

A black and white portrait of a Black woman with shoulder-length dark hair, looking directly at the camera with a calm, determined expression. She is wearing a dark blazer over a light-colored button-down shirt. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a building.

THE DIARY OF AN **OVERCOMER**

AN INSPIRATIONAL STORY OF TRUE
LOVE, HOPE, TRIUMPH, AND VICTORY.



A woman revisits her childhood. The account of her diary depicts memories of a child deprived of love. Memories of ongoing years of sexual and physical abuse begin to resurface. She sought out refuge in the church at fifteen and began preaching the gospel. However, she backslid into a lifestyle of drug and alcohol dependence and promiscuity with women. On April 6th, 2008, God gave her a second chance, and raised her up to become an overcomer.

The Diary of an Overcomer

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The Diary of an Overcomer

Daisy Copelin

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First Edition

Chapter 2

Dream Turned Nightmare

I could never understand why I never mustered up enough courage to tell my family how their words pierced me and left deep wounds. I could never tell them the amount of nights that I cried myself to sleep because of the toll the pain took upon my emotions. Nighttime was the only time I could have a conversation with God. I would tell him how much I despised life, how I yearned for him to take me in my sleep, because life and the internal pain was too much for me to bear.

God became my only friend while growing up and even though it appeared as if he never spoke back, there was an indescribable peace in knowing that he existed and that somehow he was watching over me. So I continued expressing my feelings to him at night. O how I desperately yearned for it to be nighttime until one night, that is. It all happened so fast and as a child it was confusing to me. My mind couldn't fully comprehend how family members could want to touch me in ways and in places that a child should never be touched.

My conscience kept telling me that this action wasn't right, but as a child, how do you verbalize it? If you don't trust anyone, whom do you go to? That night forever changed my life. I had to keep a secret that no one could ever know about, and I made a promise to myself that I would take this secret to the grave. The longer the abuse went on the more I hated myself, the more I felt ashamed, and the more I wanted to die. For years I felt like it was my fault and that I was the reason why this continued to go on, and I felt disgusted with myself.

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During the years this abuse took place I felt shameful before God. I cried rivers of tears before God asking for his forgiveness for me allowing this to go on. I never felt like he understood. I remember picturing him looking down on me with shame as well, disgusted by what was taking place. I pictured him on his heavenly throne shaking his head and holding his holy and majestic hands in anger. I remember the thoughts of suicide circling my head at night like a mental merry go round as I thought this would be the only way to end the abuse.

While sitting in a classroom with my peers I felt alone and different because I pictured them going to picture perfect homes. And for me home, the very place where I was supposed to feel the safest, was the place that I feared and dreaded the most because of the ongoing years of sexual abuse I was forced to endure.

Dear Diary,

It happened again last night. I feel so disgusted with myself for allowing this to continue to go on. This is something that no one can ever know about for fear of how I'll be looked upon and perceived. I feel disgusted because of this taking place, but even more disgusted about whom it's taking place with, and every inappropriate touch brings more pain, confusion, anger and shame. Every inappropriate touch tempts me to just end it, all leaving nothing more than a suicide note behind apologizing for not having enough courage to speak up.

So I lay in bed at night as a child thinking of all of the ways I could take my life. I just want this to end, and I don't know if it ever will or when will I have the courage to speak up and allow someone to know this is taking place?

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September 23rd, 1993

I remember growing up constantly asking God why I had to live the life I did. Why did I have to be adopted? Why couldn't I grow up in a normal family with my biological parents and biological brothers and sisters? Being known as adopted automatically deemed you as different and weird. Kids constantly made fun of my brothers and sisters and I and whenever arguments took place they were quick to say that's why you're adopted or go find your real parents, stuff like that pierced me like daggers. It was a constant reminder that I was different and that I didn't fit in, that I wasn't normal like the rest of my peers.

Someone once quoted, "Sticks and stones may break your bones but words will never hurt." I beg to differ. Oftentimes when your peers make fun of you and say cruel things about you, you can take it to a certain extent partially because you barely know them it still stings, however when it comes from a family member it makes it a little more unbearable. As early as childhood I could never recall being praised by anyone. Phrases like "I can't wait till you're old enough to get out of my house," "You're good for nothing," or "You're so slow," were terms that I heard on a regular basis.

"You're so slow" was one that was ingrained in my mind. I believed it, and neither I nor anyone else could persuade me that I was intelligent even if they tried. I saw myself dropping out of school at sixteen years of age because that was the legal age to drop out. I remember hearing of conversations pertaining to college and how only smart people were accepted to college. I vividly remember telling myself that when it came to college I didn't stand a chance simply because I wasn't smart enough. Therefore, I never really applied myself when it came to school; there was no point since I won't succeed anyway.

I didn't only struggle academically in school, but behaviorally as well. Behavior problems started for me as early as elementary school. Most of the problems consisted with not respecting authority. I was taught to obey my parents; however, I wasn't taught that I had to obey all authoritative figures. For some strange reason I despised authority, always had a strong personality, quick to rebel and go against the grain. I never liked being told what to do by people in authority. It was only later on that I realized that I despised authority because while growing up people that were older than me and were in places of authority had abused their privileges and had taken advantage of me.

