself to God’s Commands for Living (Romans 12:2)

III. Biblical Approach to Trouble

   a. Recognize God is present in your problems.
   b. Remember God is up to something; He is actively at work.
   c. Believe God is always up to something good.
   d. Discover where and how God is working.
   e. Get involved in what God is doing.
   f. Expect good results from God.

IV. Paul and Trouble in Acts 16:19-34; 28:17-31; Philippians 1:12-30
V. Expect Good Results

a. Your ______________ will be affected.
b. Christ will be ________________.
c. Other believers will be ____________.
d. The Good News will ____________.

VI. Application of Scripture

D_________, C_________, G_________, D_______________

VII. Romans 12:14-21 – Your Personal Notes on the Passage

A. “Bless and Curse”

B. “Rejoice and Mourn”
WE SHALL OVERCOME

Romans 12:14-21
OVERCOMING

Romans 12:14-21
Take note of the context!

Take note of the context!
SUPERNATURAL LIVING

Becoming in practice what we are in position; conforming our outer life to our inner life = Progressive Sanctification

2 Corinthians 3:18

Growth in knowledge of Christ means He is more revealed in your life!
LOVE IS THE CENTER

Romans 12:9

Love for God; Love for Christ; Love for Others is the Reason for “overcoming evil with good.”
OH WE GOT TROUBLE!

Recognize God is in your problem. Remember God is up to something. Believe God is up to something good. Discover where & how God is at work. Get involved in what God is doing. Expect good results from God.
PHILIPPIANS 1:12-30

Paul’s response to being mistreated:
“...envy, strife, selfish ambition...to cause me distress in my imprisonment... Christ is proclaimed and I will rejoice... my earnest expectation and hope is that I will not be put to shame, but with boldness Christ will be exalted.”
PAUL’S VIEW OF TROUBLE

God was in his trouble – Philippians 1:13
“in chains because of Christ”
Providential view of his trouble.
He was right where Christ wanted him to be.
PAUL’S VIEW OF TROUBLE

He recognized that God was up to something – increased troubles meant increased opportunities. His focus was not on what others were up to, but on what God was up to!
EXPECT GOOD RESULTS

*Your attitude will be affected:* “boldness, gladness, eager expectation” (Philp. 1)

*Christ will be exalted.* “My eager expectation is that I will not be put to shame and Christ will be exalted” (1:20).
EXPECT GOOD RESULTS

Other believers will be encouraged: (1:14).
Face trouble with concerns larger than yourself.

The Good News will advance: People will watch you; your response will “give the Gospel a hearing; your concern will be directed away from yourself; no details of Paul’s suffering.
APPLICATION OF SCRIPTURE

1. What should I do? What is my **Duty**?
2. Who should I be? To do right, who do I become?
   - **Character**
3. To what cause should I devote my energy?
   - **Goals**
4. How can I **Discern** truth from error?
Overcomers are winners. If you are a Christian, you are a winner.

Revelation 3:21
Do not be overcome by the wrongs that others do to you. We must recognize that every command and requirement of Christ reflects a genuine possibility. He knows our limitations and strengths and what we can handle.
Overcome Evil

Paul uses military terms because we are not to be on the defensive against evil, but on the offensive: doing good. Romans 12:14-20 is the good we are to be doing to overcome the evil.
Not a broad, generic evil which is in the world, but a specific evil directed toward you; you must endure what is inflicted by some other person.

Context is mainly an unbeliever; perhaps a “frienemy.”
The essence of this evil is **most of all that it is aimed at God**! Satan wants to thwart God’s purpose by tempting Christians to sin, disgracing God’s Name and weakening the Church.
Through no fault of your own, evil is directed against you because you are living a life that contrasts with sin. This is not the same as punishment on a sinning Christian. 
1 Peter 4:15-16
This is not passive, but active. The cross of Christ was not passive, but the most active good that overcame the most horrible evil.

Hebrews 2:14; Colossians 2:15; John 10:18
“GOOD”

The objective is to defeat evil, and retaliating will only spread more evil. Good is the most powerful, aggressive way to defeat evil. Evil is real, but it is no longer to be considered powerful at all by comparison with the power of God. The good is planned: 12:20.
“BLESS AND CURSE”

Why this command first?
*James 3:1-12; Ephesians 4:25-32*

Primary place of communication!

This is not passive; it is active.

How does love talk?

“Pray for those who mistreat you”  *Lk. 6*
First: The Christian “talk” – “Be honest, keep current, attack problems, not people, act, don’t react.”

Before we can walk together, we must learn to talk together!
ROMANS 12:14

The communication response to evil comes first. Useless to try anything else first. All the good intentions and efforts in the world can be undone by one careless word. The Christian must learn how to talk to those who wrong him.
BLESS, DON’T CURSE

Paul makes it clear that we do not by nature find this command to be easy. It is easier to curse than bless a persecutor.

He is calling for radical change.
HOW CAN THIS BE!

A great adjustment to normal way of doing things. Ephesians 4:17

Every command of God brings hope since He never asks us to do anything that we cannot by His power.
ON THE OFFENSIVE

“Blessing” is a positive, active, aggressive response; not a passive one.

Matthew 5:38-48, “turn the other cheek” is not passive, but actively doing good; giving persecutor opportunity to repent; demanding better of him; refusing his sinful behavior by thrusting forth something good; showing concern for him and his sinful condition.
ESSENCE OF GOOD

“That is not passivity. That is an active, aggressive, demanding response that requires something different from the persecutor. Doing good to another involves the most violent sort of attack on him. It is a pointed thrust at his basic stance toward you and ultimately toward God, in whose Name you bless.” Jay Adams
Doing good is showing love. Love is structured by God’s commandments. Love is not formless, jelly-like; love takes a distinct shape in each context; a shape molded by the Word of God; God defines what is good.
“Love, like light, is a powerful force. Love attacks hatred like light attacks darkness. And love is a force that never fails. Nothing can dislodge it or cause it to cease. Love “endures all things, believes all things, hopes all things.” Such a spirit built into the blessing of others is unconquerable and irresistible.”  Jay Adams
Love is not first a feeling. Feelings come later and grow in love. Love is doing whatever God says you must do for another, to please God, whether at first it pleases you or not. You must do so because God commands you; and you don’t wait until you feel like doing so.

Beware the evil of “being true to yourself” or not acting in love because you don’t want to be a “hypocrite.”
REAL, TRUE LOVE

Love begins with obeying God, then loving others as God commands. Love is not ooey, gooey, sentimental things. It is hard to love! Often it hurts to love. Love meant going to the cross through the Garden of Gethsemane.
MATTHEW 26:39; HEBREWS 12:2

Christ did not feel like dying for your sins. But He did. He endured the immediate cross by focusing on the future joy. As we express love to someone who has wronged us, we must focus beyond the immediate.
“Persecute” – various sorts – not “if” but “when” - implied by Paul
Most frequent – verbal/social
Not easy to control the mouth
Love will teach you how to manage your mouth!
“All those who want to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”

The more godly one becomes, the more likely it is that persecution will increase. The more you live like Christ, the more you will suffer like Christ.