

## Lesson One

**A. This lesson is NOT about overcoming sin.**

However, if you are right now overtaken in a sin you need to:

- *Discover what Jesus accomplished on the cross and who you are in Him.*<sup>1</sup>
- *Based on all the Jesus has done to set you free from sin, stop sinning.*

**B. This lesson is NOT about doing what you CAN do.**

We call these situations “overwhelming.”

Many situations we face in life have simple solutions.

You don’t need to forsake God-given logic in order to live a life of faith.

You have the ability to “deal with” many situations in life.<sup>2</sup> So, use all that God has given you to “take care of business”.

**C. So, just what is an “overwhelming” situation?**

Something is overwhelming when it is so confusing and difficult that you feel unable to fix it though you’ve tried again and again.<sup>3</sup> An overwhelming situation is bigger than you are. It is impossible for you. It requires a divine answer.

**D. Common OVERWHELMING Areas**

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Money (also job dissatisfaction):</b> You just can’t seem to get ahead, even though you are working diligently.</li> <li>2. <b>Marriage or lack thereof:</b> Loneliness, feeling trapped, feeling unloved</li> <li>3. <b>Children:</b> Any age</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. <b>Continual sense of worthlessness:</b> You know God loves you. You know you are righteous, but you have a sense that you aren’t.</li> <li>5. <b>Poor health:</b> especially long-term illness, or those thought incurable</li> </ol> |
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<sup>1</sup> Escaping Overwhelming Sin

- *You are not a sinner but rather the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 2:21).*
- *Believe that you are dead to and free from the power of sin (Rom. 6).*
- *Escape from a life controlled by law and run to a life lived by grace through faith (Gal. 2:21, 1 Cor. 15:56-57).*
- *Let grace, not law, teach you to live a godly life (Titus 2:11-13).*
- *Recognize that His Spirit is leading you, not the law (Rom. 8:14).*
- *Receive the freedom that is yours (2 Cor. 3:17)*
- *Stop sinning.*

<sup>2</sup> Some examples might be:

- *You keep getting speeding tickets. (Stop speeding.)*
- *Your dog keeps biting visitors. (It’s time for doggie training school.)*
- *You have a friend who is always asking for money. (Stop giving them money.)*
- *You need to file a stack of papers. (File a few each day until they’re gone.)*
- *You need a job. (Start looking and don’t stop until you get one.)*
- *Your boyfriend/girlfriend has been unfaithful. (Break up with him/her.)*
- *Certain people “bring you down”. (Don’t spend time with them.)*
- *Watching horror movies is giving you nightmares. (Stop watching them!)*

<sup>3</sup> Paraphrased from Websters Dictionary

## Overcoming by Grace through Faith Not Law

### Lesson One

6. **People who don't like (who hate) you:** Many people do love you, but there might be one or two, who just don't.
7. **The past:** Something in your past is still affecting you today (visibly or invisibly to others).
8. **Imperfections:** Something about "you" (physically, emotionally, socially) is not the world's perception of perfection.
9. **Depression:** all of the above can cause this, but some people feel depressed for no real reason.

### E. Being OVERWHELMED often results in the following:

1. **Blaming God:** God, why don't you help me?
2. **Confusion:** What I'm living doesn't agree with what God has promised.
3. **Hopelessness:** I've tried that, but it didn't work. There's no hope for me.
4. **Acceptance:** I need to simply accept this as the way it is always going to be (perhaps seeing it as God's will).
5. **Giving Up:** This can be a good thing or bad. The bad would be suicide. The good would be turning to God completely.

Please keep in mind, this lesson will is NOT about learning to accept the unacceptable. It is about →OVERCOMING← the unacceptable. Yes, it is possible to get victory in overwhelming situations.

### F. What DOES NOT WORK when trying to overcome the OVERWHELMING?

First of all it is VERY IMPORTANT that we get it through our brains that LAW is not the answer! Remember "the strength of sin is the law". It's likely that your situation isn't "sin", but the principle still holds.

### G. What does LAW usually look like when trying to deal with OVERWHELMING situations?

1. **Blame and shame:** If you/If I would just....it's all your/my fault
2. **Formula "living":** It's as "easy" as A, B, C. Do this and everything will work out.
3. **Behavior modification:** You need some discipline in your life! If you'd just practice spiritual disciplines, everything will be okay!
4. **New Year's resolutions:** This year, I'll finally improve this.
5. **Books and conferences:** I need help; perhaps this book or that conference will give me "the key" to fixing this.
6. **Advice "Let me fix you":** Yes, you've struggled for years, done research, tried everything, but someone else knows exactly what you should do!
7. **Try harder. Do more.** When all else fails, repeat #1-7. Eventually, what has failed in the past will finally be successful. You know what they say, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again!"

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**H. “Definition”<sup>4</sup> of INSANITY**

Doing the same thing that has failed repeatedly in the past, but expecting different results “this time”.

