

How to Overcome Evil

by Denny Kenaston

Denny Kenaston teaches how Christians can actively overcome evil through humility, strategic planning, and responding with good.

Duration: 1:27:12

Scripture: Romans 12:16-17, Romans 12:19-21

Topics: "Overcome Evil"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of humility in the life of a Christian soldier. He encourages believers to have a condescending attitude towards others and to not focus on high things. The preacher gives an example of his wife's ability to handle difficult situations with grace and kindness. He also mentions the presence of evil in the world and how it can intimidate believers, but reminds them that they have been delivered from this present evil world. The sermon encourages believers to plan ahead and respond to evil with love and gentleness.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the freewill offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Oh, Lord, this morning, hear our hearts, Lord.

We sing to you this prayer. Thank you, Lord, that you've given us songs that we can find our heart in. And we find our heart in this one, Lord.

What else matters? Lord, we thank you for drawing near to us this morning in this service. We trust you, Father, to continue to draw near to us through your word. Make your word alive to our hearts today, Father, that we may know how to live in this world where you have left us, God.

We know we're here for purposes. Your beautiful, divine purposes. God, that's all we want to do.

We want to live out your purposes. We want to apprehend that which we were apprehended of Christ Jesus for. Lord, breathe meaning into our lives, God.

Show us why we're here, Father. Lord, have mercy upon us this morning and on me this day, God. Lord, help me, fill me with your Spirit, God, that I might speak your word to your people.

I pray this in Jesus' holy name. Amen. You may be seated.

Let's open our Bibles this morning to Romans. Romans chapter 12 is where we're going to be this morning. The title of my message this morning, How to Overcome Evil.

And if I could put a subtitle underneath the message, it would be this, The Christians' victorious war over evil. I have said it before, I am not a pacifist. I know there are Mennonite people who are pacifists.

But I am not a pacifist. I do not believe the Bible teaches pacifism. I am a non-resistant Christian.

I do not believe in fighting with these hands which are here on my arms. I am a non-resistant Christian. And I would not fight with these hands.

But I am not a pacifist. I do believe we need to be active and aggressive in our warfare as a Christian. I believe we need an aggressive warfare mentality in our Christian life.

I like the verse, I believe it's in Ecclesiastes, There is no discharge in this war. The Bible says, There is no time for us to let up. There is no time for us to give up.

There is no time for us to surrender. There is no discharge in this war. Amen? I like the verse in Matthew 11 and 12 which says, The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence.

And the violent take it by force. And that word violent simply means energetic aggressive behavior. It is energetic aggressive behavior that takes the kingdom of heaven and wars to overcome that which is evil in my life around me.

The Apostle Paul uses many analogies of war in his writings. However, having said that, I want to qualify this war. It needs some qualification.

We Christians fight a different kind of war. It is a war, no doubt. But it is a different kind of war.

We live in a present evil world. Amen? It is all around us, yet we have been delivered from this present evil world. The Apostle Galatians 1.4 tells us, At times, evil is all around us.

I am sure some of you young people, as you find yourself walking down the streets in Lancaster City at times, or you found yourself in a village somewhere in Africa, you felt like there was evil all around you. And there are places in this world where we are surrounded with evil. And I must say, just giving my own experience, at times this evil intimidates us, doesn't it? I think of some of the times that I walked into Washington Square Park in New York City with my little children.

And I asked myself as I was there, What in the world am I doing here with my little children? It intimidates us. Sometimes we have to deal with it in those closest to us. And even sometimes it is in us.

And we must deal with it. Amen? How to overcome evil? There are two commands in the New Testaments which relate to this subject. They are found at the conclusion of a portion of Scripture that we want to look

at here today.

But first, let's look at the commands. And notice, I said commands. Those two commands are, number one, Be not overcome by evil.

Do not be overcome with evil. That is a command. The second command, But overcome evil with good.

Those are the two commands. These are words that speak to us of war. All out war.

Remember the word overcome? We find it in the book of Revelation. We find it in other places in the Scripture. That word overcome means to prevail or to get the victory.

Do not allow evil to prevail or get the victory over your life. But get the victory. Prevail over the evil with good.

That is what the Scripture tells us. Now the verses that precede this verse, which you will find in Romans chapter 12, are filled with battle strategies for us Christians who live in this present evil world. Let's read those verses.

Romans 12, we're going to start reading in verse 16. And I'm breaking into the middle of verse 16, but you follow along with me. Keep in mind while we're reading, battle strategies.

We're in a war. A war is with evil. God doesn't want us to be overcome in this war of evil.

Not only does He not want us to be overcome, He wants us to overcome the evil. And He tells us how to do it. So keep that in mind as we read these verses.

Romans 12, verse 16. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Dearly beloved, Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath. For it is written, Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay. I'm sorry.

