

Leading By Example in Knowing the Father and Overcoming the Evil One

by Santosh Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God, addressing the struggles with sin, lust, and worldly influences. It calls for a deep desire to know God as the Father, to overcome the evil one, and to find freedom and victory in Christ. The message urges parents to lead their children to know God intimately and to seek purity and holiness in all aspects of life.

Scripture: 1 John 2:13, 1 John 2:15, Acts 2:34, James 4:7, Psalm 119:9, Hebrews 12:1

Topics: "Surrender to God", "Overcoming Sin and Worldly Influences"

Description

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Transcript

Yeah, some good verses. Often when I get up to speak I feel like I have to change what I have to say because I've been listening to the children say their verses and as you know sometimes I do but the youngest class told us all the way from our four-year-olds what will it profits you or I if everything works out perfectly the way I wanted to. Imagine a life where everything works out exactly the way I wanted to work out but I lose my soul as a result of it.

Now he doesn't say you go to hell or anything like that, that you won't go to heaven as part of it but that you have some loss in eternity. I hope that every one of you comes to RLCF because you're not not because you're not looking for how you can get the best out of this world and the best out of heaven. That you want God to get the best out of your life and that's it.

How can I give the maximum to God? I just want to say in love if that's not the desire of your heart it's probably better you find another church and you may be surprised that there are elders in in a church that say go to another church. Yeah I'm not ashamed to say it. Most pastors are saying come to our church.

Most church event people are saying come to our church. Yeah come to our church but only if this is really your desire. You want to get God to get the maximum out of your life.

Otherwise I tell you honestly you're wasting your time here. You'd be more comfortable somewhere else. You won't hear hard preaching.

You won't hear the truth but I tell you if you do want the maximum amount of God to get the maximum out of your life and you're not sure how or you find yourself failing then stay here. There's a hope. There's hope.

God will help you. If you really say Lord I find myself constantly holding back a little bit. I want this.

I want that but deep down Lord I recognize giving you the maximum out of my life is what will matter in heaven. If I don't give you the maximum out of my life and I'm still in heaven somehow and I gave you even 99% you live with that regret for all eternity that there's no more time to give that extra 1% that you could have given. I don't know what all heaven is like.

What will it be like to live there knowing that I should have given more, could have given more but I know I want to live with that mentality now. Lord I want you to get everything out of my life. I give it to you.

It's not a work of the flesh. It's not you trying harder. It's simply you saying Lord I judge myself.

I don't I won't judge others. I will always love the truth. When I hear the truth and I see it in your word I will love it and I and even though it seems hard even though it seems impossible I will say Lord will you help me to live by the standard of truth that you put in your word and if that's the cry of your heart dear friend dear brother dear sister your children God will help you.

If you love the truth you will be saved. We're told that in 2nd Thessalonians 2. If you love the truth you'll be saved. Otherwise there will be people who don't love the truth.

God himself will delude, will send a deluding influence over. But I hope that nothing in this world is worth losing even a little bit of your soul. The way I look at it I hope you agree with me here that if I lose 1% of my soul I've lost my whole soul.

If 1% of my soul is in the world all of it is in the world. That's an example. If you have one drop of poison in a bucket of water the whole thing is poison.

One drop. You can say well I've got a million other drops that are not poison. No.

It's the way the world works. If you've got one drop of 1% of your soul one drop in your soul even that's for this world that loves this world I want to tell you your whole soul is lost and you should listen to our four-year-old children who said that it's not going to profit you anything because of that 1% of love of the world that's in you. But what about this verse have your enemies become a footstool for your feet yet? Let's turn to Acts chapter 2. Have your enemies become a footstool for your feet yet? I'll tell you my answer.

Some of them. Some of them have. Not all of them.

There are enemies I see in my flesh. Now I hope you know our enemies in the new covenant are not people. It's our flesh.

Myself. He's my greatest enemy. In fact he's my only enemy.

If I myself is on the cross even the devil can't be my enemy even though he is my enemy. His efforts will not succeed. The only way the devil can succeed in my life in his efforts is if self if I'm preserving self.

You follow me? If I'm seeking to preserve myself if somehow self is on the throne then the my the devil my enemy the devil can also have an influence in my life. But the moment self is crucified with Christ and is no longer on the throne and Jesus is truly on the throne and I'm seeking nothing for myself now as many enemies as around me they can't get in. There's no hole in the wall for the enemy to get in.

Imagine if you had a strong fortress a thick fortress and there's a moat around it you know these these castles used to have moats around them which a deep canal of water. Imagine if you had the strongest fortress and you knew that as long as that fortress was strong the enemy can't get in. You would sleep peacefully at night but if your fortress is weak then the enemy can get in.