I didn't listen to the teachers or principal, and everyone was scared of our elementary school principal except me. I remember the principal who everyone feared walking into the classroom or on the bus or whatever atmosphere she walked into and my peers would freeze up and be fearful to even talk, let alone breathe. I would always be the one with the wise comments and as a result of my inability to fear the principal, as well as authoritative figures the principal's office was a second home for me. I can still remember the scent of her office to this day. It smelled like a combination of heavy perfume and stale cologne and it was enough to cause your nostrils to itch. The office consisted of her large desk, along with a substantial amount of awards that circled pride all around her room and two beautiful chairs in front of her desk. It didn't matter what time of the day it was, her office was always immaculate. Every time I had a meeting with her and she scolded me, I sat there the whole time with a sarcastic smile on my face however inwardly I fought back tears.

One day she said something that stuck with me as I was leaving her office with a smile like I normally did. She said "That smile is probably because you don't want to cry." It was at that moment that I realized that there was so much truth to what she had said. Outwardly I joked and laughed about being in trouble

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consistently, but inwardly I was hurting, I was crying out for help and getting into trouble was my only way to silently cry out for help.

Every time the principal talked to me or anyone else talked to me I always felt like crying inwardly and sometimes outwardly I did. I was perceived by most as being emotionally unstable growing up. People oftentimes questioned me as to what type of medication I was on. Either that or many adults believed that I should have been on some type of medication so that I would have been able to better control myself and my emotions. Inwardly I agreed, after hearing the same comments for so long as a child you start believing it after a while. Family members oftentimes told me that I was schizophrenic like my mother, phrases like “You’re cuckoo” or “Daisy, you just don’t have it all in the head,” or “Daisy, something is wrong with you.”

Those words affected me in so many ways. I was oftentimes told that when I got older that I would end up in a psychiatric ward like my mother. As a child you’re susceptible to believe anything, so I believed it and there was a fear of growing up because I feared that what they had spoken over my life would eventually come to pass. I thank God that he had a change of plans and that only that which he had spoken over my life before I was even formed in my mother’s womb would come to pass.

Dear Diary,

Today I got into a fight at school. A couple of words were exchanged and fists began flying. I feel like fighting is my only way of getting out all of the frustration and anger that I feel. Most people enjoy fighting, but I don’t. I just do it because I have anger problems, and I feel like it’s the only way. As long as I could remember there was an inability to be afraid of anyone despite their age, height, weight or even gender. At times I feel

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like I could take on the world, even though I can't, and because I'm perceived by most as being outspoken, the inability to hold my tongue that was ammunition for people to want to fight me.

I remember adults calling me out and even though I was a child I was ready to fight. I didn't want to but instilled in me was a desire to not back down from any one. Otherwise I would be perceived as being soft and that's not the image I wanted to be portrayed as. I remember even as early as middle school days when boys were afraid to fight me not necessarily because I had a big family, but because I was tough. I learned to fight by boxing with my brothers. Last minute thoughts: maybe God made me this way, instilled in me is this fighter, who has the ability to want to take on the world. Maybe I had to be made this way in order to survive what I was going through, just maybe.

March 12th, 1998

Looking back I realize that the enemy used people's words to try and destroy me. Whenever I was depressed all I could think of was the hateful and vindictive things that people had said about me, bringing me to a place of further depression. All these years I believed the enemy's lies that were spoken over my life through thoughts and out of the mouths of people, and it was only learning of God's truth through the word of God that caused me to counterattack the enemy's lies with God's truth.

Similarly to Joseph when he had to stand on God's truth despite what others thought and said about him. Even though Joseph had a dream it immediately became a nightmare for Joseph as his very own brothers began plotting his death. "He replied, I am looking for my brothers. Can you tell me where they are grazing their flocks? So Joseph went after his brothers and found them near Dothan. But they saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him.

Here comes that dreamer! They said to each other. Come now, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns and say that a ferocious animal devoured him. Then we'll see what comes of his dreams." (Genesis 37:17-20 NIV) Who would have known that Joseph's own brothers would try to kill him just for being a dreamer? What happens next is even more astonishing; his brothers opted out of killing him because his brother Reuben spoke up, "Let's not take his life," he said. "Don't shed any blood. Throw him into this cistern here in the desert, but don't lay a hand on him."

Reuben said this to rescue him from them and take him back to his father." (Genesis 37:21-23 NIV) The story goes on to say that Joseph's brothers came to the agreement to sell him to the Ishmaelite for twenty pieces of silver. You would think that this would have been the end to Joseph's suffering, but this sadly was only just the beginning. After being sold into Egypt Joseph suffers being lied on, and this resulted in him ending up in prison even though he was an innocent man.

When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, "This is how your slave treated me," he burned with anger. Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined. (Genesis 39:19-20 NIV) Even though the circumstances that Joseph was under seemed rather harsh, God's hand was upon Joseph's life and this was the most important thing. The Bible declares "But while Joseph was there in the prison, The Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden."

So, the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the Lord was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did." (Genesis 39:20-23 NIV) Even though Joseph went through suffering, God was right there in the midst of what

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Joseph was going through; giving him strength to endure and grace to prevail so that the God-given dream that he was given would come to pass. I never thought that because of the glimpse of my destiny that God had given me at an early age nor the dreams he has given me as a child would be the reason why the enemy saw it fit to do any and everything necessary to prevent it from coming to pass.