I was quoting it out of Deuteronomy. Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Verse 20.

Therefore, if thine enemy hunger feed him, if he thirst, give him drink. For in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Now there we see the flow of the context of those two commands. And those two commands are like the conclusion at the end of all those verses that we read. Just a little spot.

Just a little quick look at these verses. In verse 16 we see the powerful attitude of the Christian soldier. In verse 17a, this verse warns us against wrong weapons in the Christian war with evil.

Wrong weapons. Verse 17b admonishes us to have a battle plan in this war against evil. Verse 18 emphasizes the strategy of peace in the Christian's war with evil.

Verse 19 warns us of the dangers of personal vengeance in this war. Verse 20 instructs us on how to destroy your enemy in this war. And verse 21 tells us how to get the victory over evil.

And I want you to note, I didn't say over the person. How to get victory over the evil. Your enemy in this war is not the person.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood. Oh God, write that one deep in my own heart. My enemy is not the person.

They may be fighting against You, but You are not fighting against them. Amen? Not in the normal sense. This is a different kind of war.

Though they may be fighting against You, You are not fighting against them in the normal sense. This is a different kind of war. Maybe this morning as you sit here, you're battle weary.

Maybe you have lost your way in the battle with evil. That's very possible. We do that at times.

Think with me for just a few moments. Cause your mind to reflect. What is the evil that is threatening you? What is the evil that is threatening you? Or, who is the person that is making life hard? Either one of those can apply.

Think for a minute. Is it your boss? Or maybe one of your co-workers? Is it your mom? Is it your dad? Is it your wife? Is it your husband? Is it one of your siblings? That live in the very house where you live? Or is it a brother or a sister in the church? Or maybe a neighbor? Just think about it for a moment. What is the evil that is threatening to overcome you? Or, maybe it has overcome you.

And you've lost your way as you come here this morning. Remember the command. It says, Be not overcome of evil.

That's a command. God wouldn't give me a command that He isn't already willing to give me the grace to obey. Amen? God would not do that to me.

God would not put me in a place where I can lose the battle. There is no temptation taking you, but such is common to man. Amen? God would not do that.

He's a loving God. He's an all-wise God. He knows everything.

He sees everything. He wouldn't do that to me. Be not overcome of evil, the Bible says.

In this battle, there is no retreat. There is no surrender. You may not give up.

You may not. You must not allow evil to prevail over you. You must not allow evil to provoke you to evil.

You must not. This is a different kind of war. And God has answers for every one of us.

Maybe this seems a bit overwhelming. If you're sitting here this morning, and maybe you just lost the battle, and you're feeling a bit battle-weary this morning, it may be you feel overwhelmed, and you think, What? Why so high? Why so far up there? It seems beyond my reach. But I want to assure you that God has some beautiful, victorious strategies for whatever it is that you are facing that is threatening to overcome you.

Maybe up until now, you've just simply been enduring. You know, we do that sometimes, and that is a battle strategy. It's not the best battle strategy, but it is a battle strategy.

It's better than giving up. Amen? You know, hold the fort, for I'm coming. And amen.

If that's what you need to do, then hold the fort. Maybe that's where you find yourself this morning. You just are simply sitting there.

You are enduring. And that is the only battle strategy that you can see your way clear on, is just to endure. But God has something better than that.

Praise God for endurance. This is also praiseworthy. And God bless you if that's what you're doing.

It's better to endure than it is to give in and give up and wimp out and just let the whole thing go. It's better to endure. But God has a more excellent way than that.

A much more victorious way. You see, God not only tells us we cannot give up in the fight, but He also tells us we must win the battle. And we will win the battle if we follow God's ways.

We will. There's no place for stalemates in this. No place.

No place for just a simple peace treaty. You know how those go, you know, in the natural. There's a war going on between two groups of people, maybe two nations and the war just keeps going back and forth and back and forth and finally they just decide, look, you compromise and I'll compromise and we'll make peace and therefore we'll no longer have any war.

No, there's no compromise in this. If evil is trying to overcome you, there is no avenue of compromise to win, to end the battle. God wants us to be victorious.

We must overcome the evil and then God tells us how we can overcome the evil. You overcome the evil with good. With good.

It's like a secret weapon. Secret in that it doesn't make any sense up here. It's like a secret weapon that God gives to His people.

Many a wise general has said, the best defense is an aggressive offense. The best defense is an aggressive offense. And what a general simply means by that is this, rather than just draw your lines and stand there and hold the fort, get outside that fort, go down through the middle of the enemy, make yourself a nice V, go right through the middle of them, turn around, come around the side of them, attack them on this side, attack them on that side, the best defense is an aggressive offense.

Amen? Well, let's look more closely at the text. Verse 16. In verse 16, we have the most important quality in a Christian soldier's life.