And what is that fortress? Self on the throne. If self is on the throne you'll have a hole in the fortress. When Jesus is on the throne and you're not seeking any of self your fortress is strong.

But in Acts 2 the verse that they told us it said verse 35 says until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. So if your enemies if you look back on the last week and you see my enemies have not been a footstool for my feet. The enemy has gotten a hold of me sometimes.

I got in a bad mood or I lost my temper or I lusted with my eyes or I did this or I did that and I got impatient or I loved money in a particular area or I told a lie or I used my tongue harshly then the enemy has not been a footstool. You've been the footstool for the enemy. Anyone who commits sin is a slave of sin.

The enemy's got his head on your your footstool for him. But you say Lord I repent of it. So while until your enemies are a footstool for your feet where should you be sitting? Did the children tell us the verse correctly? Maybe somebody from primary class can tell me.

Where should you be sitting until your enemies are a footstool for your feet? Somebody shout it out. At the Lord's right hand sit. Let's read that verse 34 to 35.

The Lord said to my Lord sit at my right hand and this was saying about Jesus and as you can take that promise for yourself. Here's the invitation from the Lord himself. God himself is inviting you dear friend.

Look back on the last week. Has it been a week of defeat? Has it been a week of condemnation, unbelief, doubt, fear, anxiety, worry, bad moods? Is that what the week's been like? Tell you what God's not chasing your way. He's not angry at you.

He's saying come. The reason that your enemies have not been a footstool for your feet is because you haven't been sitting at my right hand. You're sitting somewhere else.

You've been afraid of the right hand maybe. You've been afraid of the throne of grace but come. There's mercy, there's grace rich.

Let us come boldly to the throne of grace and not just kneel at it. Yes it's good to kneel at the throne of grace. You know God invites you to do much more than kneel at the throne of grace.

Bow before him. As you bow before him he says come and sit with me on the throne of grace. If you've been lacking at my right hand you know we are we don't sit on the throne of grace.

That's Jesus. I want to be careful how I word it. Exactly as scripture says.

He simply says come and sit at my right hand. That's a position of authority though. And he says come and sit at my right hand and while you sit here I will make all of your enemies a footstool for your feet.

So take courage dear brother, dear sister, your child. If the life you've been living up till this point hasn't been the triumphant victorious overcoming life that's promised us which is the only way to live the Christian life in every area then come and sit at his right hand this morning. Let him cleanse you of all sin.

Confess it. Be freed of all sin. Come with a clear conscience.

Come to him for help in your time of need and you hear him say sit at my right hand and let's make our enemies a footstool for your feet. God's enemies. Your enemies are God's enemies too when you're sitting at the throne.

Oh it'll change your marriage this week. It'll change the way you deal with your children. It'll change homeschool.

It'll change school if you school outside the home. It'll change the workplace. It'll change the way you drive on the roads.

That's where I need it the most you know. So yeah let's turn to 1st John chapter 2. Another brief word of encouragement here. I was in a public place with some others yesterday and I was very grieved in my spirit.

Dear family, very grieved. The world is passing away. The standards of irreverence, the standards for immodesty, the standards for careless living have gone so bad.

I was reminded of when I first came to the United States 30 some years ago and was you know and I saw you know I was lived in a protected environment. India is a fairly protected culture as a whole. There are standards of decency and modesty and behavior that are there even in heathen religions.

It's sad to say and but I was shocked to see the standards of life and speech and immodesty especially in the world when I came here and I was reminded of that and as bad as I saw it 30 years ago it is so much worse now. It is so so evil and I left that place burdened for our young people. As difficult as it is even for me an older man in with my eyes and with my ears and with the spirit make sure that my spirits not polluted my mind is not polluted in any way by the conduct and the behavior of people around me.

I left with a burden for our children and our young people. I just wanted to touch on that briefly. I hope it's your burden as well.

I'm sure you see it. I'm sure what I'm saying is not anything new but you can go to certain places where you can see it right in front of you. Women dressed so immodestly it's unbelievable that you can actually be in public like that.

I'm not saying this to judge any of those people but simply they don't they don't have light. I'm sorry for them. They don't have light.

We have light though. God has given us his word and let's be vigilant to watch over our children. Let's be vigilant to watch over our lives, our own lives.

Let's take it seriously men. I want to speak to you just briefly. Take the matter of lusting with your eyes seriously.

Let there never be any trace of impurity. See lust begins in the mind long before it begins in the eyes. If your mind is lustful, is given to lust, then when there's an opportunity to lust your eyes will go that way.