Dear Diary,

Today I was thinking about what I wanted to do with the rest of my life, even though I'm not even a teenager yet. I see myself writing books, and doing public speaking in arenas full of people. I told my brothers and sisters in the basement today that there are two things that are important to me when I grow up. I told them I want to be an elementary school teacher during the day and at night attend church every day. It appeared weird to them, but in my heart this is what I want to do for the rest of my life. I could envision myself doing this every day as crazy as it may sound.

This is a dream of mine, just like Martin Luther King had a dream, I have a dream. But my natural circumstances say that it will never happen. I oftentimes wonder if I'd even live to see the age of 18, because there are days when living doesn't even seem bearable. I would love to see my dreams come to pass. I guess the price of dreams coming to pass is costly.

Chapter 6

True Love

Oftentimes as human beings we are created with a desire to be loved. Unfortunately if we are deprived of the very thing that we were created to have we begin looking for love in all the wrong places. I spent years in search of love. Even though I spent my teen years in church I never felt truly loved. I wanted to desperately believe people when they told me they loved me or better yet I wanted to at least feel loved by God. As bad as I wanted to believe there was a God that loved me unconditionally my mind, heart or the enemy would never let me believe that God loved me. I felt like I was unlovable. I was full of imperfections, flaws, weaknesses and struggles.

I couldn't imagine God loving me or wanting to have anything to do with me. As a result I was looking for a female to love me, going from female to female just to find true love resulting in me living a promiscuous life. But little did I know the end of my search would finally come to an end. A friend that lived up the street from my mother's house for years had come into the picture. We met at the college and befriended each other and after all these years we had lived near each other and never spoke on a conversation level and here we are in college conversating.

She had one day told me about this church in Queens that she attended randomly at times and asked would I like to go with her that Sunday. At this time I didn't care too much for church and I was fixated on what I was doing. Not wanting to tell her no and because I was seeing someone in Manhattan at the time, I

thought it would be a perfect opportunity to see her after church came to an end for the day, so I agreed.

Saturday the night before I had drank so much I had passed out on the bathroom floor, I could hear my brother and his girlfriend knocking on the door and laughing hysterically because I was drunk. Nevertheless, I woke up with a headache the next morning and debated for a while on whether I should go or not. Being that I was good at keeping my word I came to my senses, showered got dressed and waited for her to pick me up.

Within a few minutes time she had arrived and before I knew it we were on our way. To me it seemed like a rather long ride, but we had finally arrived. Only it wasn't what a church looked like and she explained that it was being conducted out of an elementary school. We walked inside and a male usher greeted me with a handshake.

He led us to a seat and we sat down. Devotion and praise was going on at this time and they sounded pretty good, I thought to myself. Then the sermon went forth by a woman who was considered to be a pastor. It was confusing to me because I thought women weren't supposed to be a pastor because that's what I was taught anyhow. But I remember her speaking on Jephthah. The sermon in my personal opinion was taking rather long and I was ready to go. I didn't hear God speaking to me through the sermon nor did I feel convicted about anything.

And finally after what seemed like an eternity she came to the close of the sermon. She proceeded with the altar call. I saw people making their way to the altar, so I followed, not really thinking anything of it; me getting saved didn't even cross my mind at all. As we were on the altar she told us to lift both hands and had us repeat the sinner's prayer. As I began repeating what she said my eyes began to fill with tears as I felt the remorse of things that I was doing, but it was also combined with tears of

gratitude in disbelief that God had pursued me and given me another chance.

There was such a joy on the inside that I couldn't describe if I wanted to. They then took us upstairs in the cafeteria where they gave us all a Bible and explained to us about the commitment that we had just made. Now we were ready to depart and a young lady came up to me and told me how they had youth services on Friday night and invited me to come. I later found out that she was a youth leader and her name was Kemerlin.

I didn't think anything of it as I lived in Suffolk at the time and Queens was way out of my way so I wasn't intending on coming back. On the way outside, as we were heading to the car another lady got out of the car. She came up to me and shook my hand and we exchanged names and she told me her name was Tanequa. I later found out she was also a youth leader there and she invited me to youth service on Friday night so I told her I would try to come.

As we drove off I didn't have a desire to go see who I was intending on seeing after what had just taken place. I couldn't understand it in its entirety, but I felt completely different. I went home that day and prayed. As I continued throughout the week, I had been praying and reading the Bible they had given me. Every time I was in the midst of reading the Bible the girl who I was seeing at the time would call and Bible time would quickly come to an end for me as I spoke with her over the phone.

As Friday came nearby, I asked the same friend who had driven me there on Sunday if she could bring me on Friday as I felt like I just had to get there. She agreed and I was excited as Friday came and she picked me up and we were on our way. As we arrived, I realized we weren't at the school, but now were in a church. Music was going forth at the time I came in with my Bible and notebook in hand ready to take notes. This lady preached that night but it wasn't what I was used to as she was

extremely funny and then she called for a line of those that wanted prayer.