That quality is humility. Loneliness of mind. That condescending attitude of a lowly man or woman is of great price in this war.

Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Now consider with me, in a physical war, maybe fearless courage.

We would put that at the top of the list and say, if there's one thing that's going to get you through a fierce battle, you need to be a courageous person who's not afraid. But we're looking at a different kind of war this morning. Maybe in a regular battle, one's ability to press onward when physically worn out would be held up there is one of the highest things.

But in this war, humility is the greatest battle strategy that you can have. If you're going to fight in this war, you need to start from a place of humility. That is the place of all power.

That is the place where you have your armor on. That is the place where your helmet is on. That is the place where the shield is on.

That is the place where all the protection is given. Put on humility. If you're going to fight in this war against evil, you must put on humility.

See, that's very different than the way that we would think. That's very different than how we do things. I mean, to be warned and not be wise in our own conceits, or if I may just paraphrase it, don't think you know what you're doing.

Don't think that you've got all the answers to this thing. If you enter into this war against evil thinking you have all the answers to it, you are sure to fail. Instead, the heart that says, I don't know what I'm doing.

I'm not sure how to go through this. I'm not sure how God wants me to walk through this. I don't feel like I have the strength to face this enemy.

Oh, those are beautiful thoughts. Those are right thoughts. And if you have those kind of thoughts, many of the other things that we're going to look out will just be there, because it will flow out of that heart attitude which says, I don't know what I'm doing.

I'm sure that we all agree that most of the aggressive strategies that we will look at all flow out of humility. Now, let's look at verse 17a, where we are warned about our weaponry. In verse 17a, God says, recompense to no man evil for evil.

We are not to retaliate with evil. It doesn't say we can't retaliate, but we are not allowed to retaliate with evil. He's not forbidding us to retaliate, but He is simply telling us we are not allowed to retaliate in kind.

Evil has come my way, I am not allowed to retaliate in kind. I Peter 3 verse 9 says, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrarywise, or the exact opposite of what you would think. That's what contrarywise means.

You look at that in the natural, and you would think, that seems like the last thing you would think of to do. Some evil is coming my way. My own reasoning says, it's time to stand up and take care of this thing.

It's time to put this person in their place. It's time to set this record straight, or whatever it is that may come into our mind. But God says, contrarywise, the exact opposite of what you would think, blessings.

Don't render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrarywise, blessings. Blessings. Knowing that ye are there unto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

Now, as I understand that verse, what God is saying is simply this. Okay, some trouble has come your way. Maybe someone is unleashing something at you.

Now, what are you going to do? Are you going to defend yourself? Are you going to fight back? Are you going to tell them a thing or two? Are you going to set the record straight? God says, I sent this. I allowed this to come your way, so that you can inherit a blessing. Well now, that's a different way to look at it.

But that's exactly what God is saying in this verse. In my study on this subject, I noticed the word persecute. You know, it talks about persecution, and it talks about us being persecuted, and we'll find lots of verses like that in the Scripture, and the Bible even says that if we are in fact godly people, there are going to be times when we are persecuted.

All who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But it's very interesting to me, as I studied that word persecute, it simply means to pursue. To pursue.

And as I study this battle strategy of how to deal with evil when it comes our way, do you know that we can pursue? We can persecute those who persecute us? God doesn't say you cannot retaliate. He just says you cannot retaliate in kind. But you can retaliate.

You can persecute. When someone persecutes you, you can persecute them. Stay with me now.

Don't go out here saying, you won't believe what I heard Brother Denny say Sunday morning. You can persecute them. With all the good you want to lash out on them, you can persecute them, you can chase them, you can go after them till they're running from you.

With good. We are to persecute our offenders with good. Capital G-O-O-D.

This is aggressive warfare, brothers and sisters. This is a powerful offensive weapon. Let's look at verse 17b.

We see in verse 17b that we are to have a battle plan ahead of time. Now, we often quote this verse a bit out of context. I don't think our application is wrong, but we often quote it a bit out of context and just say, provide things honest in the sight of all men.

And, you know, we use that in finances and I don't have a problem with that, but if you look at the verse in context, God is not addressing our finances. He is not addressing our finances. Consider the word provide.

We know that word very well. Provide is actually two words brought together. Pro and vide.

Pro means ahead of time. And vide means to see. Or to see ahead of time.

Therefore, if we talk about a man providing for his household, he's providing for his household by thinking ahead of time and seeing ahead of time what they're going to need and therefore he provides for them. And that's good and right. And that's the right use of the word provide.

But in the context of dealing with evil, we're supposed to provide or think or plan ahead of time what am I going to do when evil attacks me. Now, let's look at the next word. And that's the word honest in this.

Honest? This word is not integrity. The word honest is honorable. It means honorable, beautiful and comely.

