



# DISCUSSION GUIDE

November 2/5, 2017

**SEVEN: Take Heart – The Battle Within**  
**BIG IDEA: We can choose to strengthen ourselves in the Lord or weaken ourselves in the circumstances.**

## GROUPS VISION

We believe life transformation happens when we engage with other people, with Jesus as our focus, and take next steps together. A next step is where we Ask, Listen, and Respond to take any action that advances our journey with Jesus.

**My Story** An encounter with Jesus leaves a story to tell. Share yours at [valleycreek.org/MyStory](http://valleycreek.org/MyStory).  
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## KEY VERSE

**"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."**

**John 16:33**

## POTENTIAL NEXT STEP

In difficult situations, we need to close our eyes to the problems and open our eyes to His promises. Set aside some time to write down the promises of God. He will never leave you. He is your provider. He gives you strength.

Choose to focus on the promises rather than the problem.

## MAIN POINTS & SCRIPTURES

One of the defining aspects of being a follower of Jesus is how we handle difficult circumstances. How we handle difficulties reveals what we believe about God and what is in our hearts. When we believe our God is bigger than our circumstances, we strengthen ourselves in the Lord. **(1 Samuel 30:1-6)** Having an inadequate view of the love of God, we will always create an unhealthy view of the circumstances in life. When we learn how to strengthen ourselves in the Lord, we will have joy amid the worst circumstances and reveal the love of God to the world around us. **(James 1:2)**

Three thoughts about difficult circumstances:

1. We need/crave comfort. When seeking comfort during difficult times, do we turn to work, Facebook, Netflix, alcohol? Jesus gives us true comfort and rest to keep going. **(Matthew 11:28)** Everything we pursue, apart from Jesus, makes us weaker than we already are and makes us enslaved to it. **(2 Peter 2:19)**
2. We cannot step into our destiny until we strengthen ourselves in the Lord. When we are facing opposition remember to stop and seek the Lord. **(Nehemiah 6:9)** Being content and having faith in Jesus will give us the strength to keep going. **(Philippians 4:11-13, Psalm 121:1-2)**
3. When we win the battle in our heart;
  - a) We will walk in victory because Jesus has overcome the world. **(John 16:33)** We need to stop letting circumstances determine the health of our heart and let the health of our heart determine our circumstances. **(Psalm 46:10)** A greater understanding of the love of God will lead to a healthy view of our circumstances because His love is bigger than our situation. **(Psalm 121:1-2)**
  - b) We are able to steward our victory. **(Proverbs 3:5-6)** If our circumstances change but our heart doesn't, we won't know how to walk in the freedom of our new circumstance.

## DISCUSSION

1. The words we say reflect our view of our current circumstances. When things are not going well in life, how do you respond? Are you walking in the blessing of victory or are you the bitter victim? (See summary)
2. The world makes it easy to find quick comfort for deep pain. Where do you typically go for comfort? (See point #1)
3. God has amazing things in store for your life. Where do you need to stop and strengthen yourself in Jesus in order to step into your destiny? (See point #2)
4. Don't empower your circumstances by agreeing with them. Empower your heart by agreeing with Jesus. How can you agree and align with Jesus about what He says about you and your situation? (See point #3)
5. **What is the Holy Spirit saying to you? What is your next step?**