And if you haven't been fighting the battle in your mind when there isn't a temptation around you, then when the temptation is there in front of you, your eyes will follow where your mind leads. But if you've been battling it in your mind, then when the temptation is there, your eyes will be pulled away. Your mind will be able to pull your eyes away through the power of the Holy Spirit.

And if we're not taking it seriously as fathers and as older men as examples in the church, for our young boys to follow and our teenagers to follow, it's hopeless for them. Most have christened them. And I tell you that's the thing.

It's even in churches today. I'm quite certain that many of the people I saw who are acting that way are sitting in a church meeting right now. I don't doubt it.

They're sitting in churches. They're more interested in their money and their participation and their whatever. That oh this is the church that all the young people like to come to.

We have a great youth group. But they're never told once about dressing modestly and being faithful with their eyes. Many churches, you'll never hear once a sermon where the boys are told, boys fight the battle with your eyes.

Don't let the devil get control of your eyes because it'll destroy your life. It'll destroy your marriage later on. And girls, be careful how you dress.

Be careful when you stand in front of the mirror and what you put on. Let it be that Jesus is attracted to you because of what he sees in your heart. Jesus is not attracted to your physical body.

You know that, right? I'm not being irreverent here. Let it be that Jesus is attracted to you because he sees that you, when you go into a store and you could buy this dress or buy that dress, you pick that one because it'll make Jesus happy. Even if the world thinks, oh you're old-fashioned.

Where there's a desire to cover up your body because it'll make Jesus happy. Not to seem attractive to the world and like you're part of the crowd. Let that be that desire.

And I pray that as long as RLCF is around and until Jesus comes, I hope this church is here. Not because RLCF is such a great thing or anything like that, but because I believe our goal, why we are RLCF, is because we want to be a pure testimony for Jesus. That Jesus is happy.

I thought about that even as I was coming, driving into the church meeting this morning. Many churches, what motivates people to go to a church is who's going to be there? Who else is part of that church? Oh, this person is there. That's why I like this church.

I like the people there or I like this or I like that. If that's why you're here, I want to tell you honestly, eventually the time will come when you'll get frustrated or disappointed with something in this church, offended. I'm here only because what matters to me is Jesus is going to be here.

That's it. If Jesus comes to this meeting, then I'll be here. But if some reason I know that Jesus is not coming to this meeting, I'm sorry.

As much as I love you all, I'm going to where Jesus is going to go. And I'll send you a Viber and say, hey, Jesus is actually going over there. Let's go there.

And you join me, I hope. But you know what I'm trying to say. I believe Jesus is here.

And the reason we gather in this place is because we want only one person to be here. That's Jesus. It's taken some time for me.

But over time, I've come to the place where honestly, I really only want to be with Jesus in a church meeting at all times. Jesus is what captivates my heart. Jesus is what brings me joy and excitement.

And it's because he's here that I'm here. And I hope if that's not your testimony, if you're here for some other reason, that there's Jesus plus something else that you're looking for in life. I want a little bit of this along with Jesus.

I want to tell you, I can tell you now itself, if not already, you will come to the point in your life where this church will frustrate you and disappoint you in some way. Because you want Jesus plus something else. We want only Jesus.

And we've seen over time that people who desire Jesus plus something else find another home. And we hold nothing against such people. But we will never stray from that path, that narrow path.

Oh, for a faith that will not stray from the narrow way where it's Jesus alone that we desire. And it's on the basis of that we're united. So dear young boys and young girls, this is a burden I have.

I hope you're listening to me. Some of you are already facing that temptation. I'm quite sure of it.

Some of you boys, you're facing the temptation where you're finding girls a little bit attractive. You look at a woman and you know there's something beautiful about that. You look at a girl.

Girls, you're already facing that temptation on how you can draw boys with the way you walk and the way you talk and what dresses you put on. Some of you, not even teenagers yet, I know that you're able to recognize how boys can be drawn. Oh, watch it.

Be watchful over it, little boys, little girls. Watch over it. If you give the devil a foothold in that, it will feel good.

I tell you there's a pleasure in sin. There's a pleasure in that, in girls knowing that they can seduce men with a seductive spirit. There's a pleasure, boys, that comes in looking at what pleases the flesh.

But if you give into that pleasure, if you give the devil a foothold, it is just going to get worse. It's just going to get worse. Don't give in.

Don't give in. Don't give in. Fight the battle.

Fight the battle. Jesus will help you. Jesus will help you.

1 John chapter 2. I love that John, in his 90s, I think is when he wrote this book or very old, certainly. All three of his episodes and the book of Revelation were written when John was quite old, as far as we know. But I love that he has a burden for all the stages of life in the church.