Honorable, beautiful and comely. Let's paraphrase the verse. In the context of dealing with evil, meditate and plan beforehand how you will do beautiful and comely things when evil comes your way in the sight of all men.

Meditate and plan beforehand how you will do beautiful and honorable and comely things when evil comes against you in the sight of all men. That means we are to plan what we're going to do as a matter of principle and carry it out very purposely when evil comes our way. Now that's very, very different than our normal response when evil comes our way.

Our normal response is not a response but a reaction many times. We let that evil come our way and it has its effect upon us and then we react back to that. But God would have us, rather to be wise, rather to be thinking ahead of time, rather to be knowing, okay, this may come my way in this particular relationship.

Maybe it's your boss and maybe things aren't going well there. Maybe he's a tough boss. Maybe he's a bit unkind to you.

Maybe he takes advantage of you and you're dealing with that thing. What God is saying is stop. Think.

Meditate. Plan. Live by a principle which is in My Word.

Know what you're going to do the next time that boss comes to you and lets you have it unfairly or whatever. Meditate on it ahead of time. In verse 18 we see that peace is the overriding rule in the Christian's war.

Now that's a different rule. Peace is the overriding rule in the Christian's war. Whatever you decide to do, however you try to figure out what you should do, peace is the overriding rule in the Christian's war against evil.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men, the Bible says. And our brother John read the verse to us this morning. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are those who plan and prepare and set their hearts to make peace. They shall be called children who are like God. Amen? There are two statements in this verse that I would like to look at.

One is conditional and the other is unconditional. First of all, the conditional one. It says, if it be possible.

Now that means there may be some situations where it is not possible for the Christian to be at peace. We want to recognize that. Like we said already, if we have to compromise with evil in order to bring peace, obviously compromise is not an option.

As much as is possible, if it be possible. That means sometimes it is possible, sometimes it is not possible. And we want to recognize that.

Now the next statement is an unconditional statement. And that is simply this, as much as lieth in you, or you do everything you can to be at peace with all men. That is not a conditional statement.

You may not be at peace with all men, but you do everything you can to be at peace with all men. That God wants all of us to do. In the Christian's war with evil, you have to look at that whole situation.

You and you know we are all in different places and we find ourselves sitting in different seats and who knows what it is that you are facing or I am facing, but we all face things like this because we live in this present evil world. Stand back and look at it all and say, okay, how can peace prevail over this situation that I find myself in? I know what my natural tendency is. I know what I am feeling a bit in my heart.

I know I'd like to set the record straight here. I know I'd like to put that person in their place. I know I'd like to square this thing off.

But wait a minute. Peace is the prevailing rule over this war. How can I work peace into this situation that I find myself in? We are to do all we can to be at peace.

In this responsibility, we must ask ourselves a couple of questions. Think about it. Number one, am I a part of the un-peace? Now that's a good question to ask, isn't it? It's probably not the first one that we naturally think of asking.

But it is a good one to ask. Am I part of the un-peace in this situation that I am in? Or have I made some of this evil that is coming my way? Sometimes we do that, you know. Sometimes we say things ourselves.

Sometimes we speak evil ourselves. Or sometimes we do something that is evil which brings evil back our way. And of course, if you want to evaluate it right, you better first stop there and say, am I being persecuted or am I suffering for my own evil? And number two, have I done all that I can do to settle this issue? Whatever it may be.

Alright, let's go on to verse 19. In verse 19 we are warned, never, never take your own revenge. God warns us in this battle with evil.

He gives us a very clear warning here. And however you're going to work this thing out, there's one thing you may not ever do. And that is, take personal revenge.

Dearly beloved, and I like the way that Paul wrote that word. It's like, okay brethren, I know where you're at. I know what you're facing.

I know things are difficult. I know it's not easy. But dearly beloved, you know, he is imploring them.

Maybe in the midst of difficult situations, he implores them, dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place under wrath, for it is written, vengeance is mine, I, God, will repay, saith the Lord. These words are given because it is our natural inclination to fight back. Amen? If we're in the natural, if we're in the flesh, if we're being overcome with whatever this evil may be, it is our natural inclination to fight back.

If we're being attacked, it's our natural inclination to defend. If we're being taken advantage of, it's our natural inclination to want to shut the record straight. God says, don't do that.

Don't do it. It is our natural inclination to fight back, or like against like. Don't do it.

It is not lawful for us to rise up and set things straight by retaliation. This is for God. In fact, as I ponder this little phrase, vengeance is mine.

You know, I thought, God almost seems jealous there. Hey! Get your hands off of that! That doesn't belong to you! Vengeance is mine, God says. You're out of your realm.

You're out of your jurisdiction. You think you want to set it straight. You think you want to put up a fight.