I went up of course and she had called on elder Jones to pray for me. As she began praying for me it was nothing like I've ever experienced before and it was as if she knew everything about me. She began asking God to heal me of all my past hurts and named something's that brought me to tears, and I couldn't figure out how she knew these things. What became even more alarming was when she said she had seen a number and to get rid of the number. I automatically knew it was the same number of the girl who I had been seeing.

It scared me that she knew that, how did she know? I kept asking myself and what was even more frightening was when Tanequa exchanged numbers with me at the end of service and explained it was just so she could check up on me. She told me to get rid of the number, which caused me to fear and I couldn't figure out how they knew, but I got the number out of my phone immediately. While service was coming to a close this lady, who went by the name of Minister Beard, who I later found out was my youth pastor, prayed for me as well and said that I would have a testimony. I didn't know what she was talking about, but I felt better after all the prayers for that night. I went home that night feeling down on the inside that whatever I had gotten myself into that this was indeed serious. All throughout the week I continued school, prayer and reading the Bible, but warfare then began. Every time I would fall asleep there would be dreams of me engaging in sexual acts with women. I woke up fearful and I called my youth leader Tanequa, who explained that it was just the enemy and connected me with my youth pastor who, prayed for me. I was grateful to God for sending me the help that I needed.

My second year of college was ending in May of 2008. At the time, I had been traveling from Suffolk to Queens to attend

church. When Friday came around I would pack my bags, take the LIRR to my biological mother's house and wait in anticipation as youth service came around. Even though Sunday services were cool, it was something about being there on a Friday night. My youth pastor had so many jokes and she always prayed for me. She was accessible and I felt like even though she didn't know me she understood me.

I remember the day she told me God had a purpose and plan for my life and that he was going to use me to speak to people. She told me to get a notebook and start writing out what God says because he was going to begin speaking to me. I was confounded at the time. I had never heard God speak to me before. I was wondering what God had to say to me, or better yet, what did God sound like. Later on that week I began questioning God and was asking him in prayer why I had to go through the things I went through, including the rejection, if he loved me, but I was not even expecting an answer.

Almost instantaneously he led me to the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis. It was at that moment as I began reading that I heard God speaking to me through my conscience and as I read the word, I somehow fit into the story of Joseph. God had given Joseph a glimpse of his destiny in a dream at seventeen years old and the enemy did everything he could to prevent it from coming to pass. He experienced rejection, injustice, suffering and mistreatment, but at the end God had used him to preserve a generation. God was going to use me to preserve a generation it wasn't about me at all; it finally made sense.

And there you have it! What my youth pastor told me was true. God began speaking to me; I would sometimes spend hours at a time in the word of God as he spoke through the passages. There was nothing more rewarding than hearing God speaking to me. Every time I would miss services my youth pastor would give me a call or text to check up on me. I was amazed that she

knew my name or that she would even realize that I was missing, considering we had a rather large youth department.

I never felt so loved in my life. I felt the love that God had for me through her every time she hugged me, talked to me, chastised me, etc. This was someone who didn't know me, but yet made herself accessible whenever I was having problems I would text or call her, but mostly text, and I felt like she understood me. She helped me in my journey with Christ every step of the way and as I look back I realized she was there in every season of my life in my walk with Christ. I had discouraging seasons, happy seasons, and sad seasons.

In particular, when my mother died she took time away from her busy schedule just to go to the funeral. There were also frustrating seasons and she was there in every season praying me through, encouraging me, or giving me a word. My youth leader Tanequa played an important role in my walk with Christ as well.

She worked alongside Minister Beard and made herself accessible as well what I remember most about both of them was their love they had for me when they didn't even know me. I remember leaving church at times thinking to myself that it's apparent that they know that I'm a lesbian, so why are they treating me as if I'm not. It was like they were looking past the condition that I was in, which is what God does. He was not concerned about my present state because he wasn't looking at my present state. He was looking at me in my potential victorious state.

God had allowed me to become a part of a youth ministry where youth service was conducted every Friday. It was a service geared towards just youth and young adults. Even though the beginnings years were hard for me transition wise, partially because I didn't know anyone there and because I felt like an outsider and alone. There were days when I felt like suicide was

my only option, but I look back and thank God for keeping my mind and giving me the strength and grace to get through it.

Some of the young people were very friendly there even if they didn't say much. They would greet me with a smile and a hello and they too knew my name. Shatera was one of those people. I was able to sense her genuineness and we later became friends. She helped me get through my process as well just by being alongside me with words of encouragement from time to time and being a real friend. Marsha was another one who would greet me with a smile and sometimes sit by me and talk to me. She was very genuine and caring as well that helped me out the most in my early days of attending when I felt like I didn't fit in.

Being in Kingdom Ambassadors Global Ministry served the purpose of being like a second home away from home. I somehow felt safe there, and there were so many adults there that didn't know me, but yet had a heart for me. People like Sister Gail, Sister Prisca, Dr. Carlett, Sister Aisha Williams, Sister Lorrie, Sister Katrina, and Sister Aisha Morgan who was also my youth leader and even though we got off to a rough start I learned to love her and confide in her up until her transition and there also was Mother Sargeant. It's amazing what love has the power to do to an individual.

These were individuals that if I needed them I could reach out to them in confidentiality. They were there from the beginning never judging me, but just loving on me where I was at and encouraging me every chance they got. People oftentimes have said, "You know how much God loves you by the people that he puts in your life." I felt the love of God like never before because if he didn't love me why would he put these people in my life? Finally true love had found me.