He has a burden for children, he has a burden for young people, and he has a burden for older people who are not yet, at least in the world's eyes. He says, first of all, I want to see, I want to show you, I'm writing to you fathers. To me, that speaks to everybody who is an older person.

Those who are married, those who are older, who have children. I'm writing to you fathers because you know him who has been from the beginning. This is verse 13.

1 John 2 verse 13. I'm writing to your fathers because you know him who has been from the beginning. He says it again, verse 14, because you know him who has been from the beginning.

My dear brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, do you know God as one who has been from the beginning? That means he wrote a plan for your life. He has planned every day of your life. He is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega, and you have such a knowledge of him that you're able to leave your family in that rest, in that freedom from anxiety.

Do you know, dear brothers, especially us men, do you know how much your wives, your wife and your children are leaning on you to be the example of rest and freedom from anxiety and no worry? Do you know how much instability it brings into your home when you as the head of your home have worry and anxiety and they can see it? It brings unrest, but it doesn't have to be that way. Lord, I want to know you as one who has been from the beginning and one who is the end, knows the end from the beginning, and I want to trust you in such a way that my children can say, yeah, I feel uncertainty, I feel worry, I feel fear, but dad, he doesn't. I can go to my dad whenever I'm feeling anxious.

Fathers, is this true? That whenever your children are feeling anxious or worried or a little bit uncertain, they can come to you and you will breathe peace, the peace of Christ rules in your heart, that what overflows from your tongue when you speak to them is peace, the peace of Christ that you can pour into their lives. Think about them coming like a little cup that's dry and you're overflowing with peace, you're overflowing with rest and freedom from anxiety and worry because you know him who has been from the beginning and you pour into their cups freedom from anxiety, freedom from peace. Oh, will you covet such a life? Oh, covet such a life, such a faith where any one of your children, daughter or son, can come to you say, dad, I'm a little nervous, what's my future gonna look like? I'm uncertain about what the rest of my life's gonna look like and you can say, yes, I'm uncertain too, but I have peace.

I have a peace that passes understanding and you can pour out that peace from the life of Christ into them. I've written to you children, he says in verse 12, children. Can you imagine old Apostle John, they say that when he was old, when he was to speak in the church, I think it was in Ephesus, he couldn't even walk up.

They would carry him in a chair. Old Apostle John, imagine old Apostle John sitting here and he's in the back and he's they lift him, they carry him in his chair, they put the chair here and he sits down and he says, children, I want to speak to you. Oh, I wish I could have been there to hear old Apostle John speaking to me, the little child.

Think of you like a little five, six-year-old little child listening to the Apostle John. I'm not Apostle John, I'm certainly not that old, but I want to read his words to you, little child, that God has recorded in his word. God made a point to record what John said to the children in Ephesus so that children in our LLC could hear it in 2023.

Oh, don't miss it, children. Please pay attention. I'm writing to you, children, because your sins have been forgiven, you, for his name's sake.

This is verse 12, 1 John 2, verse 12. Imagine if John, John may not know you individually, but through the Holy Spirit he can look at you in the eye, that little child over there, that little boy over there, that little girl over there and say, I can speak to you because your sins are forgiven, little children. I think if you're, you know, Xander already says that he's not a little child anymore.

He's barely six, which means that the standard for little children is less than six. If you're less than six or above, hear the word of the Holy Spirit through John recorded in his word. I'm writing to you, little children, your sins are forgiven.

What does that mean? There's no minimum age to have your sins forgiven. Do you, are you aware of sins in your life today? Little child, as you're listening to this, are you aware that there's something that you've done wrong? Some way in which you grieved your Holy Spirit and your fathers and mother have been faithful to tell you, you know, that's wrong. Jesus is sad when you speak like that to your brother, your sister.

Jesus is sad when you complain and grumble. Jesus is sad when you disobey. Jesus is sad when you told that lie and you're aware of that sin and now you're sitting here and you're hearing it and say, oh yeah, you're right.

But Jesus says your sins can be forgiven. Right now your sins can be forgiven. If you ask him to forgive your sins, he will forgive and John can say to you as well.

The Holy Spirit can say to you, little child, I'm writing to you. I have something to say to you because your sins are forgiven. Then he says in the last part of verse 13, I'm writing to you children because you know the Father.

I'm writing to your children because you know the Father. Is that possible? I'm four years old. Imagine a little four-year-old boy, little four-year-old girl here says to a visitor that comes to RLCF and says, hey tell me about you.

And this little four-year-old in the sincerity of their heart tells this stranger, I know God as my father. I have a father in heaven. I mean some of us adults struggle with that.

But you know where that comes from? I've written to your fathers because you know him who's been from the beginning. Think about it. If our children can grow up in homes where daddy and mommy know the Father so intimately, so well, that the little children know the Father as well.