Vengeance is mine, says the Lord. That's mine. Almost has an air of jealousy in it, doesn't it? Not just I'll take care of it, but it's my responsibility, God says.

This is for God. And sometimes God uses magistrates, and sometimes God uses other authorities, but it's in God's hands. Not my hands.

Not my hands. As I ponder these words, it seems that this verse is also warning us of the possibility of frustrating God's dealings in somebody's life. And I thought about it in my own life, and in my years of experience, and I would have to say, in those times when I, on my own, chose to rise up and make things right, or set things straight, or put someone in their place, or vindicate something that happened to me, it's like as if as soon as I move in to do that, God backs away.

It's like He can't. I'm sure you wives have seen that before. You know, we try to make things right, and we try to set our husband straight, and we try to give him the direction that we think he needs, and it just doesn't work out.

But as soon as you back away, basically you say in your heart, okay, that's it. It's not for me. It's not for my hand.

It's not for my word. It's not for me to correct. I don't see it.

It doesn't seem right to me, but it's not for me. I'm taking my hands off of it. God begins to work just like that in a husband's life.

Oh, how many testimonies I've heard of that. Both sides. It seems like when we pick that one up and decide we're going to do it ourselves, it's like God's will and plan and purpose to guide that individual, whoever they are, are frustrated.

And here's another thought to consider. We do not have all the facts. God does.

When we take vengeance into our own hands, we are saying, I know how to deal with this person or this situation. But brothers and sisters, we do not have all the facts. There's no way we can have all the facts.

Do we dare to match our human wisdom with God's omniscience and His wisdom? And I know none of us want to do that. None of us. In verse 20, God tells us how to retaliate against our enemy.

He tells us how to persecute our enemy. We are not to avenge ourselves. We are to give.

We are to bless. We are to meet the need of our enemy. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him.

If he thirst, give him drink. For in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. This is aggressive warfare, isn't it? Be on the attack, God says.

Be on the offensive. Be proactive in this war. This is not passive non-resistance, but rather it is aggressive love.

Someone is hurting me. Someone is doing me wrong. Someone is being unfair.

Some evil is trying to overtake me. Aggressively pursue with good. With good.

That's what the Bible says. Stop for a moment and think again. What is the need of my enemy? What is the need? You know, I thought about this verse.

It has to mean more than just feeding him if he's hungry, or giving him a drink if he's thirsty. We live in America. He'll never be hungry and he'll never be thirsty.

There's nothing I can do then. Because he's never hungry and he's never thirsty. We live in America.

Ah yes, it's deeper than that. Stop and think. What is the need of my enemy? What is the need? What is the clear felt need of my offender's life that I can lovingly meet? Now that's power, isn't it? That I can lovingly meet.

That's power. This is the most powerful weapon in the Christian's war against evil. Notice what it goes on to say.

Heaps, coals of fire. Think about that. God wants us to picture that first.

I have an enemy. They are an enemy. And in the context of war and enemies, and I believe that's the way it's given there in Proverbs, I have an enemy.

And he's a real enemy. Here I am with hot coals of fire. Not one or two, by the way.

A heap of hot coals of fire. What will that do to my enemy? Just first in the natural. What will that do to the enemy? If I heap hot coals of fire on his head, is the enemy undone or what? He is undone.

Is the enemy confused or what? He is confused. Now look at it in the spiritual. God says, If you will pursue your enemy with that kind of aggressive love, what is my enemy's felt need? Give to that.

It will totally confound for sure. He will be totally taken back, no doubt. If you do that.

And if I could just make one spiritual application to that. You will heap coals of fire of conviction down upon that heart when you pursue with a loving attitude that enemy who is hurting you. You will heap coals of conviction down upon their heart and their life.

And remember, God is always after redemption. He is after the souls of men. Maybe your enemy is a lost person that you face from time to time.

God is after that man's soul. Or that woman's soul. God is after their soul.

And maybe that is the reason why God rewrote the rules for war. Because He is after their soul. And no longer is it eye for an eye or tooth for a tooth.

But now I am going to lay down my life in love that I might win my enemy. Back to God. On to verse 21 here.

Verse 21. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. These words are very weighty after we have looked at all the verses that go before them.

And we can see these are concluding words. It's like, ok, this is the sum total of everything that I just said. You are facing a difficulty? Go after it with all of your heart.

Don't let that evil overcome you, but you overcome that evil with good. I thought about our Lord Jesus Christ. What an example He is to all of us.

He walked in this present evil world. There was evil all around Him. Wasn't there? He saw it everywhere.

He experienced it everywhere. He had it coming against Him probably every day of His ministry. Three and a half years.

But what did He do? How did He spend His days as He walked through this world? Our Lord Jesus, think about it. He hates evil. Remember? He is God.

And God hates evil. And oh, He could have vindicated so many times. So many times He could have vindicated.

