

Who Am I in Christ

by Stephen Kaung

The sermon emphasizes our identity as overcomers in Christ and the importance of overcoming self to achieve spiritual maturity.

Duration: 50:20

Scripture: Matthew 16:24, Romans 7:15, Galatians 2:20, 1 John 5:4

Topics: "Spiritual Identity", "Overcoming Sin"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking God as the ultimate answer to life's questions and hindrances, highlighting that only God can truly provide answers. It discusses the concept of being overcomers through Christ, acknowledging the inner battle between the spirit and self. The sermon also addresses the challenge of overcoming oneself, which is more difficult than overcoming external sins. Lastly, it provides guidance on dealing with sudden spiritual stumbling and the importance of immediate repentance and surrender to God's will.

Transcript

Good morning brothers and sisters. Thank God we can still gather this morning. This morning is the questions and answers period.

I always feel this is a wrong day because the questions may be real but the answer, no man can answer your questions. Only God can. So even though this is a wrong name and yet I hope brothers and sisters you all remember that God alone is our answer.

Whatever question you may have, do not look to man for answer. Man can help you a little bit. May be able to remove some of your hindrances but they cannot answer your question.

God is the only one who can answer your question. So brothers and sisters, do not look at us as if we are able to give you the answers. We cannot.

We are here by the grace of God that we may help you to remove some of your hindrances. To prepare the way for God to answer your question. So do not put your hope on man.

You will be disappointed. Our hope is only in God. Now let us have a few words of prayer first.

Dear Lord, we want to thank thee for bringing this conference to a conclusion. Lord, as we gathered here with our questions in our hearts, we do not expect any human being will be able to be the answer. Lord, thou knowest that we believe you are alone the answer.

So our hearts turn to thee and say, Lord, be our answer. Remove whatever hindrance it may stand in the way by the grace of God that we may be able to get the answer from yourself. We commit this time into your hand.

May thy name be glorified. In thy precious name we pray. Amen.

I was given three questions. Question number one. Concerning the question, are we ready? I've heard sharing, mentioning that we all should say we are ready once we are all in Christ.

Yet, though we Christians are all in Christ, are not many still not ready to be overcomers? I'm having trouble having our stance as Christians concerning our readiness. Especially the verse on 1 John saying that whatever is born of God overcomes the world. 5.4. Which may imply that all Christians who are born of God are already overcomers.

And thus, all are ready. Sorry if this question is tortuous and hope you understand. Brothers and sisters, it is true.

We who have believed in the Lord Jesus, we are overcomers. Why? It is not because of us. It is because of Christ, the overcomer.

Our Lord Jesus came into this world to be a man. And as a man, he overcame. He overcame sin, death, and Satan.

He is the overcomer. And because we who believe in the Lord Jesus, we have his life in us. So, so far as the life of a Christian is concerned, that life is the life of an overcomer.

Because he has overcome. Therefore, we who are in him have overcome. This is our position.

This is what God has provided for us. This is what God has meant for us. We are to be overcomers.

It is not because of what we are. It is because of what he is. Our Lord is the overcomer.

I think, brothers and sisters, you have no problem on this. If you read the four Gospels, you can see how he who came as a man, and yet he was sinless. He overcame all his life.

He overcame sin. He overcame the world. He overcame Satan.

He overcame himself. Throughout his life, he is to do his Father's will. Not my will, but thy will be done.

Not what I want to say, but because you have said it. Not what I want to do, because you have done it. Not where I want to go, because you have gone there.

So throughout our life, our Lord's life, he is undoubtedly the overcomer. On Calvary's cross, he cast the enemy away. He overcame.

And brothers and sisters, because we who have believed in the Lord Jesus, we have his overcoming life in us. He lives in us. Therefore, we are overcomers.

So, so far as our spiritual position is concerned, all believers are overcomers. This is our position. If we fail to overcome, that is because we fail to trust in Christ.

If we trust in Christ, our life will overcome. But sadly, brothers and sisters, it is a fact that we who believe in the Lord Jesus, positionally, we are all overcomers. But practically, we are not.

Why? Because there in the spirit dwells Christ, the overcomer. And by him, we overcome. But there in our soul, that dwells our old self.