How did this little child know the Father? Was it because they went to Bible school and they went to seminary and they knew how to? I mean this little child can't even read the Word. I know for a fact that these children didn't have God's Word in their home because the Bible was, the printed Bible came thousands of years later. How did these little children in 1st John 2 verse 4 13 know the Father? Because

they had dads and moms that knew the Father.

Knew him who was from the beginning. I know him, you know him who has been from the beginning. And out of the fullness of that knowledge of God they poured into their child.

They poured into their little boy, their little girl. And that little child was in a home where Monday through Saturday they were being filled up with God, knowing God as the Father. Not this doctrine and that doctrine and all that.

And even memory verses, that's great. But more than having them study their science and their math and their history and their Bible verse, help them to know the Father. As parents, if you know the Father so well and that's overflowing into them, you say, child, you can know God as your Father.

Come and sit on his lap today. He's invited you to sit. You know, children, parents, as you helped your children learn, memorize this verse for the primary class, Acts 2 verse 34 and 35.

Did you actually ask them to come and sit at God's right hand? Don't feel bad. I didn't. I'll confess, I didn't.

But I'm going to after I go back. I'm going to take some time with my children whenever I have the chance and say, you know what that verse you memorized really meant? I wanted to share that out in front of everybody so that you all can hear it. But parents, will you go home at some point and say, child, I know there's battles you'll face.

I know there's trials you'll face. I know there's difficulties you face. But while you're facing those trials, you're not out there on the battlefield.

You're at the right hand of God. You're fighting at the right hand of the King himself. You're fighting seated at the right hand of the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

You're going to win. Don't give up. You're going to win, little child.

You're going to win because you're seated at the right hand of the Lord Jesus Christ. And if the Lord Jesus Christ is going to win, you're going to win. And let them, you know, it was an invitation in Acts 2 verse 34.

Come sit at my right hand. That's the invitation to you all, your brother, your sister, even your child. Come sit at my right hand.

The enemies being a footstool, it'll happen. I'm going to finish it. But don't leave this place.

And I tell you, the reason there's been anxiety in your life this past week, the reason there's been a lack of love, there's been doubt, there's been unrest, there's been a lack of faith, or whatever it might be is because you haven't been sitting at the right hand of the Father. You've been trying to battle the enemy, trying to make them a footstool for your feet. And God, the Father invites you, come sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

So little children, know the Father. You can know the Father. If you're wondering, little child, if you're over the age of...if you're five or older, please look at me for a minute.

Take your eye off whatever you're writing and reading. Please look at me. I wish I could look each of you in the eye, dear little children, dear little boys, and dear little girls.

Sometime after today, I want you to, in your heart... Well, first, you could go to your parents and say, Dad, Mom, what does it mean to know the Father? And maybe you'll have dads and moms who are honest and say, I don't know, child. I'm trying to figure that out myself. That's honest.

That's good. But I want to lay a challenge first then for you, for us fathers and mothers. We ought to be able to lead our children to know the Father.

We absolutely must. We're running out of time. Our children are in our home for 18 years, maybe, if that.

Some of them, you know, by then, they have the right to leave home. They may go to college. They may get married.

Some things can happen, you know. They may leave home. Some of us have children that are already that close to that age.

It means we've got two, three years left. Can you say that by the time your children have reached the age of 18, son, daughter, if you've seen me, you've seen the Father, to some extent. To whatever extent God wanted them to see the Father in you while they were in your home.

I have a burden for my children that by the time they leave home, I can say to them, daughter, son, if you've seen me, you've seen the Father. I haven't done it perfectly. I haven't done it perfectly.

Already, I haven't done it perfectly, and I might still not do it perfectly, but I've set it as a goal. Lord, I want to represent the Father to my children. This is what Jesus said.

You know, we talk about following Jesus. Yeah, we're disciples of Jesus. You know what it means to be a Christian? It means to be a follower of Jesus.

Jesus, at the end of the allotted time that he had with his disciples, said to them, if you've seen me, you've seen the Father. And I take that to heart. I say, Lord, at the end of the allotted time by which I have my children in my home, I want to be able to say to them, if you've seen me, you've seen the Father.

The times of ignorance God overlooks. Now, he calls you, fathers, to repent. Now, he calls you, mothers, to repent, so that you have time yet.

If you've got 16 and 17-year-olds, the time is short, but God's not limited by time. He's beyond time. He can allow, if you... Why does he say that now is the appointed time? Today is the day of salvation, if you hear his voice, don't harden your heart.

Here's how I take it. I have a 16-year-old. That means I've got two more years, the way I look at it.

