



LEGACY INSTITUTE

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Dear Fellow Laborers,

My wife Gloria is just finishing up teaching the swimming and water safety class at Legacy here in Thailand. This class is very important. In fact, it is so important that we have made it a requirement.

Why is it so important that our students learn to swim? It is always a good thing to know how to swim. Someday, it might save their lives or help save someone else's. But that is not the main reason we require our students to learn how to swim. The main reason is this: if you can overcome your natural fear of water and even learn to be confident in the water, that increased level of confidence spills over into everything you do. You have conquered your primordial fear of water. This helps you to understand you can also conquer other fears.

For instance, we also teach public speaking. It is hard enough to get up in front of an audience and speak in one's own language. But when a person has to get up in front of everyone and give a speech in a new language he is learning, it dramatically increases the level of that person's anxiety. Overcoming in swimming helps our students conquer their fear of public speaking. And success in public speaking increases their level of confidence to overcome in other areas of life.

The life of a Christian is a life of overcoming. There can be no such thing as a "static" Christian. A Christian is either going forward or he is going backward. There is no treading water for a true Christian. That is why the idea of "just give your heart to the Lord and you are saved" is so deceptive. Yes, we understand that we cannot EARN salvation. Eternal life is given by God to us. We can have confidence in the substitute sacrifice of Jesus Christ in our stead. But repentance and baptism is only the starting line for our journey of salvation. If that is all we need – WHY do anything else? And why does the Bible clearly talk to us about living the life of an overcomer? If salvation consists only of "giving our hearts to the Lord," why do we have to overcome anything?! Yet the Bible clearly describes the life of a Christian as the life of an overcomer:

Rev 3:5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.¹

1 John 5:4-5 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

Faith is the tool we use to overcome. Jesus is ever present and ready to help us in our times of need. I remember feeling His presence right there beside me as I lay in the hospital bed right after having congestive heart failure. Jesus is our Savior. He is in the business of saving us. The Bible teaches that He not only died for our sins so that we are reconciled to God, He also lives NOW to save us by His life in us.

Rom 5:8-11 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Jesus lives His life in us, and His life in us helps us live the life of an overcomer. All this is done through the power and influence of the Holy Spirit.

John 17:22-23 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one...

Jesus is busy perfecting us. It is His main job right now. Perfecting us is no easy task, especially when our own human nature is naturally hostile to God's influence.

Rom 8:5-10 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

But Jesus is clear about His devotion to His task. He says that He and the Father will come and make their home with us.

John 14:23-24 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."

¹ NKJV throughout

The Father and The Son are busy perfecting the saints – that is, you and me. It is their firm assurance that they are always there for us. And they always will be—as long as we are striving to overcome with their help and stay ever connected to them in faith and obedience.

John 15:4-5 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

None of us can overcome under our own power. None of us can weather the trials of this evil world by ourselves. Not one of us can withstand the attacks of Satan alone. The life of the overcomer is a life of constant warfare against the spiritual forces marshaled against us.

Eph 6:10-13 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the Wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Overcoming is a pitched battle. And Satan is relentless. He is constantly probing us and testing our defenses to discover our weaknesses. If we move out from under the protection of the shadow of the Almighty or detach ourselves from the vine through sin or just plain neglect, we will be vulnerable. We need God’s help—and we need each other.

I have been going through some very tough times since having congestive heart failure and strokes. My vision has deteriorated and my right arm has unceasing tension in the tendons because of the strokes. I have trouble with short-term memory. But I know God is with me and, if I exercise faith and trust Him, everything will get better according to His will. My life belongs to Him and all I achieve is by His power. But I also need the prayers of the saints.

I know that many of you have been praying for me and I know God has been listening and acting on your prayers. Some of you have your own physical and spiritual trials—maybe worse than mine! And you still pray for me anyway.

I am only a single branch, but I am attached to The Vine and so are all of you. We are all fellow laborers and fellow overcomers. We need each other and we need Our Lord Jesus’ constant spiritual sustenance and our Heavenly Father’s loving care in order to finish our race. That is why Jesus said we all must be in Him—and He in us. Overcoming is a team effort!

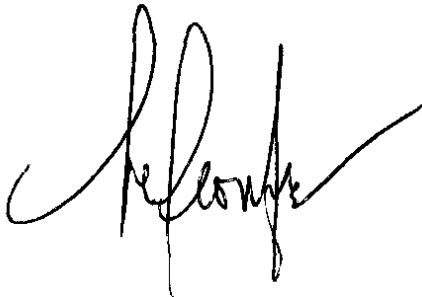
Passover is swiftly approaching. In no time at all we will all ceremonially share the body and blood of Jesus Christ. There is no other single ceremony in which we can participate that better demonstrates the relationship we have with Jesus and with each other. When we wash one another's feet, let's remember that this is the humble attitude of service and care we are to have for one another. I thank you for your prayers for all of us over here in Southeast Asia. Please continue to pray for us as we continue to pray for you.

Little Seng Moon is doing much better and is in good spirits. She will be coming home in a few days. We are hopeful her body will soon be completely clear of the bacteria. Please continue to pray for her.

In a few short days we will be holding the Legacy graduation ceremony. Seven more graduates will head out into the world and carry on with their lives. Some must face serious daily trials and tribulations as a way of life for them and their families. I hope and pray that their three years at Legacy Training Center have given them the hope and confidence to trust Our Almighty God and His Son Jesus to find their way through the physical trials of life in Southeast Asia; and in the end, triumph as God's overcomers.

Please pray for them.

In Jesus' service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Leon Sexton', written in a cursive style.

T. Leon Sexton

LEGACY POST SCRIPT: We just received some wonderful news about one of our 2004 graduates. After graduating our Legacy program in Chiang Mai, Miss Nu Tawng from Kachinland returned to her home country and was able to pass what is called the "10th Standard Examination." Without passing this important exam, people in Burma are not able to get good jobs or go on for further studies. By using her English language education, she was able to successfully pass this test. Her passing grade allowed her to go on to get a university degree and she now has a good teaching job in a primary school. When Nu Tawng came to Legacy she could not speak any English. WOW!