

# ...BUT GOD!

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## Introduction:

### **A. Some of the most amazing things happen when we think we are facing an impossible situation!**

1. As a sports fan, it doesn't get any better than when it looks like your team doesn't stand a chance of pulling off a victory, then the impossible happens & before you know it, you're celebrating!
  - a. In baseball it's the bottom of the ninth, your team is down by four, & the best closer in all MLB steps on the mound. What makes it worse is the bottom your team's line-up is up to bat! Hopeless? A few hits, a few walk, & an error scores three runs. Suddenly, with one crack of the bat the impossible happens and your team has won the game!
  - b. In football it is being down by 6 points. The other team is kicking off with only 4 seconds less. Nothing short of a run back for a TD could do any good. Hopeless? With a few laterals and some incredible blocks you find yourself celebrating with fellow fans!
  - c. We know that "Anything can happen" but we also know this is the exception, not the rule!
2. When we turn to the Bible we see God not only loves situations similar to these, but it appears God does some of His greatest works in the midst of impossible situations!
  - a. Maybe God chooses to do such great work in these situations, often waiting until the impossible has arisen to do anything at all, to display for us the greatness of His power and the immeasurable depth of His love bringing us to trust in Him more!
  - b. We must do what Nehemiah admonished – Remember the Lord! When we remember the God we serve, impossible situations become conquerable! (**Nehemiah 4:14**)
  - c. When we face the money factor, the guilt factor, the people factor, the past factor, the employment factor, the health factor, the relationship... Don't forget the God factor!

### **B. When facing impossible situations, insurmountable odds, and walking down a dead end streets in life, there's a small two word phrase in the scriptures that suddenly instills hope & confidence – BUT GOD!**

1. I found about 105 passages in the Bible that described a certain circumstance or event and then turned right around and said, "But God!" or "But the Lord." For each of those verses there is another story in the Bible where the "But God" factor is seen w/o using those exact terms!
2. Consider a few of the "But God" passages we have – See God those two words change everything!
3. This phrase reminds us God never deserts us, that He overcomes our failures, that He creates victory from defeat, and that God reveals Himself in ways beyond our imagination!

## **LET'S LOOK AT SOME "...BUT GOD" SCRIPTURES & LEARN THE POWER AND HOPE THAT LIES IN TRUSTING IN THE GOD OF IMPOSSIBLE OR DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES!**

### **A. To me, the greatest "...But God" statements comes in answer to the most impossible situation and the greatest problem man has ever faced: We were lost in our sins without hope... But God!**

1. Before Paul could tell his readers in Rome, "...But God!" he had to instill in them the depth of the hopelessness of man apart from Christ because of sin:
  - a. Remember how the first part of Romans is set up like a courtroom scene. We are reading the words typed up by the court reporter. God is the judge, Paul is the prosecuting attorney, & the whole world is on trial. For now, Jesus isn't present in the court room