I might have more, but at least I've got that much. But, you know, honestly, I don't even know if I'll have that. The Lord might take one of them before that.

The Lord might take me before that. I don't know. I'm not guaranteed tomorrow.

But I want to know that by the end of whatever that allotted time is that I had my children in my home, I'll be able to say to them, if you've seen me, you've seen the father. I long for that Lord. But it's possible.

Dear brothers and sisters, it's possible. Don't give up. Don't give up.

We have an allotted time, I believe, with our children, and it's possible that by the end of that time, we can say, you know the father. Think what a heritage. It'd be better than giving your children \$100 million.

You know, there are maybe some people in the world that can give their children \$100 million. That's my inheritance to you, son. You're leaving home.

Here's \$100 million. You know what's way better than that? None of us has \$100 million to give to our children. You know what you can give them, though? A knowledge of the father.

You can give them the knowledge of the father. That's eternal riches. It's more than a billion trillion dollars.

And what a tragedy it will be if you reach the point in your life where your children are out of the home and you miss that opportunity. Again, the times of ignorance, the times when you didn't know God overlooks. He's merciful, but you're hearing it today.

You're hearing it today. That's why I say RLCF is a dangerous church to sit in, because now God's going to hold you accountable to that. You heard this message.

You heard, not from me, it's, I'm just, God's filled my cup up with something, and I'm pouring it into you. It's from the Holy Spirit. I'm not the source of this.

It's God's word, and it's the burden of God's heart more than it's even mine. I know that for a fact. But out of the burden of God's heart, if you've heard the burden of the Lord, that's where the prophets had a mission.

The burden of the Lord, the burden of the Lord. I'll tell you, the Lord has a burden today for your children. It's his, they're his children, but he's put them in your home.

And he's given you one task, dear fathers, dear mothers, that you will know the father, and that they will know the father. Please listen to the cry of my heart this morning. Don't waste time.

Don't, don't give up. Don't lose hope. Now, if you don't have children or your children are out of the home, it's okay.

God can put a burden in your heart in some other way, in some other form of responsibility. Husbands, you have a responsibility for your wife. Wives, you have a responsibility for your husbands.

Intercede for them. You can know the father, from the youngest to the oldest, all shall know me. And then he says, I'm writing to you young people.

He calls them young men, but in the middle of verse 13, it says, I'm writing to you young people because you have overcome the evil one. And that's what I thought about. You know, again, I was talking about how I was observing just the irreverence for God, the foul language, the extreme immodesty in dress and all of this in the young people that are, most of them teenagers, if barely 20.

And this is the world that our children are growing up into. Yeah, you can homeschool them. You can protect them.

You can make sure that what they watch on TV, if you have a TV or what movies they watch is protected. But the time is going to come when they ought to know the father and they ought to be overcoming the evil

one themselves. It's one thing for us parents to overcome the evil one.

It's another thing for John to come into a church, the church in Ephesus, let's say, and say, I'm writing to you young people because I see, I can see in your eyes, you're overcoming the evil one. Dear young boys, can John the apostle sit here and he had tremendous discernment, I believe. I don't have that level of discernment.

I long for it. I long to be able to look at the flock that God has given me and know what's going on in their heart, not to judge them, but to help them. That's my longing for us as elders.

We long that God will give us insight and revelation into what's going on in your heart so that if you're headed towards a pit, that God will show us the pit in advance before you fall into it. That's why we speak firmly. That's why we speak in love.

That's why we're strong sometimes even in rebuke or discipline. It's because there's a pit ahead. We hope you won't fall into it.

We are careful over our own lives as well. We're careful over our marriages, over our children. But imagine if John the apostle was to walk into this church and with the discernment that he had when he wrote these letters, look at you, young boy, and say, young boy, I can see in your eyes that you're overcoming.

You know, adultery is something you can see in the eyes. Their eyes are full of adultery, it says. A discerning man can look at another person, another man, and know just by looking in his eyes if that's a lustful person or not.

I met rare men like that. Godly men can say that's a man who's got adultery in his eyes. Yeah, his marriage seems okay.

He's not divorced and all that, but there's adultery in his eyes, impurity in his eyes. Can he say that about you young people? Fathers, men, can he say that about us? Can the Holy Spirit, Jesus himself, come and sit in front of you right now in this very moment, take a chair, put his hand on your shoulders, and say, there's purity in you. If not, you are to fall on your face and repent.

We are to fall on our face and repent and cry out to God. Because the time is coming when we will stand before the judge, and that adultery that we didn't take seriously will be there for all the world to see. But I want to speak especially to you young boys and young men.