One thing I continually asked God was what was going to make this experience with church different than my last experience with church up until the time I backslid? He already

had the answer figured out. It was my relationship. This was emphasized in youth service when they constantly taught us about having an actual relationship with God and not just attending church religiously. Prior to backsliding I never had an actual relationship with God, I had religion.

I religiously attended church. I religiously read my Bible and religiously prayed and religiously fasted. I oftentimes felt myself doing this just to please God. I felt condemned when I didn't do these things. I tried to earn the love, approval and acceptance of God by going through these religious rituals. A relationship is based upon love and if you don't believe the other person you're in a relationship with loves you, it's not a healthy nor productive relationship, boy I wish I had learned this the first time around.

April 6th 2008 I was led into an actual relationship with God and even though it took time for God to drill the principle into my head for years that I didn't have to earn his love or have to do religious deeds just to earn his love because the Bible says he loved me unconditionally, I eventually learned. The Bible says, "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39 KJV).

Not only was there acceptance and love in the youth department for me, but I really began to learn the word of God through the various classes that were being offered in the church. Classes like discipleship, which was one of my favorites and I had the pleasure of taking it with my youth leader minister Daryl, who has a genuine heart for youth, always sets a good example and expressed concern for me from day one. Classes like pastor's heart, the power of joining and many others.

My first year of Bible school there was an amazing experience also. I got the opportunity to take more classes like

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what the Bible is all about where I learned so much pertaining to stories in the Bible, as well as spiritual growth, one of the most life changing classes that I've ever taken. I learned that as Christians we are supposed to start off as babes in Christ but eventually reach a place of maturity. Unfortunately this wasn't the case with me in my church experience prior to this I sat in church for years and never matured in God.

It was in this class that I learned that ultimately it's God who causes us to grow and he uses the things that we go through to bring about growth. Things such as trials, tribulations, and storms entering our lives, but as we yield to God and surrender unto him in the process, he brings the growth. This lesson was important for me because if you're considered to be a babe in Christ it's easier for the enemy to take you out of the will of God, however; if your mature in Christ the very things you stumbled and fell prey to when you were a babe in Christ becomes a lot harder for the enemy to use to take you out.

My professor Elder Brown used the illustration that a tree, once it had become fully grown, it becomes a lot harder to chop down. Growing in Christ and becoming a mature Christian was important to me because I felt like this was make it or break it for me and if I didn't go the whole way this time and get it right then I would never get it right. The Sunday school classes were what I also looked forward to as well; the ability to hear teachers teaching me how to live life as a better Christian was important to me.

Dear Diary,

I'm really enjoying my experience being at the church. Whenever I think about my church I think about God's love for me. There's so much help there and even though I don't feel like I fit in, I know I do. There are days when I'm excited about going

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and there are days when I'm not so excited, but nevertheless, I thank God for giving me another chance and sending me to the church so that I could get the help and deliverance that I need. I've always just wanted to do the will of God, serve him without me even being able to know where these desires were coming from or understand them, but he has put me in the place where I am growing spiritually and that's the most important thing. Every day isn't always a walk in the park, but he gives me the grace to go through with it.

November 15th, 2008

Even though I had suspicions pertaining to my call it began to become clearer the more I developed my relationship with God. Through God himself speaking to me through his word, certain dreams and desires of mine, as well as through the confirmation of those that are in the ministry, it became evident that God was going to use me to bring forth his word and to do ministry. I thought it was going to be an overnight thing, but boy was I in for a reality check. Little did I know that there was a process that the Lord was going to bring me through before even bringing me to a place of use.

Chapter 10

Discover the Overcomer in You

You too have been given the power to become an overcomer. According to the dictionary an overcomer is “To get the better of in a struggle or conflict; conquer; defeat: to overcome the enemy.” What I realized in my walk with Christ is that God is the one who ultimately causes us to become overcomers. Years of every form of abuse and rejection for the victims statistically speaking leads to suicide, becoming murderers, prison, drug and alcohol abuse and the list goes on.

The first step that I took in becoming an overcomer was surrendering my life over to Jesus Christ the one who died on the cross for my sins. Surrendering my life fully over to Christ wasn't an easy decision. As I can recall, April 6th 2008 was when I made the decision on the altar to surrender, but not fully, as it took years for me to fully surrender. Because of the way I grew up I trained myself to do things on my own, I had the mentality that no one was there for me so I had to do for Daisy because that's the only way that it would get done. I believed that I was the only one that had my best interests at heart. I developed defense mechanisms that would keep me safe and secure.

Similarly to turtles, turtles have shells because it provides them with protection. Whenever a predator is near or they sense danger they can pull their head, arms and legs into the shell so that they are safe. Vice versa, my shell was in the safety of my skin. There was a way that I could be around people, but yet inside of my shell to keep myself protected, merely because I couldn't trust anyone. So giving my life over to Jesus Christ and trusting in a God, who at the time I literally didn't know anything

about, was challenging it took years for me to fully surrender knowing that he had my best interests at heart.

