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I would like to share two secrets that helped me overcome sin. Both are related to experiences in my life.

COME TO THE ZERO POINT

The first one happened in this manner. Years ago, when I was a young Christian, I had some responsibilities in our fellowship at that time. So I would make some suggestions about the fellowship to the leading brother, but he would give so me reason and not just take it or brush it aside. This went on for some time, and I began to feel agitated inside and have unkind thoughts towards him. But I realised that it is not right to harbour unloving thoughts, so I would go to God in prayer and ask for His help to have loving thoughts towards this brother. So the next time I met him, I thought I would show a loving nature to him and not have an unloving attitude towards him. But the same thing repeated when he would brush aside my suggestions. I tried and tried with resolve to have a loving attitude by praying fervently. When I would meet him, I felt the confidence to be loving towards him, but his actions again made me fall. I tried so much but could not manage to love this brother in Christ. Finally, after much trying and praying, I came to the conclusion that I could love all others except this brother. In other words, I gave up hope of loving this brother.

It was at this time that grace came upon me and I found I could love this brother even when he crossed me. My eyes were opened to see this brother as a wonderful person. Our relationship blossomed from a wilderness to a garden.

I realised the first lesson in overcoming sin is to know that we cannot do it by our determination, struggling, or even by praying (though it is a good thing to do). God, who sees our hearts' desire, gives us grace to overcome. Romans 6:14 is true, "For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace."

When we have had the first-hand experience that with our efforts and striving we are not able to succeed in overcoming, and at the same time, have also tasted the grace of God making us overcomers, this gives us faith for any other situation or sin in our lives.

So the first secret is "Come to the zero point."

CERTAINTY THAT OUR PRAYER IS HEARD AND ANSWERED

A few years ago, I was encouraged by reading 1 John 5:14 & 15: "This is the confidence which we have before Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked from him." This scripture says that if we ask anything according to His will, God hears us and not only does he hear us, he answers our requests too.

There are things that we pray for which we are not confident or sure that they are in God's will. For example, praying for a particular job or something we want to buy, etc. As another example, if we have a car and we see another good-looking model and have a wish to own it, even though it is expensive, when we pray about it, we are not sure that it is the will of God. It may or may not be.

One day, I was reading Colossians 4:6. "Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person". I realised that my speech was not gracious. When I spoke to people, I had a tendency to hurt them, especially my family and others with whom I had to interact in church, at work, and so on. I did not speak with an angry tone or raise my voice, but what I said left a bad taste or hurt others. By observing their expression, I was able to deduce this. This made me feel bad. Now with Colossians 4:6, I saw my need and asked God to fulfil this word in my life. I always wanted to be gracious in my speech, as Jesus was. I prayed to God and said I was willing to pay any cost, but I needed this quality in my life. 1 John 5:14 & 15 gave me the confidence that I had asked the Father according to His will, and I believed God heard me and answered my prayer at that time itself, according to verse 15.

I had many falls in my speech after this and was repentant about it, but I believed God answered my request and I trusted Him to fulfil it. Some years later, I can truly say God has changed the way I speak. He has put graciousness in my speech.

ech and I am so glad for it. He has made me an encourager after this. I am still far from what Christ is, but I know it will become better and better. I thank God that His word is true.

So the second secret is "confidence that our prayers are heard when it is in God's will and also that God has answered our prayers at the very time we made our request."

These two truths come to me when I need to overcome something new in my life and it works because it is founded on His word.

Dear all who read this message, you can experience this in your own life. I would encourage you who are struggling to overcome sin to know these two secrets.