

# Unstoppable

## Dealing With Adversity

March 30 & April 2, 2017

(Hebrews 12:2-3 MSG) Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. That will shoot adrenaline into your souls!

(Matthew 27:27-31) Some of the governor's soldiers took Jesus into their headquarters and called out the entire regiment. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him. They wove thorn branches into a crown and put it on his head, and they placed a reed stick in his right hand as a scepter. Then they knelt before him in mockery and taunted, "Hail! King of the Jews!" And they spit on him and grabbed the stick and struck him on the head with it. When they were finally tired of mocking him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him again. Then they led him away to be crucified.

## Expecting The Unexpected

- ✓ Difficulties should be expected.

(John 16:33) "I have told you all this so that you will have peace of heart and mind. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows; but cheer up, for I have overcome the world."

- ✓ Difficulties reveal the condition of my heart.

(Proverbs 17:3) The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but the LORD tests the heart.

- ✓ Difficulties offer me opportunities to get closer to God.

(Psalm 34:18) The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

- ✓ Handling difficulties faithfully results in me advancing toward my purpose.

(Psalm 71:20-21) You have allowed me to suffer much hardship, but you will restore me to life again and lift me up from the depths of the earth. You will restore me to even greater honor and comfort me once again.

## Overcoming Adversity

(James 1:1) This letter is from James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am writing to the "twelve tribes"—Jewish believers scattered abroad.

1. Realize what is really happening.

(James 1:2-3) Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.

2. Embrace the opportunity to grow.

(James 1:4) Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

(Romans 5:3-4) Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.

(1 Peter 1:6-7) In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

3. Ask God for understanding.

(James 1:5) If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

4. Remain faithful.

(James 1:6-8) But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

5. Be positive and brave.

(James 1:12) Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

(Isaiah 40:29-31) He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.