

# 26-0524a - Detailed Summary

26-0524a - *Victim or Victorious, Choosing Your Response to Hardship*, Tom Freed

Bible Readers: John Nousek and Roger Raines

This detailed summary by Grok, xAI, (Transcription by TurboScribe.ai)

See the transcript: [Transcript HTML](#) - [Transcript PDF](#)

## Victim or Victorious

### Choosing Your Response to Hardship

#### Scripture Readings

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading** (0:04 - 1:04): John Nousek

**Genesis 50:19-21:** The service begins with the first Scripture reader, John, sharing from Genesis chapter 50, verses 19 through 21. Joseph tells his brothers not to be afraid, acknowledging that while they intended evil against him, God meant it for good to preserve many people alive. Joseph assures them he will provide for them and their families, comforts them, and speaks kindly to them.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reading** (1:09 - 1:53): Roger Raines

**Romans 8:35-37:** Next, the second Scripture reader, Roger, reads from Romans chapter 8, verses 35 through 37. He asks who can separate us from the love of Christ, listing tribulations, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword. Quoting scripture, he notes that for God's sake we face death all day long like sheep for slaughter, but in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loves us.

## Summary of Transcript (0:04 - 16:59), Preacher: Tom Freed

### (1:58 - 5:00) Introduction and Ben Kerr's Story

Preacher Tom greets the congregation, humorously apologizing for being late and mentioning he was testing them, referencing the need to be prepared in season and out of season. He notes it is his turn in the preaching rotation with six preachers, and encourages attendance for John preaching that night. The sermon title is "Victim or Victorious? Choosing Your Response to Hardship."

Tom shares the powerful story of Ben Kerr, star of the Angel Studios movie **Standout**. Born with Crouzon Syndrome, which affected his skull and face development, Ben faced constant stares, bullying from children and adults from a young age. While buying candy alone for the first time, a father pulled his children away, warning they might catch something from him and treating him like a monster. Devastated, Ben hid in the bathroom at home, despairing and wanting to remove his deformed face.

Before he could act on those dark thoughts, his mother entered, hugged him tightly, and cried with him. She was not a coddler but a cuddler, choosing not to tell him to hide from the cruel world. Instead, she comforted him and said God did not make a mistake—He made Ben this way for a reason. The world would notice him, and he should use that attention for something great. She presented the choice: "You can be the victim or you can be the victor." Ben chose victory, stepping onto the wrestling mat and becoming a champion.

## **(5:08 - 7:28) Applying the Message to Everyone**

Tom emphasizes that while Ben's story is powerful, the message applies to everyone. All people face hardships such as bullying, broken relationships, sickness, betrayal, loss, or worse. No one escapes life unscathed, though some endure more than others. Everyone has experienced pain and trials.

The world and the enemy push a victim mentality, wanting people to stay defined by what happened to them—depressed, bitter, angry, and helpless, replaying trauma instead of God's promises. Culture often encourages staying defined by past wrongs, even those before one's birth. However, being a victim of circumstances differs from choosing to live as a victim. Pain is inevitable; the key question is how one responds. The sermon examines biblical figures who faced severe hardship but chose victory over victimhood.

## **(7:28 - 12:29) Biblical Examples of Victory Over Victimhood**

Tom first highlights Joseph, sold into slavery by his brothers, falsely accused, and imprisoned for years. Despite every right to bitterness, when facing his brothers again, Joseph declared that while they meant evil, God meant it for good to preserve many lives. Instead of revenge, Joseph saw God's hand, forgave his brothers, rose to power, and saved nations including the family that harmed him.

Next is Job, who lost everything—children, health, wealth, and reputation—in one blow. Even his wife urged him to curse God and die. Though Job wrestled with God and questioned during suffering, he never cursed Him, declaring "Though He slay me, yet I will trust in Him" (Job 13:15). Job refused victimhood, kept trusting, and God ultimately restored and blessed him more than before.

The apostle Paul endured beatings, shipwrecks, stonings, danger, and imprisonments. Stoned and left for dead outside a city, he got up and returned to the city. He declared thanks to God for victory through Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57) and refused to let suffering define him as a victim, pressing forward in his mission.

The ultimate example is Jesus, betrayed, falsely accused, mocked, beaten, and crucified unjustly. Instead of claiming victim status, He prayed "Father, forgive them" and rose victorious over sin, death, hell, and the grave three days later. Because Jesus is the ultimate victor, believers do not have to remain victims. Romans 8:37 states that in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loves us.

## **(12:29 - 15:55) Practical Steps to Move from Victim to Victor**

Tom encourages taking pain and letting Jesus turn it into purpose, just as Ben used his challenges for good. Five practical steps are offered:

First, bring pain honestly to Jesus without hiding it. Let Him hold and comfort you, as the Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit (Psalm 34:18).

Second, stop rehearsing only the trauma. Quit telling the old victim story and start sharing what God is doing now. Forget the former things and do not dwell on the past, as God is doing a new thing (Isaiah 43:18-19). Every day brings new mercies and opportunities.

Third, look for God's purpose. Ask how God can use the pain for good and His glory. God works all

things for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28). Even darkest times can lead to good, such as Tom's own lowest point leading him to become a Christian.

Fourth, walk in forgiveness and freedom. Release those who hurt you, as Joseph and Jesus did. Be kind, compassionate, and forgiving, just as God forgave in Christ (Ephesians 4:32).

Fifth, stand daily on God's Word. Fill the mind with scripture to avoid conforming to the world and be transformed by renewing the mind (Romans 12:2) through reading, studying, and meditating on the Bible.

### **(15:55 - 16:59) Conclusion and Invitation**

Tom concludes that Jesus presents the same choice today: victim or victorious. Believers do not need to carry past burdens, as Jesus carried them on the cross and rose victorious so others could walk in victory. Today is the day to choose.

He invites those tired of being defined by pain, those ready to become victors through Christ, those who have never given their life to Jesus, those needing to rededicate, or those seeking church prayers to come forward as the congregation stands and sings. Come lay burdens at His feet and choose victory in Christ.