Take it seriously. It is possible. If it was possible for the young boys, young men, sitting in whatever church John was sitting in, it is possible for you.

If it was possible for Jesus, when he was your age, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 years old, to live with purity, where not even once did he give in to lust with his eyes, it is possible for you. Jesus is your example. And he invites you, the same Jesus who walked on this earth and faithfully overcame, invites you now to sit at his right hand, and to hold his hand, and for him to walk you through that temptation.

To give you the grace to turn your eyes away when you're faced with that temptation. To give you the power and the strength to overcome, for you young women. He says that also again, verse, how are we going to overcome? Verse 14, the middle of verse 14, I have written to you, you young people, because you have overcome the evil one.

How? You're strong. The Word of God abides in you. Here's how you're going to overcome, dear young boys.

If you're not already facing that temptation, I don't mind speaking about it now, because you're going to. It's just a matter of days, weeks, months, or a few years, before you're going to face that temptation. The temptation that is imprisoned almost all of the young people of today.

Almost all of the young people today are walking around in chains. Chains of lust. Chains of defeat.

All forms of chains. And that leads to all other forms of addiction, and drunkenness, and drug addiction, and all of that. But you don't have to be defeated that way, dear young men, young boys.

How will you overcome? Let the Word of God abide in you. And if you're listening today, and you know that if the Holy Spirit, if Jesus was to sit in front of you, and hold you by the shoulders, and look you in the eye, he would have to say, my dear son, there's impurity in you. You know it.

And you've been able to hide it. And you think, yeah, nobody knows. But I know.

And that's what matters. And you can be freed from it. I invite you to come out of your bondage.

Out of your lust. Out of your defeat. Out of your failure.

Come sit at my right hand. We'll make our enemies a footstool for our feet. Come.

Come. Come. Don't delay.

And it happens because the Word of God abides in you. You know what that word abides means, young boys? Again, especially listen to me. That word abide means I've made a home.

What is my abide? It's the home that I live in. At the end of the day, that's where I'm gonna go back. I might, here I'm here for a little while, here for a little while, we might go to the park for a little while.

But at the end of the day, if you really want to find me, that's where you're gonna find me. You can't find me anywhere else, that's probably where I am. So we're gonna end up at the end of the day.

Think of the Word of God like that. Yeah, you might read a little bit of history here. You might watch a little bit of some sports game.

You may play a little bit here and there. You might like to play video games or something like that. But at the end of the day, where are you gonna come back to? Come back here.

Make this your home. I know it's not the easiest book to read. I don't mind saying that.

I'm not being irreverent. The Bible is not the easiest book in the world to read. There are comics that are more pleasurable to the flesh and to the soul.

But this is the book that will save you from becoming a prisoner. This is the book that will set you free. Let this book become your home.

Every morning, if you like to use picture language, young boys, if you're fighting this battle, every morning, imagine yourself inside a little Bible. This is you, let's say. Imagine yourself.

Say, Lord, I'm gonna make the Bible my home. Just gonna sit in here. In your mind, you just picture yourself in the Bible and say, Lord, protect me.

You know, no lust can get in through here. No evil can get in through here. If your home is the Word of God, you will be strong.

That's why we have Bible reading plans. That's why we have memory verses. That's why we have book reading plans.

It's so that you will find a home in the Word of God. So you don't even have to wait till tomorrow morning because, young boys, there's gonna be a temptation waiting for you when we go to the park. When you drive on the road, there's gonna be billboards.

There's gonna be women walking on the street. That's gonna tempt you with your eyes. Put yourself in the Word of God.

Let the Word of God protect your eyes. That means, very simply, just say, Lord, you cry out. If you're hearing this, like I said, I hope you're listening to me.

In your heart, say, Lord, I want to be free. I want to live a life of freedom. I want to live this life that I heard about this morning.

Will you help me? That's all it takes. You don't have to get better at fighting or anything. You just cry out to God and say, Lord Jesus, help me.

Help me to take your invitation and to sit at your right hand and cry out with all of your heart for you to live in freedom. And you will live in freedom. He will set you free.

Young women, he writes to you as well. How are you going to fight? It's a spirit as addicting as it is for men with lust, to look with lust. It is as addicting, I believe, for women to act in a way that seduces others, to draw the attention of men.

That is also an addiction. And God will judge that part of sexual sin as much as he'll judge men for their lustful behavior. Now, again, please understand, I'm not saying that a woman is to blame for a man's lust, but that spirit of the world that seeks to seduce men in how you walk and how you talk and how you smile and use your eyes and what you put on, that spirit is of the world.

That spirit is of the world and you can be freed from it. If you find that you constantly are falling back into that behavior, fight it. Ask God for help.