And He hates evil. Yet the Scripture gives this testimony of our Lord Jesus in Acts 10.38. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him. Look at that.

That's how our Lord Jesus dealt with the evil that was around Him. Our Lord Jesus, who hates evil, attacked that evil with all of His energies. Amen? He did.

He attacked it in this life when He was walking on this earth. And He also attacked it in His death. What a blast to the enemy was the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Be not overcome of evil, the Scripture says, but overcome evil with good. That is exactly what Jesus did. He did it while He walked upon this earth.

And He gave the grand finale when He laid Himself down on that cross and shed His blood and gave up His life to deliver man from all evil. Oh, what a testimony and an example He is to each and every one of us. To know how to deal with the evil that comes our way in our lives, whatever, in all our many different circumstances.

In John 16, verse 33, Jesus said these words to His disciples, and these were parting words. He said, These things have I spoken unto you, that ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer.

I have overcome the world. You know, I was meditating upon that. And I thought, that is a present future tense statement.

Yes, He can look back over those years before that have gone before Him and say, I have overcome the world. But wait a minute. He is just about ready to face the greatest onslaught of evil that He has ever faced.

Yet He is saying, I have overcome the world. Look at His faith-filled statement. I have overcome the world.

It seems to me like He planned what He was going to do. What do you think? He knew how He was going to deal with the things that are going to come His way. What do you think? And He walked through it in love, with love in His heart.

And He dealt such a death blow to evil like there has never been since. May God help us. A few applications and we'll be done.

Ponder your situation again. What are you facing? Are you losing the battle? Are you weary? Can you see God's more excellent way? Maybe you've just been enduring. But now, do you see God has a more excellent way? The way to overcome evil? Let's plan a bit.

Let's strategize. Remember? Verse 17b. Plan ahead.

What will you do? Premeditative attack. That's what this is. Premeditative attack.

I am going to premeditate how I am going to attack this evil when it comes my way. This is how you can win without fighting back. Amen? Nobody likes to lose.

This is how you can win. Without fighting back. My dear wife is very good at this, by the way.

In the stores. How many of you ever face difficulties in the grocery store or places like that? You go through the checkout line and somebody is having a bad day. You ever deal with that? Let me see your hands.

Yeah. Plan ahead of time. What am I going to do when the cashier blasts me because she or he is having one of those bad days? I have watched my wife do it many times.

Master. Stand in line. Let's see up ahead.

Somebody is not having a very good day. Furled eyebrow. Grumbling at everybody, you know, while they are checking them out, you know.

Jackie walks up there. My! I like your dress. Your dress looks lovely.

A soft answer does turn away wrath. It really does. But you have to plan.

This is what I'm going to do. When evil is coming against me, this is what I'm going to do. Some of you, you may need three plans.

Plan A. Plan B. And Plan C. But that's alright. You plan them out. How am I going to respond when evil comes my way? There is a way that God wants me to respond.

It is the principle way. I'm not going to react. I'm going to respond in a loving way.

You know, you think about it. I don't know what you're facing. But let's just imagine for a minute that somebody is just really making life miserable for you.

And in your heart, it's like, I don't want to be around this person at all. You see him, you go the other direction. You want to overcome evil? Maybe you would even say in your own heart, I've got some attitudes in here that are not right.

Think for a moment. What is a deep felt need in this person's life that is making life miserable for me? And once you see what it is, go invest in their life. And you know what? It will also overcome the evil that is in your own heart.

You say, well, I don't feel good. And if I don't feel good in my heart, I'm not going to do anything. You're looking at it wrong.

You're looking at it wrong. Invest. This is principle, brothers and sisters.

Purposeful. Invest in that person's life. It will change your own heart.

And it will also begin to change that heart. Whoever that is. Whatever that is.

Be not overcome of evil. It is a command. But, overcome evil with good.

That's what God tells us. Let's bow our heads for prayer. Oh, Father.

You know us, Lord. You know us all. You know everything we face.

You know everything we're going through in our lives. You know everything we're going to face next week and next month. You know.

You know it all, Father. My only prayer is this, God. That you will take these words and apply them to our individual lives, God.

You know what we need. I trust you to do that. Let not your word return void.

But, let it fulfill that which you sent it for. In my life and in every life in this room this morning. We pray this in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Amen. God is searching the hearts of men. With his word and with his spirit.

This is, as I think of this message today. It seems to me like this is one principle in the Bible that I have known about. That I seem to wrestle with faith that it actually does work.

Or I wrestle with faith when I'm in that situation. To know how to walk it out. This must be one of the most difficult ones for me.

So, I greatly appreciate the message this morning. I take it personally in my own life. And I look at all my brothers and sisters here this morning.

And I think, well, most likely you don't all have this difficulty or struggle with this. Overcoming evil with good or having someone come against you. But, I think again, I think probably there's not one of you that's exempt from this one.

