

● The Winning Combination
(God's Plan to Bring Victory to His People)

INTRODUCTION:

1. A winning combination is something that is desired in so many areas of life.
 - A. Companies are always looking for it with their leaders and support staff.
 - B. Sports teams change their coaches and lineup to find it.
 - C. We want to win, and we know that we need the right combination of people and circumstances to do so.
2. Fortunately for us God has not left us to find for ourselves a winning combination when it comes to this life.
 - A. In fact, God has clearly revealed this combination for us to know and use.
 - B. That is what I want to talk about—the winning combination God has given us to assure that we are victorious in this world.
 - C. To do that I want to begin with an O.T. example where this combination is clearly presented and then look at some examples in the N.T. where we see it as well.

BODY:

● **I. The winning combination for Israel's deliverance (Ex. 3):**

- A. **Problem** – (winning combinations are needed because there are problems) God *acknowledged* the problem of Israel's affliction and oppression in Egypt at the burning bush (Ex. 3:7 – “The Lord said, “I have **surely seen the affliction** of My people who are in Egypt, and have **given heed to their cry** because of their taskmasters, for **I am aware of their sufferings.**”).
 1. Note that when God addresses the problem, He desires two things to be evident:
 - a. He is fully aware of the problems faced by His creatures.
 - b. He listens to His peoples' cry for deliverance and is compassionate.
 2. If God did not acknowledge our problems or hear our cries, we could not overcome.
- B. **Power** – God provided a solution (3:8 – “So **I have come down to deliver them** from the power of the Egyptians, and **to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land**, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.”).
 1. When God applies his power to a problem, it will be solved! Of course, must be willing to allow Him to solve it!
 2. God showed his power is quite sufficient to address the problem when He revealed his name (3:13-14 – “Then Moses said to God, “Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now they may say to me, ‘What is His name?’ What shall I say to them?”¹⁴ God said to Moses, “**I AM WHO I AM**”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘**I AM** has sent me to you.’”).
 - a. Here God revealed Himself as the **eternal, self-existing God—the God who IS**.
 - b. Think about the power expressed in being eternally self-existent, especially compared to how we are totally dependent beings—earth, weather, health, others, and ultimately God.
- C. **Precept**—God gave *instructions* that addressed the problem (3:10 – “Therefore, come now, and I will **send you** to Pharaoh, so that **you may bring My people**, the sons of Israel, **out of Egypt.**”).
 1. Once God acknowledged the problem and determined to address it, His solution included man's involvement. He would free Israel through the efforts of Moses.
 2. God could have done this himself—providing complete deliverance without human involvement. Yet, He chose to use an *Israelite* to bring about Israel's deliverance!
 3. God has continued this approach throughout history.
- D. **Promise**—God *assured* Moses' success (3:11-12 – “But Moses said to God, “Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?”¹² And He said, “**Certainly I will be with you**, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain.”).
 1. When God revealed His will, Moses felt completely inadequate for the task.

- a. This response was not wrong in that none are personally qualified to do God's work.
- b. Yet, this response was wrong in that it ignored how *Yahweh* had determined that *Moses could do the job*, which makes all the difference. We must remember this!
- 2. To assure Moses of success, God promised **He would certainly be with him**.
 - a. This is the last piece of the puzzle, which assured Moses' success.
 - b. The strength, power, etc., needed to complete God's will were not found solely in Moses! *God was with Him* assuring His success as God is with the faithful always!
- E. Here we see the winning combination for assuring Moses' success, which continues to be the winning combination today.

● **II. The winning combination for His people today:**

A. Deliverance from sin and condemnation:

- 1. **Problem** – God *knows* our sin and need for deliverance.
 - a. We sin (Rom. 3:23 – “for **all** have **sinned** and fall short of the glory of God”).
 - b. That sin produces death (Jas. 1:14-15 – “But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. ¹⁵ Then when lust has conceived, it **gives birth to sin**; and when **sin** is accomplished, **it brings forth death**.”).
- 2. **Power** – God *sacrificed His Son Jesus* to address the problem (Rom. 5:6-8 – “For while we were still helpless, at the right time **Christ died for the ungodly**. ⁷ For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. ⁸ But God **demonstrates His own love toward us**, in that while we were yet sinners, **Christ died for us**.”).
 - a. God so loves his rebellious creation that He was willing and sacrifice His own Son for us!
 - b. Through the **good news** of Christ crucified, **God's power to save** is applied to all who believe (Rom. 1:15-16 – “So, for my part, I am eager to **preach the gospel** to you also who are in Rome. ¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the **gospel**, for it is **the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes**, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”).
- 3. **Precept** – God *commands* us to take the good news of Jesus' sacrifice/salvation to the world.
 - a. The Great Commission:
 - i. Mk. 16:15-16 – “And He said to them, “**Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation**. ¹⁶ He who has **believed** and has **been baptized** shall be **saved**; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.”
 - ii. Matt. 28:18-20a – “And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “**All authority** has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ **Go therefore and make disciples** of all the nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ **teaching them to observe all that I commanded** you...”
 - 1) Note the power behind the precept – Christ commands with “all authority.”
 - 2) Because the **gospel** is the answer to sin, it is to be preached to all nations so that **all might be saved and become disciples through faith in Christ and baptism**.
 - b. Like God's deliverance of Israel through Moses, God has *chosen to involve us* in His plan of salvation (2 Cor. 5:18-19 – “Now all these things are **from God**, who **reconciled us to Himself through Christ** and **gave us the ministry of reconciliation**, ¹⁹ namely, that **God** was in Christ **reconciling** the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and **He has committed to us the word of reconciliation**.”).
 - c. Without playing our part, the world will not be reconciled to God.
- 4. **Promise** (Mt. 28:20b – “and lo, **I am with you always**, even to the end of the age.”).
 - a. Though like Moses we might feel completely inadequate for the job, we can act with confidence because Jesus promises to **always** be with us in our efforts.
 - b. God has given us the winning combination concerning redemption from sin, assuring victory in Christ for us and *all* who will turn to Him in faith and obedience. But, we have to trust him enough to do our part.