- b. After presenting his arguments Paul summarizes the case against man saying there is none righteous because all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God **(Rom 3:10, 23)**
  - c. Man is left defenseless! Satan will accuse us and God cannot overlook our sins **(Rom 3:19)**
  - d. When you consider that the whole world will stand before God to be judged according to their works & the wages of sin is death, man was hopelessly lost! **(Rom 2:16; 6:23)**
2. Man's situation was hopeless, then we read those two words that changed everything – "But God" – But God shows His love for us! **(Romans 5:6-11)**
- a. How many of you would be willing to die for a good person, a righteous person? Maybe a few of us would. But who among us would die for an unrighteous person? If people don't die for wicked people man's problem is intensified... Who'd die to save man?
  - b. We were weak, we were ungodly, we were unrighteous, we were sinners, & were enemies of God → This is what it means to be lost! However, the next words say, "But God!"
  - c. But God demonstrated His love for us... But God sent His Son to die for us... But God justified us through His blood... But God saved us from the wrath that was to come!
  - d. Let's go back to the court room scene... Just as the gavel is about sound bringing a guilty verdict to all mankind carrying the sentence of an eternal death of separation from God in the pains of Hell, Jesus enters the room and says, "See, here's the blood!" and the sentence of "JUSTIFIED" is reached! Now there's hope, peace, and forgiveness!
3. Later Paul describes the same situation with slightly different words – We were dead in our trespasses and sins... "BUT GOD" – But God made us alive again! **(Ephesians 2:1-6)**
- a. Notice how Paul just piles on phrase after phrase to capture how dark it is to be lost – It's a dark condition, a dark direction for living, a dark relationship, and a dark future!
  - b. Notice the past tense → We were dead, we were following the direction of this world, we were under Satan's control, we were living by our own fleshly desires, we were heading toward a judgment filled with wrath! We were lost... until BUT GOD!
  - c. We were lost, BUT GOD showed rich mercy saving us! We were dead, BUT GOD showed us great love and made us alive! We were drowning in our sins, BUT GOD showed grace raising us to sit in the heavenly places with Christ! BUT GOD changes everything!
  - c. This section starts with the word "And" – Paul had been discussing the great power of God in chapter 1 & continues that in chapter 2. God's power is seen in raising Jesus from the dead. Another way His great power is displayed is in changing man's lost state!
4. When we look at the Christians in Corinth, we see a group of people for whom this "but God" worked incredible changes in their life! **(1 Cor 6:9-11)**

## **B. When we lose our health and sickness seems to become the norm... But God!**

1. One of the most difficult things to deal with in life is the loss of your health or having to watch a loved one struggling with failing health:
  - a. Health problems are especially difficult because not only do you face a battle but because your health is being attacked, you don't feel good enough to deal with it!
  - b. Losing your health can cause you to get very frustrated and discouraged, it can cause you to lose hope, it can cause a person to question their faith, and some simply give up!
  - c. When you have a loved one who has lost or is losing their health, you feel helpless, there's not much you can do, watching them suffer hurts, & it can impact your faith as well!

- d. It's no wonder when Satan tried to shipwreck the faith of Job he went after Job's health. When losing his possessions didn't work, and having his children killed didn't work, Satan turned to one last thing to destroy his faith, Satan attacked his health (**Job 2:7**)
- 2. Epaphroditus was so sick he almost died, BUT GOD blessed him with healing (**Phil 2:25-27**)
  - a. Here's a man who is a man of faith, a great worker in the kingdom, a close friend of Paul, a man who was more concerned about others than himself... and yet he became sick
  - b. His situation seemed hopeless & others were already filled with sorrow on his behalf, but God answered with mercy! God is able to reverse the health problems we have!
  - c. Another case is Hezekiah who not only was sick, but was told he would die by God. He had a SURE death sentence – Yet he prayed & was given 18 more years! (**2 Kings 20:1-5**)
  - c. When we pray for the sick, even those near to death, we can pray with faith because we're praying to the God of impossible circumstances! Yes, it may seem hopeless to man, but Lazarus seemed hopeless, Jesus seemed hopeless, the man blind from his birth seemed hopeless, and Epaphroditus seemed hopeless – then we see, "But God!"
- 3. But obviously, it is not always the will of God that we be healed. What do you do then? While Asaph saw his health and body failing him, he found strength in "but God" (**Psalms 73:26**)
  - a. This psalmist had been struggling with a question we all have when we are physically sick or hurting. Why did the wicked seem to enjoy good health while he was suffering & had tried to live a righteous life – He knows God is good, but it didn't make sense!
  - b. As Asaph's doubt builds toward unbelief he enters the temple to worship & his perspective changes. He realizes ultimately the righteous will be upheld by God & the wicked will reap what they've sown. Worship brought him to see from God's perspective!
  - c. He knows his physical heart was failing, but God would give his spiritual heart strength! He knows his flesh, life on earth, was ending, but God would be his inheritance forever!
  - d. Asaph came to receive hope and was able to be strong in the midst of his health problems because He focused on God and drew himself closer to God! (**verse 23-24, 28**)
- 4. Sometimes we may feel like our health and other physical problems may limit us, but God may have great plans for us that may involve using this suffering for good! (**2 Cor 1:3-7**)
  - a. He probably is referring to suffering persecution because he's talking sharing in Christ's suffering... The afflictions were intense and he speaks of them being abundant
  - b. Paul shows an attitude that's so admirable, but so hard to copy... He saw his hardships as a tool in God's hands for giving comfort & strength to those under similar pressures
  - c. While God could have removed Paul's suffering, God had other plans... There was a need for an example, a need for someone to strengthen others, & God used Paul for that!
- 5. Health problems & physical difficulties are a part of this life. Sometimes God answers with mercy providing healing, sometimes God's plans carry us through the hardship, but God always says, "My grace is sufficient for you, My power is made perfect in weakness" (**2 Cor 12:9**)