Amen. I'm not exempt from this one. But this one.

If I could, by God's grace, overcome this one. I would be victorious all the way through. I'd like to open up for some testimonies or thoughts you may have.

Please, remind the Lord as you share. We have some mics. Ready? Get your hands up.

We can see. Yeah, I was really blessed this morning to hear that. And it gave me a new insight on some scriptures.

1 Peter says, Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings. That when His glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy.

If you be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are you. For the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified.

I'm sure in heaven, somehow we're going to see maybe like a video of Christ's glorious triumphs over evil. His good deeds. I'm sure we'll all fall down and worship Him.

It's said if all the books could be written, it would fill the whole world of the good deeds that He did. And so God in His love, He allows us to share in His glory here by being like Him. Being allowed.

I was talking last night to someone about why does God allow suffering? We don't understand some of these things, but here's one reason why He does. We're partakers of Christ's sufferings that when His glory shall be revealed, we may be glad with exceeding joy. So I want to remember that.

I want to do that by His grace. Thank you for sharing, Paul. Back here.

I had to think of Brother Denny's words on proactive parenting during the message. This is such an opportunity for each of us as parents to apply overcoming evil with good in sibling conflict, in the child that feels like your enemy because he's resisting you, and to have a plan of action. What can I do to face this attitude in my child when it comes the next time? So that I can be prepared to respond from a godly attitude, with a godly attitude, with a quiet, controlled, led by God's Spirit, full of Scripture response, rather than a reaction to their bad attitude or to a sibling conflict that we're observing and being a peacemaker in.

I thank you for the message, and I rejoice to see what God's doing. Thank you, Sister. I was really convicted and also really encouraged.

And especially the thought of planning ahead of time, how to answer, how to bless, and not to be knocked down. And I especially just repent of backing off in silence and not overcoming with good, not asking the Lord or receiving from the Lord the grace I should have in the past. And I just ask the Lord for wisdom and just how to do that.

Praise God. Seems like if I could just picture in my mind being on the battlefield, and if I would know of a sure way of victory over the enemy, that's the way I would walk. That's the way I would go.

I mean, just picture two, in physical, two armies. If I'm in this army over here, and I can be 100% sure that if I follow this pattern, I will be sure to overcome the enemy. I'd be a fool not to do that.

But the problem is, there's this thing in here that wants its own way, its own vengeance. And somehow, by faith, lay that aside, we'll come. Over here.

I just marvel from Sunday to Sunday how God orchestrates the connection between the opening and the main message. And the thought came to mind this morning how in the second message, the greatest dilemma possible that we Christians face is how to deal with our enemies. And that was presented to us.

And as well, the greatest solution for that dilemma was presented in the opening message, and that is to allow the life of Christ to love our enemy through us. As John Mark articulated, there's an engine inside us. And we can choose to steer away from our enemy and avoid a wonderful opportunity to let Christ love him

through us.

Or we can, by faith, know that there is an engine in us with all the power to love and accept and forgive an enemy, and steer towards them. And I just marvel. An example of that comes to mind from the martyr's mirror of a young girl who was known for her unusual graciousness.

Grace is a good word. When persecution broke out on this particular village, an executioner was assigned to come to that village and publicly take her life. And her response to him was to be yielded and submissive.

The love of Christ flowed through her towards her executioner, and all he could do was gently pick her up and drown her in a horse trough before an onlooking village. That is an amazing display of love. And it was only the life of Christ through her who could lay down in that situation without seeking vengeance.

A revival, I'm told, broke out in that situation. But what a blessing this morning to hear the greatest dilemma we face in us. How do I love my enemy? Everything natural, as Brother Danny said, in me wants to seek vengeance.

But as Brother John Mark pointed out, the life of Christ in us rises up in those situations and says, If you'll let me crucify your flesh in this situation, allow your enemy to crucify your flesh in this situation. Don't rise up in the flesh, but let me rise up in the spirit. I will love this person into repentance and brokenness that could very well save their soul for eternity.

Thank you, Brother. Hello. I was blessed with the message that I heard this afternoon.

I've been struggling with a lot of, you know, I've just started a new job this week or something. And I felt kind of a conviction coming onto me, and I wasn't sure how to really handle it. I felt very, well, it seems like an enemy, you know, a lot of enemies trying to get against me.

I didn't really know how to respond to that. But I'd just like the church to pray for me to know how I should respond to a person with my enemy. Because I'm so weak, I really can't do them on myself.

So I just got to let go and let God do it. And I just feel I'm too weak to try it on my own. So just pray for me that I could give up myself and live a more victorious, better life, more humbling life.

Thanks. God bless you, Jesse. We don't know how to walk through it either, except the Lord be with us.

