

# Overcoming For God's Purpose

by Stephen Kaung

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**Scripture:** Isaiah 14:12, Revelation 2:7, Matthew 24:40, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, Revelation 22:12, Amos 4:12, 1 Corinthians 15:52, 2 Peter 3:10, Revelation 3:11, 1 John 2:28

**Topics:** "Pride vs. Humility", "Vigilance in Faith"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Will you please turn to Acts 13, verse 36. Acts 13, verse 36. For David, indeed, having in his own generation ministered to the will of God, fell asleep, and was added to his father, and saw corruption.

Let's have a word of prayer. Dear Lord, we do want to thank thee for the privilege of being gathered together in your name. How we thank thee knowing that where thy name is, there is thy presence.

Lord, we covet thy presence more than anything else. As we are in thy presence, prepare our hearts, open our hearts, that we may hear thy word and allow thy word to work in us in such a way that will bring fruit unto yourself. We commit this time into your hand.

We ask thy blessing that thou may be glorified. We ask in thy name. Amen.

Thank God for bringing us all together this time. We look to the Lord for his blessing. We trust whenever God's people meet together in the name of our Lord Jesus, his presence is here with us.

And with his presence, we know there will be blessing for the glory of God. In the beginning, God. There was nothing but God.

And our God is a trying God. He is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. If we may use human way of description, may we say that in the beginning, there was a conversation among the Godhead.

Because our God is a trying God. He is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. There was a consultation, as it were, among them.

God the Father loved his Son. He wanted to give everything to his beloved Son. But being God, he knew the very end from the very beginning.

He knew that in the process, there will be problem. So as the Father was sharing his thought, his Son stepped forward and said, Father, if this is thy will, go ahead. I'm willing to offer myself as the lamb to redeem the lost people.

And it is on the basis of what the Lord Jesus has said, that the Father proceeded with creation. And sure enough, when God created the heavens and the earth, everything was rosy. Of all God's creation at that time, the highest of his creation were the archangels.

And among the archangels, there was Lucifer, the brilliant star, the masterpiece of God's creation. He was gifted with ten wonderful gifts. He was to be the leading angel, the angel over the throne of God.

He was to lead the angels in worshiping God. In the beginning, everything was rosy. Everything was what God wanted it to be.

But unfortunately, Lucifer, the archangel, because of his much traffic and of his great talents, he began to look into himself. Brothers and sisters, it is always dangerous to look into ourselves. Because when we look into ourselves, what do we expect to see? Either we see ourselves as perfect, as glorious, and thus become proud of ourselves.

Or we look at ourselves as nothing and be dejected. So the thing is, never look into yourselves. Look up unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith.

When Lucifer, in the beginning, he led the other angels in worshiping God, everything was right according to God's order. But unfortunately, Lucifer began to look into himself. Dear brothers and sisters, it is always dangerous to look into ourselves outside of our Lord Jesus.

Because once you did that, you will either consider yourself as more excellent than what you really are and become proud. Or you will be dejected because you are nothing and you tend to give up. So the Bible always exhorted us, look off from yourself and look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith.

That is the only safe way. Sure enough, Lucifer, because of his great talents, of his great job, of his great position, of leading the angels in worshiping God, in serving God, he began to look into himself. Brothers and sisters, as I have said, it is always dangerous if you are outside of Christ and you begin to look into yourself.

Because there can be only two results. One is you will be elated and consider yourself more than what you are. You get proud or you will be dejected, looking down upon yourself and be discouraged.

That's the reason why the Bible always exhorts us to look off unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith. Sure enough, Lucifer began to look into himself. He was not satisfied with what God has given him.

With the position, with the service that God has called him to do. He wanted something more for himself. Isn't this true even with us? If we look into ourselves, we tend to even look ourselves beyond what we actually are and get proud of ourselves and begin to act accordingly.

Or we look into ourselves less than what God has given us and be dejected and tend to be negative. So this is what happened to Lucifer. In Isaiah 14, we are told, when he looked into himself five times, he expressed his feeling.

He wasn't contented with what God has given to him. With the place and the gifts that God has given him, he wanted to be more. To put it plainly, he wanted to be equal with God.

And what does it mean? Who is equal with God? Except God's only begotten Son. So in other words, Lucifer was ambitious to take the place of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. That was his downfall.

So in Isaiah 14, we are told, five times, he wanted something more. He wanted to be equal with God. He wanted to take the place of God's beloved Son, only beloved Son.