### **C. When temptation arises and Satan threatens to destroy us remember... BUT GOD!**

- 1. I am sure all of us are aware of the fact that when a person becomes a Christian, that doesn't mark the end of our battle against sin & the devil, but only the beginning:
  - a. Before your baptism into Christ you weren't really having to battle the devil because you were in on his team. And while you may have not wanted to be guilty of certain sins and you tried to resist those temptations, outside of Christ sin owned all of us!

- b. The devil doesn't fight against those who already belong to him and those who are currently sold under sin... But he is the accuser & enemy of Christians! **(Rev 12:10-12)**
  - c. Our daily struggle against sin & the attacks of the devil is intense, it is a real war, it is a battle that takes place on the fields of our hearts & minds, and it's stakes are eternal!
- 2. During His life on earth, Jesus spent a good bit of time in defeating and binding Satan... Whether through His teaching, casting out demons, or ultimately His death & resurrection **(Mark 3:23-27)**
  - a. There was a man possessed by a demon which made him run around naked in the tombs and cut himself often... BUT JESUS! There was a young boy who was possessed by a demon which made him throw himself down on the ground... BUT JESUS!
  - b. Through His perfect resistance to sin in His, through His death on the cross, & through His resurrection from the grave Jesus bound Satan and destroyed his power over us!
  - c. As temptation arises we can say, "But Jesus!" – But Jesus left a perfect example to follow, but Jesus is at the Father's right hand interceding for us having experienced what we are facing, but Jesus shed His blood giving us the power we need to conquer sin!
- 3. When temptation stares us in the face, we can know with full assurance of faith that there will be a "But God" – Temptation arises, but God provides what we need to overcome it! **(1 Cor 10:13)**
  - a. In the moment we may think our temptations are more powerful than those any others face, that they're somehow different, & that we are drawn like a moth to a flame & we are somehow powerless to resist it's magnetic like pull... But this is totally wrong!
  - b. Our temptations may feel like this, but, there's another "BUT GOD" – If the devil brings temptations before us God makes sure that we're able to conquer them first!
  - c. We know based on God's faithfulness that He'll provide a way of escape for us! The word "provide" literally means "to create" ...God always makes sure there's a way out!
  - d. While we see "But God" provides a way of escape, Satan has a way of escape as well... His way is the temporarily easier way, it's the way of compromise, it's the way of least resistance, it's the more appealing way, but it's the way of sin and death!
  - e. The next verse says, "Therefore flee..." and ends this section with a call to choose between the Lord & the devil & says we can't partake of both. Ultimately, the decision is ours!
- 4. When Satan seeks hard to destroy our faith, we see another "But God" entering the picture as God responds to the devil's attacks with grace and glory! **(1 Peter 5:8-11)**
  - a. It sounds hopeless... The devil walks about as a roaring lion seeking to devour our faith! This sounds bad enough, but we all know our weaknesses & struggles... We like that wounded gazelle limping along! BUT GOD gives us the grace needed to be victorious
  - b. We have seen that through suffering God works great things in us & through us. Now we see this principle at work in our war with the devil. After going through the fires of temptation God Himself restores us, confirms us, strengthens us, and establishes us!
  - c. It's not that a mature Christian is never tempted by sin or even that he never sins. But he doesn't give in to the temptations near as much as one who's young in their faith. Why? A mature Christian has fought the battles, resisted sin, & are stronger for it!
  - d. Every time we face temptation and we choose to do what is right we are gaining strength for the next time. Every time we don't choose to do what is right, we lose strength.
  - e. It's a growing process toward perfection... While God doesn't tempt us, He does use our temptations to conform us to the image of His Son! But it takes our cooperation!
- 5. Perhaps there are some who do try to tear us down spiritually, we may feel like the heat from temptation is intense, & it may seem Satan is constantly shooting fiery darts at us, BUT GOD

