



WEEKLY STUDY

Week One

Pastor Jacob began a new sermon series to start 2022. Jesus said, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” The promise heading into a new year is not that it will be easy or without trouble. If anything, we have all come to anticipate trouble. It would be easy for us to lose heart, but Jesus calls us to look up from the trouble we face and take heart in Jesus’ ability to overcome the world with his life, death, and resurrection.

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional question at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture, follow the daily prayer prompt, and then pray this or your own prayer.

*Come, Lord Jesus.
You know all about the troubles we face today.
Give us strength to persevere even in times of great trials.
For we know that you have overcome the world.
Therefore we take heart.
Amen.*

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: JOHN 16.16, 28

Jesus went on to say, “In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.”

²⁸I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.”

- When we enter a covenant (like marriage) we say it is true “until death do us part.” When Jesus begins to talk to his disciples about his upcoming departure they must have felt a real sense of ending. They had experienced hard times even when Jesus was with them, now they had to imagine life without him for a time. That moment captures the sense of the entire world on the three days before Easter. There is waiting, there is trouble, but there is hope.
- *As you pray today, recall the feeling of that time between Good Friday and Easter morning. Pay attention to the longing for Jesus to show up again.*

TUESDAY: JOHN 16.20-22

Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy.²¹ A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world.²² So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

- Jesus knew what his disciples would face in the days after his death. He knew what we would face today when the world seems indifferent to the trouble we experience. The comparison of that sense of pain and longing to childbirth is vivid. The joy of what is to come gives us hope in the waiting.
- *Pray with assurance for the new things God wants to do in your life this year.*

WEDNESDAY: JOHN 16.33

³³“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.”

- Jesus has been glimpsing into the future on behalf of the disciples. It's not all rosey—disciples will fail from time to time. But all of this is in the context of Jesus the Messiah and his promised return. Sometimes with Jesus it looks like death has one. Sometimes it looks like the pull of the world is too much. Those are the moments for which Jesus says, “Take heart! I have overcome the world.”
- *As you pray, take stock of the state of the world around you. Take stock of the condition of your heart. Then physically look up if you can and thank Jesus whose love, life, and resurrection has overcome it all.*

THURSDAY: DEUTERONOMY 31.6

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”

- With these words, Moses passed along leadership of God's people to Joshua. The people were about to enter into the promised land—a place and a promise that had motivated them for generations through the wilderness. Can you see yourself approaching some of the promises God has put before you? What is your role in seeing them and walking into them?
- *Pray for the courage of Moses that you might be used in the fulfillment of God's promises, places that you yourself may not even enter in this world.*

FRIDAY: PHILIPPIANS 4.12-13

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.¹³ I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

- As the first full week of 2022 comes to a close, hopefully some truths are coming into focus. Contentment in Christ is the key to a life well lived. We will have trouble (as Paul knew when he wrote these words) but Christ is our strength. In him our challenges meet their defeat.
- Use these words of Paul as a prayer refrain throughout the day, “I can do all this through him who gives me strength.”

SATURDAY: PSALM 46.1-3

*God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.*

² *Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,*

³ *though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.*

- These words were written well before the age of cinema and special effects that aid us in imagining such things as the earth giving way and the mountains falling into the sea. What had the writers of Psalm 46 seen or heard about? It may be easy for us to imagine mountains quaking and surging in our age. The earth seems unsteady beneath our feet at times. Remembering that God is ever-present and a help to us can steady our footing in uncertain times.
- As you pray, remember the promises of God in the face of troubles. Pray out loud, “Therefore I will not fear!”

- See reverse for Small Group Discussion -

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

In his message, Pastor Jacob said,

“And when we lose heart, we become discouraged. And our discouragement leads to a negative outlook that is not based on the confidence of Jesus' power. And the negative outlook leads to negative self-talk, negative other people talk, and a negative spiral.

And I think we have the opportunity to not choose the negative spiral for 2022. We don't have to go there...but because of the reality that Jesus is letting us in on—that trouble is just a part of it. When trouble happens this week, don't say my life is over, or my week is over, say well of course it did, it's Tuesday, Jesus told me that was going happen, but the other reality that we claim is that Jesus overcame the cross, overcame our sin, overcame our troubles, overcame death. Jesus overcame the world.”

- Do you recognize the pattern that leads to a negative spiral? Do you recognize that you are susceptible to that? Is it easier to recognize downward spiral-thinking in others?
- How can you practice sitting in the reality that there is trouble in this world, while staying focused on the fact that Jesus has overcome the world.