Brother Mel. Yeah, thank you, Brother Denny. I was just blessed, too, how the two messages fit together.

You know, I shared last Sunday on walking in the Spirit and we shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. So, you know, I thought again this morning on the importance of the inflow, the constant inflow of God's Spirit into our lives. You know, really we can't give out more than we take in.

That was John's message this morning. And then in Philippians 1 here, verse 28, I'd like to comment on Denny's message. It says, And nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation and that of God.

I just, you know, as I thought on that verse, how that, you know, they are, when we are not terrified by our adversaries and return good for evil, that they are receiving token after token of their perdition. And hopefully that will convict them and lead them to Christ. And, you know, they can be saved through that.

But it says also that we receive tokens of salvation and that of God. You know, we receive reminders, constant reminders that, Yes, I am standing firm against my enemy and I am standing in the midst of the, you know, in the midst of the trials and the temptations. I'm not giving in to his temptations that he tempts me with.

And it's a constant reminder that I am a child of God and I am saved. So, thanks brother for sharing that blessing message. And were you saying that God confirms with us constantly that we are his children as we walk through that? Exactly.

And confirms to the enemy, to our adversary of their perdition and their destruction. That's what we want. In the back here.

Yes, I was blessed by both messages too. And I was just trying to think in my mind how do you reconcile. We heard a lot of good words this morning.

Plan, choose, make a strategy, premeditate. And how we reconcile those things where we want to fulfill the law of Christ in our lives with the verses about grace and how the law is made of no effect anymore and how we're resting in Christ. How do we rest in Christ and also battle? So, I just had to think of the illustration I heard brother Daniel Kenniston use.

It was that of a son. And the son can either be in rebellion against his father. Maybe a quiet, sly rebellion, but just not doing what his father wants him to do.

Not knowing the heart of his father, not wanting to obey it. Or his son can be resting and have the attitude, yes father, I'm here. Just like Isaiah said, here am I, send me.

So, I feel if each one of us has that attitude we will be able to do these things and overcome our enemies with love. Yeah, we can only fight properly if we first learn to rest in the Lord and walk out his principles. Then God will teach us how to war.

I'm a visitor here this morning. I'm new to the area. Been here six months.

I'm a pastor and evangelist. And I would like to say to my brother here, greetings from the sword of the Lord and the Bill Rice Ranch. For I work for them.

So, I thought that was rather strange and odd and of great providence of God to hear a man talk of a place where I work with Dr. Bill and work with Dr. John R. Rice. And today work with Dr. English and Dr. Ron Zawadko and myself in evangelism. I'm new here this morning.

I drove by a week ago and I saw this church. I'm speaking all over the area. And I saw this church and I thought I've got to come and visit these people.

Being in evangelism and seeing what I see each week. My heart is sort of taken back because I see the sovereign God that I love so much. Have his glory taken from him.

I see the changing of the word of God. I see the replacing of words of scripture with words of men. Like Dr. Barnhouse used to say, I smell the smell of man and not the smell of glory.

And this morning my heart has been refreshed to sit here not to speak for a change. My wife would be here but she's sick today. But to sit here for a change and actually watch the spirit of God move in a

congregation.

And to feel the spirit of God move and to see it. And the humbleness that I don't normally see in churches. And it's refreshing because I can remember a day when Dr. Rice spoke on Jeremiah 29.11. For I know the thoughts I think towards you saith the Lord.

Thoughts of good and not of evil to give you an expected end. And I thought as you brothers spoke this morning. How you are demonstrating the things that I don't see in churches today.

And I praise the Lord for that and for your humility. And I pray that you stay humble and remain humble. Because you have here in this congregation something that I do not see in America very often.

And God bless your people. And I've never been in your church before or a church like this. It's different for me.

I'm not used to seeing women on one side and men on the other. I understand it. I've studied it.

I love it. I love your humility. I love your music.

Your music was a blessing this morning to me. There is not much glory given to the Lord today. There isn't.

I'm so sick of what I see in our churches. And last week I was in a Russian church with 400 believers. I didn't understand the word that was said.

But I felt like I had walked into heaven by the singing that I heard. And I feel the same thing here today. Like your brother here, I too was studying for the Catholic ministry.

And then I met the Savior. And He changed all that. Right, brother? Amen.

God bless you folks. You're good people. Your attitude is right.

Your spirit is right. And thank God that His grace is upon you as I see it today. God bless you.

Thank you so much for coming and for sharing with us those words. We stand separate from much of today's church life. And sometimes the world wants to overtake us in those areas.

It's good to hear your confirming words of God's grace and what He sends here. Thank you very much, brother. Could I give you all an assignment? Go to war this week.

And bring back the reports next week. See how you made out. All right, I'd like to, if you'd come and sing that song, lead that song, Eric, and then a few announcements.

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