And that was the sin of Lucifer. And because of what his ambition was, God put him out from heaven. And all that were under his domain were under curse.

We believe that the earth we know today was formerly under the dominion that God has given to Lucifer to rule. And therefore, when God's judgment came upon Lucifer, he was not only displaced from heaven, but the earth, which was under his rule, went into ruin, surrounded by water. Under judgment, we do not know how long this continue on.

But we only know that there was a time when the earth was surrounded by water. We call it the Ice Age. It was actually the judgment of God over Lucifer.

But God being the God of love, he would not consider, allow such negative things to continue. So the Bible begins with the Spirit of God brooded over the face of the deep. In other words, God's love began to return to earth.

And in six days, God began to restore the earth to be habitable. God has a plan. For God to destroy Lucifer, it was easy.

His breath can destroy Lucifer. But God wouldn't do that. Because if he did that, he got no glory.

It is as if a person, a grown-up person, beating a little child, that is no glory to that person. So God, in his marvelous wisdom, he had a plan. He wanted to defeat his enemy, not by himself alone, but someone made a little lower than the angels.

And yet by the grace of God, he will use that person to defeat his enemy. That is the glory of God. So dear brothers and sisters, this is the story of the creation of man.

Man as we are, are created not for ourselves. Man as we are, are created to glorify God, to accomplish God's purpose, to defeat God's enemy, so that God may be glorified. Think of how glorious it will be for using an inferior to defeat a superior, not by himself, but by trusting in God.

And this is what God expects us to do. Unfortunately, man failed. God put man in the Garden of Eden.

It is a wonderful garden, filled with fruit trees for the food of man. And God commanded man, saying, kill it and guard it. Kill it, because it is always God's purpose.

He wants man to improve upon what God has provided for the glory of God. At the same time, to guard. Now what does that mean? It means that when God planted the Garden of Eden and put man in it, Satan was outside that garden.

God commanded man to do two things, to kill and to guard. To kill is to improve upon what God has provided. That is always God's purpose.

And to guard against God's enemy, for Satan was outside of the Garden of Eden. It was a garden of pleasure, but as you all know, man failed in his commission. He killed the garden.

We do not know why. When man was killing the garden, his wife was wandering around, not helping man in the work that God has given them to do. On the other hand, we find that man failed to guard the garden.

A garden without a wall. God did it for purpose, because God allowed man to be that wall. Now think of that.

When God created man, man was of such great power and strength that he's able to guard the garden. He's able to be the wall of the garden against the enemy. That is God's purpose for man.

But unfortunately, our forefathers failed. They killed the garden, but they did not watch the garden. They did not act as the wall of the garden.

Think of that. What power God must have given to Adam that he's able, as a person, to guard that big garden and act as wall against the enemy. God has given Adam great power in order to do that, but Adam failed.

And because he failed to guard the garden, so Satan was able to slip in to deceive his wife and through his wife to deceive Adam. That is the fault of man. What a tragedy.

But God cannot be defeated. He had a plan. The seed of the woman shall tread upon the head of the serpent.

Even the serpent will hurt his heel. That is the promise of God. In other words, God is not going to destroy the enemy by his own power, because that will not give him glory.

God will use men a little lower than angels to destroy the angel that is higher than him. That is the glory of God. So, brothers and sisters, even though Adam failed in the garden of Eden, and yet God made a promise, the seed of the woman shall destroy the head of the serpent, and the serpent will hurt her heel.

In other words, God put an enmity between Satan and man. Man and Satan. God does not want man to be in friendship with his enemy.

God wants man to be a vessel in his hand to defeat his enemy. That is where the glory of God is. So, as we read the Bible, we find that God's promise of the seed of the woman finally came to this earth.

God sent his own beloved son into the world to be the seed of the woman, to defeat his enemy. Our Lord Jesus came incarnated as a man. And as a man, he was tempted in all things, just as we do.

But thank God he was faithful to God. He never yielded to any temptation. Throughout his life, he obeyed his father in spite of himself.

You remember how he repeatedly said, I can do nothing by myself. I do it because I saw my father did it. I can go nowhere on my own.

I go because my father has sent me. He resisted all the temptations of the enemy of God and overcome. And because he has overcome, therefore he has given this overcoming power to those who believe in him.

Brothers and sisters, as we read the Bible, we come to the last book of the Bible, Revelation. And what is the theme of Revelation? What is the word that occurs again and again in the book of Revelation? It is the word he who overcomes. God is raising us, overcome us throughout the ages.