**Or, even WORSE THAN “INSANITY”**

Asking God to “give you grace” to obey the law (formulas, books, conferences, behavior modification, advice, try harder, do more, resolutions, blame and shame

**I. What DOES work when trying to Overcome the OVERWHELMING**

It was by grace through faith that you were saved, and it will be by grace through faith that you overcome the overwhelming (and not of yourselves, it will be the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast).

***Colossians 2:6-10***

*As (in the manner, according, even like) you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord (by grace through faith), so walk (live) in Him,<sup>7</sup> rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.*

*<sup>8</sup> Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. <sup>9</sup> For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; <sup>10</sup> and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.*

**Salvation (initial, continual, and eventual) is by grace from Him by faith in Him.**

**Perhaps you already know this, and if fact, you are living it in MANY areas in your life. So, you may ask God, “Why am I experiencing Your grace in so many areas but not in this one?”**

**“Maybe it’s my thorn in the flesh.” NO. Pauls’ thorn in the flesh referred to his oft persecutions and difficulties in ministry.**

*God is not withholding His grace from us. So, without assigning guilt or shame, it is fair to examine our own thoughts. Are we going about this wrong? (Obviously!) Since God’s grace is constant and super-abounds toward us all, perhaps we need to consider that God has a different solution. Don’t be intimidated by this. Be honest. The problem is NOT with God. He WANTS to help/save us. Could it be possible that we have not yet tapped into His grace through faith in this area?*

**Finding New Faith**

***2 Thessalonians 1:3***

*We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because **your faith grows exceedingly**, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other.*

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<sup>4</sup> This isn’t the actual definition of insanity, but is often a visible symptom.

## J. Saving Faith: We see in the example of “saving” faith, a clear explanation of how faith comes to us.

**Romans 10:17**

*Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (of Christ).*

“Word of God” here does not refer to the Bible. It refers to the good news of God’s grace.

**Romans 10:14-17**

*How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? <sup>15</sup> And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:*

*“How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,  
Who bring glad tidings of good things!”*

*<sup>16</sup> But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our report?” <sup>17</sup> So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (the glad tidings of good things...the gospel of peace/grace).*

Faith for Salvation comes when someone tells us (we hear) the glad tidings of good things (the word of God/of Christ). We obey/believe the gospel by confessing what we believe.

**Romans 10:9-10**

*The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): <sup>9</sup> that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe (have faith) in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For with the heart one believes (has faith) unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

## K. Hearing of His Grace for Salvation brings Faith for Salvation

- The GOOD NEWS (of His grace)—it exists!
- The good news is PREACHED.
- We HEAR the good news.
- FAITH COMES-WE BELIEVE IT (faith and belief are the same word in the Greek)
- We CONFESS-SPEAK what we believe about His grace
- SALVATION-RESCUE COMES

## L. Hearing of His Grace to Heal brings Faith for Healing

**Mark 5:25-34**

*Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years,*

- The woman was unclean (Lev.15:25, 20:18). Anyone who touched her was unclean. (Stay away from her.)
- Her husband could not touch her without being unclean. (She was lonely and undesirable.)

- Since it was a long-term problem, everyone she knew probably knew about it. (No privacy, embarrassment)
- The advice had come. (Have you tried this or that?)
- The accusations were common. (Surely this is a curse from God for the sin that's in your life. It's your fault.)

**Mark 5:25-34**

***<sup>26</sup> and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse.***

- She wanted to be healed.
- She tried everything and saw many physicians
- To the point of spending all she earned.
- Her treatments were causing her to suffer.
- No one could help her.
- She got worse.

**Mark 5:25-34**

***<sup>27</sup> When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment.***

- She HEARED about Jesus.
- What did she hear about Jesus?<sup>5</sup>
- She heard that Jesus was healing anyone who asked.
- Faith came by hearing the good news.
- If he heals anyone, then He will heal me.

**Mark 5:25-34**

***<sup>28</sup> For she said, “If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well.”***

***<sup>29</sup> Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction.***

- The woman's faith led her to confession of her faith (what she believed):  
“If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well.”
- The woman's faith led her to action,

“She came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment”.

- If she hadn't heard, if she hadn't believed, if she hadn't confessed, if she hadn't reached out to touch Him, she would NOT have been healed.

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<sup>5</sup> Although this Scripture is recorded after the account of this woman, it is a strong indication that she had heard of people merely touching the hem of His garment and being healed.

Mark 6:55

Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well.