According to others I knew he was a God who people had said loves everyone and wanted the best for everyone, but at the time I begged to differ. So trusting someone with my life who I knew nothing about took years of him proving himself for me to fully surrender my life over to him believing that he wanted the best for it. Some of the things that I remember was God constantly showing me his unconditional love for me over and over. There were times that I had fallen short, meaning I sinned. I would go to youth service and being led by God my youth pastor or youth leader would come and pray for me or call me out and prophesy about what God was going to do in my life.

Tears flowed as it appeared that God no longer remembered the sin that I had committed against him. There were other times whenever I did something that offended God or someone else unintentionally that I would be praying and asking God's forgiveness for weeks for what I had done over and over again. One day he spoke to me in prayer and emphasized that once you repent the first time you don't have to keep bringing it up because I had already forgiven you. The Bible states that, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit" (Romans 8:1 NIV) It also states that if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness". (1John 1:9 NIV)

I finally got to a place where when I did fall short and I would repent and understand and know in my heart that I was forgiven because he loved me. And whatever sin it was, I would be less susceptible to doing it again because I would think on his love that he had for me and that would keep me from doing it again. There were times where financially speaking I wouldn't

know where the money would come from, but at the last minute he would always provide.

I always thought that I had to work to make sure I had a roof over my head, food for me to eat and clothes for me to put on. But then I encountered situations where I wasn't working and was wondering and stressed out about where these natural resources would come from, God always managed to provide. Even though there were some seasons in my walk with Christ where money wasn't flowing the way I wanted it to flow and I was complaining, one day God led me to the scripture where the apostle Paul stated,

Paul said, "Not that I am implying that I was in any personal want, for I have learned how to be content (satisfied to the point where I am not disturbed or disquieted) in whatever state I am. I know how to enjoy plenty and live in abundance. I have learned in any and all circumstances the secret of facing every situation, whether well-fed or going hungry, having a sufficiency and enough to spare or going without and being in want. " (Philippians 4:12-13 AMP)

After the Lord showed me that I began to ask God to teach me how to be content in whatever season I went through and that he did. I remember one winter not knowing how I would get a coat and before the winter came to a close I had four coats. God was showing me over and over that I could trust him just like his word says when it came to him providing for me, naturally speaking. It was then that I began trusting God little by little because he kept proving himself time after time again.

After I surrendered my life over to Christ the next step on becoming an overcomer was learning how to fight, not naturally, but spiritually. There is no way that you could win the struggle and come out victorious without a fight. Because even though God has a purpose and plan for your life and wants you to become an overcomer the enemy wants the exact opposite. He

doesn't desire for you to become an overcomer. He desires for you to become overcome.

The Bible states "The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds." (2 Corinthians 10:4 NIV) The Bible also states "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Ephesians 6:12 KJV) It takes a while to master spiritual warfare as well as a lifetime because it is a lifelong process.

People who don't know the plan of the enemy may think that thoughts of suicide have nothing to do with the devil, but that isn't true. The enemy will constantly wage war against our thoughts with his lies. He may tell someone through their thoughts that they are ugly, whereas if someone came against that lie with God's truth they will be able to tell the enemy that they don't believe it but that it's a lie because the Bible says "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well." (Psalm 139:14 NIV)

The enemy may tell you that your situation is hopeless and there's no way out other than through suicide, but that's just a lie as well. Because the Bible states "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28 NIV) The enemy causes people to fall into the bondage of drug and alcohol addiction because he presents the lie that it will make you feel good, but he won't tell you that it will get you hooked and destroy your life years down the road and that it leads to drug overdoses that have proven fatal.

What I learned about the enemy is that he shows you the beginning, but doesn't show you the end. He'll tell you it's okay to have a crush on someone of the same sex, but won't show you that experimenting with that will cause you to be bound by that

years down the road. What I learned through years of warfare is that in order to come out victorious I had to use the word of God and prayer. It's in prayer that God speaks and it's through the word where you're able to fight every lie of the enemy.

Whenever you want to shut a liar up you just reveal the truth. Even though warfare isn't easy there's no way around it and if you are ever going to become an overcomer you have to be willing and ready to fight at all times. Oftentimes we are not willing to fight because we don't realize that our souls are literally on the line. This goes beyond church and religion. This is about where you would spend eternity.

Oftentimes I thank God that he allowed for me to go through the backslidden process. When I was saved the first time around I didn't have a full understanding of salvation or how serious it was for me to walk with Christ, truth be told, I really didn't know my potential in God; all I knew was religion. It was only after backsliding and coming back to Christ and entering into a real relationship with him, looking back and seeing that the enemy's plan was to try to take me out.

Just knowing that the only reason why I'm breathing and writing right now is because God has a purpose and plan for my life. That has put a greater fight in me so that even when I want to give up and go back because the enemy is wearing me out, I realize that I have to fight not just for now, but because my fight depends upon where I'll spend eternity. Far too often I look around and a lot of youth are backslidden young people that were once on fire for God, preaching, evangelizing doing missionary work etc.

But somewhere along the line they got weary in the fight, got knocked down and didn't get back up. Not to past judgment because I've been there so I understand if they only knew that their eternity depended on them fighting, they'd get up and fight. And even when at times I felt like there was no more fight left in

me I had people of God stand in the gap spiritually and fight for me, until I was able to get my strength back to fight.