will protect & deliver us! It just comes down to whether we desire to do right more than we desire to do wrong! How badly do we really want a righteous life? (**2 Thess 3:3; 2 Pet 2:9**)

**D. When our determinations, desires, and dreams are different from God's, we see another "BUT GOD"**

1. As people of faith we really try to trust in the Lord at all times; however, this can be a difficult thing when it becomes clear that our plans for our life is not always God's plans for our life:
  - a. From our perspective, not God's, this point is different from the others we have seen thus far because to an extent we view this as a negative thing. It just doesn't sound like the other points: "We were lost in sin... but God! We may experienced the loss of our health... but God! We may be facing temptation... but God!" But now we have come to, "We have certain plans & expectations for our life... but God!"
  - b. Maybe it's the young couple who've dream of a family overflowing with children. They have bright hopes for their future! But God's plans take them in a different direction
  - c. Maybe it's one who has great expectations for a certain field of work or corporation. Their future seems promising to them, but God has something else in store for their future
  - d. This can happen in our personal health, dating relationships, where we want to live, our families, when we plan to retire, or even in spiritual works we want to undertake, etc
  - e. It's difficult to apply this principle to every aspect of our lives because we don't know every time whether something is God working out His will for our life or some other cause – Like time & chance, being part of an imperfect world, our own decisions, etc
  - f. It's easy to walk by faith when God's plans for our lives are going in the same direction as our desires & expectations... but how do we respond when His plans are different?
2. David had great plans for building a permanent house of worship for God, but God's desires were different from David's dreams (**1 Chron 28:2-3**)
  - a. This sounds like a great idea... He wants to build a temple to house the ark of the covenant & for worship to take place. God's not opposed to the idea in general because He says the temple will be built, but not by David... What he wants to do is a good thing!
  - b. God tells David His plan was for Solomon to build it, not David. This had to hurt David, a man who loved to worship God, but he humbly & gladly surrenders to God's plan!
  - c. Instead of getting bitter about the situation David rejoices in what God has blessed him with and gets behind and encourages the building of the temple by Solomon!
  - d. He knows he can't be the one to build the temple since it's not God's will, so he prepares Solomon for it by encouraging him to be faithful and collecting the needed supplies!
3. Jonah had certain expectations when it came to preaching the words of the Lord, but the Lord had determined to take him in a different direction and Jonah wrestled with this (**Jonah 1:4; 4:7**)
  - a. Jonah had a specific concept of God's people → He saw them as the group of people within the walls of Jerusalem. Like most good Jews he looked down upon the Gentiles & couldn't see God working among them... especially those of Ninevah!
  - b. BUT GOD had another concept... God saw all people as belonging to Him, although some certainly didn't live for Him, and God cared about all people, even those of Ninevah!
  - c. So when God called Jonah to go and preach to Ninevah is was a decision that SHOCKED Jonah to the core! It shocked him so much he tried to run from God... BUT GOD did pursued him. Jonah didn't want to go to Ninevah, BUT GOD had other plans!