Cry out for help, young girls. Cry out for help. That God will give you a spirit of modesty where you rejoice to dress modestly because Jesus is attracted to that.

Where you're excited to put on that clothing instead of the other one, which you know will make you more attractive to the world and to boys, but you wear that because Jesus is drawn to it. Jesus is pleased with it. You know, after he says all of this, you know what he says in verse 15? If you love the world, God's love is not evil.

If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not hidden. 1 John 2 verse 15. So let's take that word to heart.

Dear young boys and girls, especially young children, I spoke to you. I spoke to us men. I spoke to us women, I believe.

I don't, I won't speak what I planned to speak this morning because the Lord had something else for us, I believe, and that's what we needed to hear. I hope you're encouraged, dear, especially dear young boys, young girls, young people, and even if that's been you as an older person living in defeat, living in prison, Christ has come to set you free. Come, come.

We sang out of my bondage and pride and arrogance. I come to you in sinfulness. I come to you, Lord.

Fill me with your Holy Spirit. Let's pray together. Pray with me.

In the seed for our children, dear parents, in the seed for your children, young people cry out to Him. Cry out to Him. Forget about everything else.

This is important. This is life or death. You could have everything else in the world, but if you lose your soul in this area and lust will corrupt your soul, will eat away at it.

The spirit of the world will eat away at your soul and corrupt it, and if you lose your soul, you've lost it all. It will profit you nothing. Come to Him.

Come to Him. Come to the merciful Savior who beckons you. Come.

He'll set you free. He invites you to sit at His right hand, and your enemies that you're battling against, that you feel helpless against, you'll see that they're His enemies too, and He's fighting that battle for you. And together, He will help you put those enemies under your feet.

Lord Jesus, I cry out to you. I come to you, Lord, for myself, but also on behalf of my family and this church family and those listening to this prayer. Oh, we cry out to you, Lord, for help and grace and strength.

Preserve us, Lord, in a world that's getting worse and worse by the minute. Preserve us, Lord Jesus. Preserve us in purity.

Preserve our children. Preserve our young people in purity with their eyes, in purity with their dress, in a spirit that's pleasing to you, Lord Jesus, in their thought life, in what they do in secret. Oh, watch over them, Lord.

We can only watch over them so much. We can only protect them so much, but you, Lord, through the Holy Spirit, put the fear of God in their eyes, I pray. Put the fear of God in their hearts, Lord Jesus, so that they will fear you.

They'll reverence you. There will be such a reverence for you that will preserve, keep them from sin. Oh, I lift up these children, these young people to you.

Believe that you hear our prayer. You hear our crying. You hear our helplessness.

We don't know where to turn, Lord. We don't know how to preserve them, but you can and you will, and I believe you'll do that, Lord, and as they continue to learn from you, as they learn your word, as they sit in Sunday school classes, oh, Lord, preserve them. Let the word become alive.

Let it not just be head knowledge, Lord. Set them free from all sin, I pray. Let there be no sin in their life.

Help them to know that they can be forgiven this moment. They can be cleansed this moment. They can be justified this moment, and they can live an overcoming, victorious Christian life where no sin is master over them because they're under grace.

Oh, pour out a spirit of grace in our church, Lord. We long for it. Pour out a spirit of grace on us husbands and fathers.

Pour out a spirit of grace on us wives and mothers. Pour out a spirit of grace on our children, Lord, on the young people, a spirit of grace that overcomes sin. I thank you that you will do it.

I believe you will. This faith that will not shrink, Lord, the battles ahead of us, it's raging, but we will not shrink back. We're taking back our children in the name of Jesus.

We're taking back our marriages in the name of Jesus. We're taking back our homes in the name of Jesus. This church is yours, Lord Jesus.

Take control of it. It's fully yours. If there's any person here or any part of RLCF, Lord, that's been for the world or has had the spirit of the world, remove it, Lord, completely.

Let your fire burn in our midst that burns up all of the spirit of this world. Be a wall of fire around us that the spirit of the world will never come in. Oh, Lord, we cry out to you.

You must help us. You must be that wall of fire around us, Lord Jesus. We have no fire in ourselves.

We have no fire as much as we desire it. You are the fire and you be the glory in our midst, Lord, and oh, transform this church more and more into a greater purity, Lord Jesus, a greater purity than we have known yet or even imagined, because that's the purity of heaven. We thank you.

Give us more of that infinitely Holy Spirit, we pray. Thank you, Lord. That's a word of comfort as well.

You're with us. I pray we will leave this place seated at your right hand, and there's safety there. There's power there.

There's no sin there. There's authority there. There's victory there.

Thank you in Jesus name. Amen.

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