What I realized in warfare or a battle is that enemies or opponents would never go into battle with anyone who didn't pose a threat to them. The enemy knows some of our potential more than we do, so if he's fighting you tooth and nail it's because he knows you're a threat not only to him, but to his kingdom and he will do any and everything to wear you out in a fight to prevent you from reaching your potential in God.

Even the apostle Paul knew this because he wrote "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7 KJV) another scripture says "You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier." (2 Timothy 2:3-4 KJV) So in order to become an overcomer you have to be willing to learn warfare. There's no way around it, but the greatest part about it all is that we have an instructor who teaches us how to fight so that we can become overcomers.

One important thing that I learned is that we were called to become overcomers before we were formed in our mother's wombs. God knew what we would have to endure, but yet chose and handpicked us to endure it. Looking throughout the Bible God chose people to use mightily who we would have never suspected to become overcomers. One example is Moses who happens to be one of my favorite biblical characters. God knew Moses would have a speech impediment before he was formed in his mother's womb, but God chose him to be a leader and spokesperson for him because he was aware that in spite of Moses' speech impediment God would cause him to become an overcomer.

Jepthah was another one who God used to be a leader and a judge when naturally speaking it looked impossible because of

his background. The Bible lets us know “Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior. His father’s wife also bore him sons, and when they were grown up, they drove Jephthah away. You are not going to get any inheritance in our family, they said, because you are the son of another woman. So Jephthah fled from his brothers and settled in the land of Tob, where a group of adventures gathered around him and followed him.” (Judges 11:1-3 NIV) This was someone who was the child of a whore and rejected by his brothers, but God chose him to become an overcomer.

You too have been chosen to become an overcomer to beat the odds. In fact a lot of individuals who have left legacies in times past were faced with situations which normally would have prevented them from overcoming certain circumstances and becoming successful. However they did not allow whatever they were up against to stop them. For instance, take a look at Helen Keller, someone who was born deaf and blind. You would think that she would have just given up on life.

However, she learned with the help of an instructor how to speak, and she became a writer, wrote books, became an activist and finished college. Because of her influence she was inducted into the National Women’s Hall of Fame and considered to be one of the 100 most influential people of the 20th century. When she was up against the odds, what did Helen Keller do? Became an overcomer and left a legacy and she is truly an inspiration.

Or let’s take a look at Rosa Parks, someone who lived during the time of slavery, but despite that she became an overcomer and managed to become a civil rights activist in a day and age when African Americans were prohibited from even learning how to read. One of my favorites is Harriet Tubman who also became an overcomer despite her circumstances that would have prevented her from succeeding, she still succeeded. Harriet was born to two parents who were slaves. Harriet was also a slave who was

sometimes treated harshly by the man who owned her, she was also denied the opportunity to read or write.

Nevertheless, Harriet Tubman bound herself by slavery, had a desire to see others experience freedom so she conducted the Underground Railroad and made nineteen trips to the south to help the slaves use the Underground Railroad. In total she helped approximately three hundred slaves reach a place of freedom and to begin new lives. This is just some of the heroic individuals in times past who became overcomers.

God has planted a seed in every last one of us to defeat the odds and become overcomers. We have to want to be willing to tap into our potential and become the overcomers that God has destined for us to become. I learned that if we're not willing to become overcomers then we won't because becoming an overcomer is a choice. Like those stated above, as they all had a choice to make they could choose to become overcomers and work toward that goal or choose not to be and they chose to be overcomers.

Like myself, I had a choice that despite what I had gone through and despite the challenges and obstacles I was up against I wouldn't let that stop me, but I chose to become an overcomer. You too have a choice and you can make up in your mind right now to become an overcomer because everything you decide to do, you have to have a made up mind first and after that be willing to fight to become that overcomer you were destined to be. You may have had parents that have never graduated high school, but make up in your mind that you're an overcomer and you will graduate despite your parents not graduating. It looked like I wouldn't graduate high school let alone college if you had told me I would be sitting here with a college degree many years ago I wouldn't have believed you, which I'm still in awe of but because I had a made up mind that I could do it I did.

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You may have grownup or are currently growing up in the foster care system therefore lacking stability, but you have to make up your mind that you will overcome and fulfill your dreams despite your rough beginnings. You may even be reading this book from a prison cell, but, even so, you too have the ability to become an overcomer. You may be addicted to drugs or alcohol, but it doesn't mean that it has to be the end. With Jesus Christ being set free from that addiction is an option because Jesus Christ died to set the captives free.

You can become sober again and beat the odds, thus becoming an overcomer. You may even be living a homosexual lifestyle, but you need to know that Jesus Christ loves you right where you are and is willing and well able to set you free. Why die a slave to homosexuality when you can be set free? You may have been homeless, molested, or raped, but it doesn't have to be the end. You can rise and become an overcomer.

Growing up, although I envisioned me writing books and public speaking because of what I was going through temporarily at times, it looked and felt as if my situation was hopeless. The enemy many times tried to feed me the lie that suicide was the only way out and at times I believed it, but at the times when I wanted to die there would be a strength that rose up within me that only God could give me. Maybe you're trying to become an overcomer by your own strength. It won't work because you need to rely on the strength of God and only then will you overcome.