- d. When Jonah preached and Ninevah repented, Jonah pouted. As he sits under the tree, thankful for it, he harbored feelings of contempt for the Ninevites... **BUT GOD** sent that worm to devour the tree teaching Jonah a great lesson about love & compassion
- e. Ananias had similar feelings when God asked him to preach the gospel of Christ to a man called "Saul of Tarsus." This was certainly not a "mission trip" Ananias expected or ever dreamed he'd take, but it was the Lord's will & so he submitted to it! **(Acts 9:15)**
- 4. Sometimes we may have dreams, desires, and determinations, BUT GOD'S plans for our lives are far better. Faith surrenders our plans to the plans of the Lord! **(Proverbs 16:2, 7, 9)**
  - a. Outside of determining what is right and wrong, it is true that we often cannot know for sure what God's specific plans may be for our lives... Since God doesn't speak directly to us like or send prophets specifically to us, we have to simply do the best we can
  - b. We should pray for God to make the best direction for our life clear to us... then continue to serve Him and make the best out of whatever situation you have to face.
  - c. **Illustration:** Conversation with Josh... Took responsibility & wasn't bitter... Recognized that getting caught was the best thing for him & Laurie, though it was hard to see that at the time... And said that while he knew God could get him out of prison, that doesn't seem to be God's will, so God must still be using him and working on him there
  - d. When we are taken in a direction different from our expectations or our dreams, whether by our own choices, chance, or God's doing we must realize that if we respond in faith God can and will make the most out of our lives to His glory & our salvation!

#### **E. When others threaten and seek to destroy us... BUT GOD!**

- 1. It would seem natural to us that those who are striving to serve God would have no enemies and would not have anyone trying to destroy them, but this is far from the case:
  - a. Throughout the Bible, from the murder of Cain in Genesis to the persecution & martyrdom of Christians shown in Revelation, God's people have always faced great opposition
  - b. This hardly seems fair and it does not make sense – The people who are living the golden rule, who love their neighbors as themselves, who live righteously have enemies!
  - c. This may come in the form of persecution for our faith and it may come in the form of personal attacks. Having to face opposition from others is discouraging, difficult to do right in the midst of it, and emotionally it can cause us great pain... But God!
- 2. Outside of Jesus, possible the person who faced the greatest amount of personal attacks and opposition is David **(Psalm 18:18; 37:1, 12-13, 17)**
  - a. From the time of his youth, when he slew the giant Goliath, and Saul tried to kill him with a spear out of jealousy through the time of his old age when people, even his own son, tried to usurp his authority and take his throne away – David faced great opposition!
  - b. Many of the psalms capture not only David's struggle to just keep going but also the way he turned the problems over to God in faith... He knows God is still in control
  - c. People were literally seeking to destroy David all of his life, some of them were complete strangers, but David does not allow them to influence him to sin or destroy his faith
- 3. Consider some others who saw personal attacks and oppositions, some for their faith, and some because they were around people who were simply wicked:
  - a. Nehemiah – Was trying to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem, but three men named Tobiah, Sanballat, & Geshem saw their control & influence slipping away. They sought diligently to destroy him – Physically & by false rumors! **(Neh 4:8; 6:1-9, 13)**