From the beginning of human history to the end of human history, God is raising up people as overcomers. What do we mean by overcomers? It means that they overcome God's enemy. They overcome all the temptations that the enemy tries to put upon man.

They are obedient to God, faithful to God, true to God. And through them, God is able to defeat his enemy. These are the overcomers.

The call to overcome is not only at the end of the book of the Bible, Revelation. As a matter of fact, the call to overcomer is from the beginning of the failure of man. God called his people to overcome.

To overcome Satan by overcoming all the temptations that Satan tries in man. Deny yourself. Obey the Lord.

Follow him. Trust him to the very last. These are the overcomers that God is looking for.

So, brothers and sisters, it is not in the last book of the Bible, Revelation, that we find the call to overcome. As a matter of fact, from the beginning of man's failure, God began to call for overcomers. And that is why you find in Revelation 14 countless people who have overcome throughout the ages by the grace of God.

Brothers and sisters, we are living at the end of this age. I wonder whether the Lord will return in my lifetime. I heard some people say, this was instilled to me by somebody else.

But no. Somehow in my spirit, I feel we are living at the end of this age. It is quite possible that our Lord will return during our lifetime.

Do you expect that? Or are you hoping that the Lord will delay his return because you still have your own plan? You are not ready for him yet. Wait, Lord, until I have enjoyed what I wanted to do. And then I will repent and you will come.

Isn't it there, your expectation? But the Lord will not cater to your selfishness. If the Lord should come without your permission, he will come actually out of your expectation. You don't expect him to come that soon.

Our attitude is, Lord, I haven't enjoyed the world yet. Give me time to enjoy the world and then I will repent and expect you to return so I can be raptured. Isn't that our selfish, secret idea? I wonder whether we are living at the end of this age.

This age has prolonged for 20 centuries. Isn't that long enough? I have a secret hope. And my hope is that my Lord will return in my lifetime.

I'm not a prophet, not a false prophet. I'm just hoping that the Lord will return in my lifetime. I believe it is possible.

I believe, why is it that the Lord allows me to live that long? The Lord is coming. And when he shall come, in Matthew chapter 24, we are told everything looks usual, as it always has been for 20 centuries. But suddenly, two were grinding the mill in the morning.

One is taken, one is left. Two are working in the fields. One is taken, one is left.

Two sleeping in their bed. One is taken, one is left. Why? Because the earth is round.

In some place, it's morning. In other place, it is daytime. In some other place, it is night.

But wherever you may be, you find that this will take place. One will be taken and one will be left. The one taken is the one that has been ready, ready at all times, preparing themselves for the coming of the Lord.

And the one left is the one who said the Lord would delay his return and began to beat his fellow workers. And to his surprise, the Lord suddenly returned. Brothers and sisters, if this should happen today, do you know you will be among those who are taken or among those who are left? This is a serious question.

We cannot afford to be complacent. Brothers and sisters, I deeply feel that the Lord may come in my lifetime. He keeps me living so long because he wants to come in my lifetime.

Am I ready for him? Am I prepared for him? Or if he should come, I will be left behind. Now that doesn't mean that anyone who will be left behind is not saved. By the grace of God, if you believe in the Lord Jesus as your personal Savior, he will save you.

No doubt about that. But it is not a matter of salvation. It is a matter of full salvation.

I do believe, brothers and sisters, if the Lord should come now, you want to be raptured, do you? Do we who are here in the auditorium this morning, if the Lord should come now, do you hope that you will be among those who have been raptured? Are you content to be left behind? I do not say that those who are left behind are unsaved. They are saved by the grace of God, but they will be disciplined during the time of Millennium, the Kingdom. Only those who are ready to go will become kings and reign with Christ during the Millennium Kingdom.

It will be a big difference. It doesn't mean that you will be unsaved. Thank God you are saved.

Once saved, forever saved, and once saved, God will save to the uttermost. But those who are not prepared will have to suffer in darkness during the Millennium time. So I believe the Bible is very clear to us.

Brothers and sisters, thank God we are living at this critical moment. This is no time for us to be complacent. This is the time for us to wake up, give ourselves totally over to the Lord, allow His Spirit to work in our lives, search our hearts to see if there's anything evil within us that will hinder us from being taken.

I believe this is the attitude that we must take today. So Lord, have mercy upon us. We thank Thee for giving us this opportunity of coming together to seek Thee.

And we pray, Lord, that none will be left behind, but everyone will, by Thy grace, press on towards the goal and be taken to be with Thee and reign with Thee for a thousand years. For the glory of God. Amen.

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