● B. Church discipline (1 Cor. 5; 2 Thess. 3).

- 1. **Problem** – God *knows* when there is sin among His people:

- a. 1 Cor. 5:1-2 – “It is actually reported that there is sexual **immorality among you**, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. ² And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you.”
- b. 2 Thess. 3:11 – “For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies.” (See Rev. 2-3 where God does this)
- 2. **Power** – God provides the solution (2 Thess. 3:6 – “Now we command you, brethren, **in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ...**”).
 - a. Christ's power/authority is responsible for this solution. He has addressed the matter.
 - b. To ignore it is to ignore Christ's lordship.
- 3. **Precept** – God gives *instructions* for addressing the problem:
 - a. God commands individuals to repent before all else (2 Thess. 3:11-12 – NKJV – “For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a **disorderly** manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. ¹² Now those who are such we **command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ** that they **work in quietness and eat their own bread.**”).
 - b. When such people will not repent, God *commands* the church to act.
 - i. 2 Thess. 3:6 – “Now we **command** you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you **keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life** and not according to the tradition which you received from us.”
 - ii. 1 Cor. 5:5, 11 – “**you are to deliver this man to Satan** for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord...¹¹ But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one.”
 - iii. Despite the difficulty of this action, it is a precept, a matter of obedience/faithfulness!
- 4. **Promise** – God's power/authority provides strength to succeed (1 Cor. 5:3-5 – “For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. ⁴ When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, **with the power of our Lord Jesus,** ⁵ you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.”).
 - a. When brethren act righteously, the righteous will be with them in spirit.
 - b. More importantly, when we obey, *Jesus' power is with us*, helping us accomplish what needs to be done and assuring us that the outcome will be according to God's wishes.
- C. The struggles of life:
 - 1. **Problem** – God *knows* our struggles, challenges, and fears.
 - a. Sin has broken our world and we face death, toil, sorrow, and pain (Gen. 3).
 - b. Unique problems for Christians (Acts 14:21-22 – “After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, ²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, “**Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.**”).
 - 2. **Power** – God chose to live and die in human flesh to address our problems.
 - a. God became flesh to free us from sin and the fear and slavery of death caused by it (Heb. 2:14-15 – “Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and might **free** those who through **fear of death** were subject to **slavery** all their lives.”).
 - b. God became flesh to help us face the struggles of life (Heb. 4:14-16 – “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”).

- 3. **Precept** – God exhorts us not to fear or worry...for good reason.
 - a. Do not fear...for God values you (Matt. 10:28-31 – “**Do not fear** those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰ But the **very hairs of your head are all numbered.** ³¹ So **do not fear**; you are **more valuable than many sparrows.**”).
 - b. Do not worry...for God knows your needs (Lk. 12:27-32 – “Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. ²⁸ But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you? You men of little faith! ²⁹ And do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and **do not keep worrying.** ³⁰ For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your **Father knows that you need these things.** ³¹ But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you. ³² **Do not be afraid**, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.”).
 - c. We are not to fear because God has shown us perfect love (1 John 4:18-19 – “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. ¹⁹ We love, because He first loved us.”).
- 4. **Promise:**
 - a. God’s love will always be with us (Rom. 8:35-39 – “Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ Just as it is written, “For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” ³⁷ **But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.** ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, **will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**”).
 - b. God’s victory through Christ provides peace (John 16:33 – “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you **may have peace. In the world you have tribulation**, but take courage; **I have overcome the world.**”).
 - c. We should not fear because God promises a **crown of life** to the faithful (Rev. 2:9-10 – “I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰ **Do not fear what you are about to suffer.** Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into **prison**, so that you will be **tested**, and you will have **tribulation** for ten days. Be **faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.**”).

CONCLUSION:

1. We are amazingly blessed because God has mercifully and lovingly provided the winning combination for helplessly lost sinners to overcome sin and a broken world.
2. That combination is:
 - A. God’s *acknowledgement* of the problem
 - B. God’s application of His *power* to provide the solution of the problem
 - C. God’s *precept* given for us to follow in working with Him to bring about that solution.
 - D. God’s *promise* to be with us as we obey His precepts, assuring us of victory.
3. Of course, to obtain victory in life we must believe and be willing to allow God’s winning combination to work in our lives.
4. Will you allow God to do His work in your life, trusting in Him as your Savior and Lord, repenting of your sins, and being buried with him in baptism, putting to death the old person of sin that you might be raised to newness of life with Christ? The winning combination is before you!