- b. Jeremiah – Called by God to preach a difficult message, in a difficult time, to a difficult people. They rejected him and opposed him physically – But God! (**Jeremiah 20:11**)
- c. Paul – There was a group of Jews who followed him from city to city as he preached, raising up opposition against him. Even while he was in prison for his faith, some were preaching the gospel in order to add affliction to his chains (**Phil 1:15-18**)
- d. We could go on... Joseph, S.M.A, Daniel, Stephen, John, & many others! (**Heb 11:36-38**)
- 4. Certainly, the ultimate example of one who faced such opposition is Jesus (**1 Pet 2:22-23**)
  - a. The Jewish leaders were consistently trying to trick Him into saying something they could twist into something else so they could destroy His influence or get Him arrested
  - b. His motives were attacked, His identity was questioned, the good He did said to be the work of Satan, as well as despised & forsaken – Jesus knows what opposition is like!
  - c. The greatest opposition man could bring was to crucify Him – This was the ultimate form of rejection. His enemies waged a war against Jesus that culminated in His death – As the sun went down that Friday evening, they were sure they had won.
  - d. In facing opposition, He responded with love, grace, & forgiveness. He trusted completely His Father would take care of the matter. There is our example and standard!
  - e. Jesus knew some men may seek to destroy Him, BUT GOD would raise Him up... BUT GOD would punish their wickedness one day... BUT GOD would affirm Him & exalt Him!
- 5. It may be that we face opposition that comes in the form of personal attacks, not because of our faith, but simply because they want to destroy us for some physical reason (**Romans 12:17-21**)
  - a. A person gets angry over some perceived injustice, on the job a person wants to push you out of the way to get promoted, out of greed & covetousness a person wants to take what you have, they spread rumors because you're getting the praise they want
  - b. There's a tendency to let the carnal, fleshly side of us get the best of us and to lash out in retaliation. We want them to know WHO they're messing with... That's the problem!
  - c. Who are they messing with? Hopefully we'll let them know they are messing with a child of God and we respond differently. Why? Because we trust in God who will handle the matter! We don't have to vindicate ourselves because we know God knows!
  - d. The key to the response that Paul tells us to have is trust – "Leave it to the wrath of God..."
- 6. We may face opposition because of our faith – May be what we believe, the righteous standard we live by, our stand for our convictions, or our support of those treated unjustly (**2 Tim 4:16-18**)
  - a. When no man stood beside Paul as he faced persecution for his faith, he knew he was not only... Man deserted him, BUT GOD stood with him and strengthened him!
  - b. Once Paul understood that God was with him and saw the strength God gave him, Paul was able to respond to those who opposed him by abandonment with forgiveness!
  - c. **John 3:17-21** tells us why people respond to "the light" with antagonism – They know their deeds are evil & the light exposes that. If we walk in the light, our lives will do this!
  - d. It's dangerous to minimize the opposition we may face for our faith – Even though we don't foresee having to die for our faith, persecution is still alive and powerful:
    - 1) Some are ostracized by their peers because they live by a different standard
    - 2) Some have had to give up job, or have even been fired, because of their morality, their putting the Lord, and their refusal to be dishonest in business practices
    - 3) Some have had to face opposition in their relationships – Maybe their family turns against them, spouse mocks their faith, girlfriend or boyfriend breaks it off

7. Isaiah talks maybe in a dual sense of himself and ultimately of Christ - Notice the trusting way of faith they respond to opposition and the determination with which they face it (**Isa 50:5-11**)

**F. When we must come to grips with our own mortality, when we are forced to face our own death, even in this seemingly impossible circumstance we see the words, "...But God"**