**Mark 5:25-34**

***But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. <sup>34</sup> And He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.”***

● ***The woman was healed.***

*Why?*

● ***Jesus tells us why.***

*Her faith made her well.*

*Her faith, which came when she heard the good news of His healing grace, confessed what she believed, and took action.*

**M. Hearing of His Grace for Your Situation brings Faith for Your Situation**

● We HEAR the good news that Jesus has an answer for our situation

● FAITH COMES-WE BELIEVE

● We CONFESS-SPEAK and perhaps take action

● THE ANSWER COMES

**N. Where to Begin in Overcoming the OVERWHELMING**

**→ Faith comes when we hear the good news! When times are difficult, it is good news to know that:**

1. God sees you (Gen. 16:13).
2. God knows the truth (Rom. 8:27).
3. God cares for you (1 Pet. 5:6-7).
4. God is not against you (Rom. 8:32).
5. This is personal between you and God (Rom. 14:12).
6. Nothing is impossible for Him (Lk. 1:47).
7. He is willing (Mt. 8:3, Mk. 1:41, Lk. 5:13).
8. God is right here right now.
9. Remember who you are in Him.
10. Remember that God loves (has compassion on) you.

**N. Next Step:**

**→ HEARING OF HIS GRACE CONCERNING YOUR SITUATION BRINGS FAITH FOR A MIRACLE IN YOUR SITUATION.**

1. **Discover** the specific Good News that you need.  
*Collect a list of verses particular to your situation.*
2. **Hear** the glad tidings of good things about your situation.  
*Recite them to yourself often to encourage yourself so your faith will grow.*

**3. Confess what you believe/your faith.**

*Speak out the faith/belief that has come to you through hearing. Give thanks to God for His promises and provisions. Encourage yourself by bringing these verses to your memory. Speak to the mountains. Resist the enemy using the glad tidings of good things.*

**4. Take Action: Sometimes, not always, there will be steps of faith that God will instruct you to take. Take them.**

**FAITH PITFALL #1**

You can't go at this backwards. You can't go off "blabbing and grabbing", "confessing and possessing". You need to HEAR GOOD NEWS FIRST, then wait until FAITH COMES, then speak what you believe. Speaking it doesn't make it true. It is true, we believe it, and therefore we speak. In the same way, taking steps of faith doesn't produce a miracle. We take steps of faith based the grace that is given which has given us faith to step.

**2 Corinthians 4:13**

*And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," **we also believe and therefore speak.***

**FAITH PITFALL #2**

You are NOT God nor shall you ever be. When God speaks, those things which did not exist, now exist. He hasn't given us that authority. What we do is speak what God has spoken as truth—his provisions and promises (His grace)—the glad tidings of good things.

**FAITH PITFALL #3**

God is NOT going to ask you to do something that will endanger you or someone else, and you won't make God do something by taking a stupid supposed "step of faith". He won't ask you drive without your glasses if you need them to drive. He won't tell you to stop taking medicine that you need to live. He won't ask you to walk across a lake or tell Mount Shasta to be removed and cast into the sea. Anything God tells you to do will be wrapped in wisdom and peace.

**FAITH PITFALL #4**

Basing our faith on the experience of others instead of on the Scriptures is the most common faith pitfall. Most everyone in the Christian community has heard of or experienced a situation in which a certain person was sick. Everyone was praying, but the person only grew worse. Shall we then conclude that God did not answer when this negates His promise to do so? Do we form our theology on experience or on the written word of God which speaks of His provisions and promises? Or do we dig deeper into the Scriptures and fortify our faith by learning of His grace? Some, out of a sense of loyalty to those they know who have not been healed, refuse to believe for their own healing. This is also unhealthy and a grace killer.

## FAITH PITFALL #5

**Insisting that God do things the way WE say He should do them**

**Refusing to accept HIS way of receiving miracles**

Although God will meet us where we are and help us, bringing us to where we need to be, it is the height of arrogance to think we can dictate to God our own terms. “If God wants to save me, He’ll save me,” isn’t any more presumptuous than, “If God wants to heal me, He’ll heal me,” or “If God wants me to have the victory, He’ll give it to me.” God’s miracle system is based on grace through faith and the confession of what we believe. He tells us to ask, to seek, to knock. He wants to answer our prayers, and He will, but we need to respond to His grace with faith.

## Overcoming the Overwhelming

Express your total dependence on God’s power in this area.

Ask Him for wisdom believing without one doubt that He is going to give it to you.

Discover the good news about your relationship with God.

Discover the good news about your specific situation.

“Hear” it. Encourage yourself in the Lord.

When faith comes, speak it.

Let His grace discipline and teach you.

Be open to new insights and wisdom and to specific instructions.

Cooperate with His guidance.

Let go of law as your controlling force and guide. Embrace grace and the spirit-led life.

Speak what you believe in prayer.

Do what He instructs you to do.

Trust that He will answer you and go on with your life.

Rest and give thanks.

## “Ain’t No Mountain High Enough”

### **Mark 11:20-24**

*Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. <sup>21</sup> And Peter, remembering, said to Him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.”*

*<sup>22</sup> So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. <sup>23</sup> For assuredly, I say to you, **whoever says** to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and **does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.** <sup>24</sup> **Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.***