You need to know despite what you have felt up until this point, what you feel right now and no matter what your situation looks like; you too have the potential to discover the overcomer in you. Giving my life over to Jesus Christ was the best decision that I have ever made in my whole entire life. I may have gotten off to a rough start, but before I was in my mother's womb God predestined me, as well as you, to become an overcomer so that our story would end in victory.

Daisy Copelin

That which I had envisioned in my childhood of writing books, public speaking, performing poetry and working with young people is what I'm currently doing now, but from a ministry point of perspective which makes it all the more satisfying. I chose to become an overcomer and discovered the overcomer in me God's way. So right where you are it doesn't matter what you have done in your past. Give your life over to Jesus Christ, the one who died on the cross for your sins because of his father's love and his love for you so that you can discover the overcomer in you.

Repeat this prayer: Lord Jesus I believe that you died on the cross for my sins and rose on that third day. I confess my sins before you, everything that I did that offended you forgive me God. I ask you right now to come into my heart and I confess you as Lord over my life. And from this day forward help me to live for you.

If you just prayed that prayer sincerely I want you to know that God heard you despite how you may feel and it doesn't matter what sins or wrongdoings you have committed in times past. God just gave you a brand new slate and he just threw your sins into the sea of forgetfulness. Now you can live for him, but it doesn't stop there. I want to challenge you to take it a step further and ask God to lead you to a Bible believing Christian church where you can be amongst other Christians that will help you in your walk with God. They will train and teach you about how to live life as a Christian so that you too can now become an overcomer. I realized in my walk with Christ that in order to get to where I needed to get to in God I couldn't do it without God or the church and the people that he placed in the church that has been assigned to help me. As a result of me realizing that this poem was conceived.

The enemy has declared war on the church

The enemy has declared war on the church from news shows to magazine articles cover to cover it's portrayed that we as the people of God are living undercover lives. You see the enemy has people's minds infiltrated with lies, keeping people from the one place where hope lies and this is the church. Nowadays the world deems the church hopeless the only one place where hope is and people are exposed to see the church's faults, but eyes hold blindfolds to the truth and hearts have grown cold and tempers are rising. We find it somewhat surprising that in the church there's more fallen leaders than dominoes.

This is nothing new because it occurred back in Biblical times too, and this is true that there's a difference between the church of the days of old and the church of the days of new. There's no comparing the two, yet there are comparisons between the two. And that is that God made it one place of worship and that's something that could never be negated even though the church has become the enemy's target and is most hated as opposed to it becoming the most appreciated.

People have said that the church is no longer trustworthy and they have nothing to put their trust in as opposed to just trusting in him because the Bible says cursed is the man that putteth his trust in man. So sometimes God allows circumstances in the church so that we can take our eyes off of them and fixate our eyes on him because we as Christians are full of imperfections, but the church is where we go to confess them so that we can get the help that we need to perfect them.

And in regards to fallen leaders, we are all subject to be wounded because we're in a war as stated before; on the church the enemy has declared war. And this goes from the pulpit to the door, but even furthermore this battle is not in the physical, but more so in the spiritual. The enemy may have declared war on

the church, but most importantly it's on your soul, which is bold. But his goal is to keep you from the church so that God's plans for your life will never have a chance to unfold.

And because of the "he said she said" in the church your hearts have grown cold. But let's get something straight, it's not the church that hurts people. Its people who hurt people and the church is not to blame for your pain. And it was not designed for drama, but to bring glory to his name and it'll be a shame for you to get to heaven and in the lamb's Book of Life you don't see your name because you were hurt by someone in the church. What a shame.

So what I suggest is staying in the church with your pain and get the healing that you need which is vital and stop putting people in the church on pedestals, cause they are not your idols. And stop going to church just to pursue titles and fame because doing that you don't gain anything, you just leave with no change. For some the church is just a building built upon a foundation, but for me it became so much more. It became a home away from home and the people became my family and I no longer felt alone.

Grew up feeling unloved and deprived with feelings of hurt, I no longer had to hide, no longer had to seek for direction because my leaders became my guide, and when I fell short they didn't leave, they stood right by my side. Because their love for me was not based upon my condition so I can testify that the church is still a hospital and God is still a physician. The church became my refuge and shelter from the storms of life. It became a support system so when I was at death's doors it pumped life.

God used the people as mouth pieces to speak into my life and call forth my destiny and now I'm that woman of God that I was destined to be. But I couldn't have done it without the church, so despite every false claim and the slandering of the church's name, the church is still a home for the backslidden, and

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a hospital for the bedridden because in the church miracles, signs and wonders are still being manifested.

The church has stood the test of time and is still being tested. That's why Jesus said, I build my rocks upon this church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. So the enemy may have declared war on the church, but most importantly it's on your soul, which is bold but his goal is to keep you from the church so that God's plans for your life will never have a chance to unfold.



A woman revisits her childhood. The account of her diary depicts memories of a child deprived of love. Memories of ongoing years of sexual and physical abuse begin to resurface. She sought out refuge in the church at fifteen and began preaching the gospel. However, she backslid into a lifestyle of drug and alcohol dependence and promiscuity with women. On April 6th, 2008, God gave her a second chance, and raised her up to become an overcomer.

The Diary of an Overcomer

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