1. Coming to face our own mortality and even our own death is something that can be very scary, discouraging, and uncertain but it is something we all must do:
  - a. It has been said that once a person is born they start dying and there's a great deal of truth in that – We all bear reminders that our bodies are wearing down & decaying
  - b. None of us know exactly when we are going to die, you can't tell by age or the appearance of health, but some may feel closer to that point than others due to age or illness
  - c. What do you when you get the news, "I'm sorry, it's cancer," when you turn around and suddenly realize you have more years behind you than you have in front of you, or when you've buried your friends or parents and you realize, "Next time it will be me"
  - d. **Illustration:** Jungle Book – Wise owl says to Mowgli, "Death Steps Aside For No One"
2. We read in the Bible about a man who lived some 2000 years ago whose life was taken by death, whose body was placed in a tomb, BUT JESUS raised him & gave back his life! (**John 11:41-44**)
  - a. Everyone around the tomb that day understood one thing – DEATH is final... Once a person "crossed that river," so to speak, there was no coming back. Lazarus had been dead for four days now. He was wrapped, buried, & the tomb was sealed... Impossible!
  - b. They had faith that there would be a resurrection on the final day, but coming back to live in the flesh again seemed hopeless... especially after having been dead for so long!
  - c. This miracle was proof that Jesus was everything He said He was, but it also showed them that not even death, the most powerful force on earth, could conquer the Lord!
3. A short time later, Jesus, the Son of God, had to face His own death, but knew that after the pain of the cross and burial in the tomb, there would be a "But God" (**Acts 13:26-30**)
  - a. This point is repeated throughout the sermons to the Jews recorded in Acts – You condemned Jesus even though He was innocent... You delivered Him over to be crucified... **BUT GOD** raised Him from the dead! They forgot about the God factor!
  - b. Jesus certainly was filled with sorrow as He thought of the suffering of the cross; however, He faced the cross with confidence and even joy knowing what was on the other side
  - c. We think of the cross as the focal point of the gospel, but it's the fact that God raised Jesus from the dead that gives the power to the cross... Many men had been crucified, but only one had been raised from the dead... Death had to step aside for Jesus!
4. Because of the resurrection of Jesus, we can face our own mortality and death with the same kind of assurance with which Jesus faced the cross. We know there'll be a "But God" (**1 Cor 15:51-57**)
  - a. While growing older, dealing with illness, and know death is near for us may be difficult, we can have peace, confidence, & joy because we know what lies on the other side!
  - b. The cross removed the sting from death and the resurrection robbed it of its power
  - c. **Illustration:** Read the words to song, "Resurrection" – It's not just about having hope when our loved ones pass away, but having the faith to face our own mortality!
5. As our faith in the God who gives life to the dead strengthens, our perspective of our own life changes (**Romans 4:17-25**)
  - a. The epistles consistently reference the fact that God raised Jesus from the dead as the foundation of our salvation, faith, confidence, manner of living, motivation, etc...

- b. Consider some passages which emphasize the impact faith in the resurrecting God has:
- 1) **1 Thess 1:9-10** – It reassures us that God will send Jesus back to take us home and it reassures us God will save us from His wrath we have earned through sin
  - 2) **Col 2:11-13** – Assures that God is powerful enough to remove our sins raising us from spiritual death & bringing us into a state of eternal life through baptism
  - 3) **Eph 1:19-20** – The same power he displayed in raising Jesus, He uses to work in us
  - 4) **Rom 6:4-11** – We receive direction & purpose – God raised Jesus up by His glory & He has raised us up by His glory as well to live for Him in newness of life
- c. The resurrection of Jesus does not only give us confidence to face death, but gives us the strength and assurance we need to live righteously, to face our daily battles against temptation, to endure the struggles we may face, & it gives us purpose for living

### Introduction:

Start With This Example: A young but struggling couple is filled with excitement as they have learned they are expecting a new child. They can't afford much and wonder how they will provide for their new son. Despite their financial distress they are filled with hope as they think about their little bundle of joy that is coming. Soon the day arrives and they are blessed with a seemingly healthy son. They dream about his future and are hopeful that maybe he can change the family history and bring them out of their poverty. As the days turn into weeks and a month passes their joy turns to sadness as they realize their son is blind. For the rest of his life he is not going to be able to see a thing. The dreams they had for their son's future are now just a painful memory. He goes through his childhood into being a young adult without the ability to see. Everywhere he goes people have led him by the hand and he has been dependant on others for his existence. Since his family does not have much money, he is left to sit around the city and hope those who pass by are generous and give him a little change. People see him as having a pitiful existence... BUT GOD! In this case, but the Son of God meets him one day and restores his sight. Now the dreams, the future, and the life are restored!

Next Review Previous Points...

Illustration From The Jungle Book: Mowgli, the man cub, asks the animals what's the most feared thing in the jungle. He's told that when two animals meet on a narrow path that one must step aside and let the other pass. The animal that steps aside for no one would then be the most feared. Mowgli wants to know what kind of animal would that be? One tells him it's an elephant. Another tells him it's a lion. Finally the wise owl exclaims, "The most feared thing in the jungle is death. It steps aside for no one."