And this old self is a defeater. He was defeated in the Garden of Eden. And since then, he is always defeated by the enemy.

So brothers and sisters, the Bible tells us, within us, there is a civil war. In the spirit, Christ reigns. But in our soul, our self still reigns.

The enemy has no hold on Christ. But he has every hold on our self. Our self has been under his domain since we are born.

And he will not let go. So I believe, brothers and sisters, we who have believed in the Lord Jesus, in the beginning, at the time when you first trust the Lord, everything to be rosy, everything to be wonderful. But gradually, you find there is an inner war within you.

The spirit wars against the soul. And the soul wars against the spirit. In the spirit is Christ.

In the soul, in our soul is our self. And this self has been under the domain of the enemy since we have been born. And therefore, you find the enemy will not let us go.

So brothers and sisters, as you look back to your spiritual experience, you find at the beginning of your Christian life, when you first believe, everything seems to be so heavenly. So rosy. You are walking in the air.

But very soon, it seems as if you have dropped down to the earth. You discover, as Paul did, that within him there is a civil war going on. In the spirit is Christ, the overcomer.

But in the soul is your self, your own self, which has been under the domain of the enemy since you are born. And therefore, you find the enemy will not let you go. I believe this is our Christian experience in the beginning.

I do not know how long you seem to stay in heaven. You are walking, as it were, in the air. So glorious.

That is because you first taste the victory of Christ. But not very long, you find it seems as if you have dropped down on earth. You begin to experience what Paul did, what every believer did.

You begin to experience an inward warfare. There seems to be two people warring against each other. In the spirit Christ raised, you want to go the way of Christ.

But in our soul, our self reigns. And the enemy uses our self to fight against our spirit. I believe this must be your experience.

This was the experience of the Apostle Paul. And this has been the experience of all believers. It seems as if you drop down from heaven to earth.

There is the war within yourself. A civil war. The spirit against the soul.

The soul against the spirit. Christ in your spirit against self in your soul. And this has been our Christian life.

Sometimes you may think how good it would be if the moment I'm saved, God took me to himself. That will avoid all the problems of my life. But brothers and sisters, God knows better.

If this is the case, heaven will be a kindergarten. It will be full of babies that need to be cared for instead of being used of God for his glory. So dear brothers and sisters, thank God he has not taken us immediately after we are saved.

Like that thief on the cross who turned to Christ during his last time. And the Lord said, tonight you will be with me in paradise. We think he is blessed.

But brothers and sisters, when you think deeply, you find he will be in paradise as a baby. And God wants grown up Christians. So thank God for still leaving us on this earth.

How we have mistaken God. We think, we thought, that God did not love us enough to take us right away. But thank God he loves us so much.

He did not want babies, all babies in paradise. He wants grown up, fit to be his bride. And the only way to be growing up is to leave us here on earth.

Give us opportunity to experience the inward battle of spirit and soul. And learn the lessons of denying ourselves. Take up our cross and follow the Lord.

So brothers and sisters, did you ever thank God for saving you? I believe you did. But did you ever thank God for leaving you in this wretched world? Allowing temptations, all kinds of things happening in your life. Your life seems to be very difficult.

But do you thank God for that? As a matter of fact, God has given you every opportunity to grow up to be men and women in the Lord. Instead of babies in Christ. Babies are very lovely.

I think everybody loves baby. But baby is very troublesome. God wants you to grow up to care for others.

Instead of being babies to be cared for. And that's the reason why we are still here. On the one hand, our prayer is that the Lord will come immediately and take us to himself.

There is nothing better than that. But on the other hand, if it is the Lord's will to leave us still on earth, to learn the lessons that he wants us to learn, that we may grow up into manhood and womanhood, that we may be able to care for others instead of being cared for. Brothers and sisters, do you see the wisdom behind it? So this is our opportunity.

As long as we are still living. On the one hand, we may feel we pass through in the warfare all the time. We battle all the time.

Battle our way to heaven as it were. But on the other hand, God loves us so much. He wants us to grow up.

To overcome ourselves. To obey God in the absolute. And this is God's thought for us.

So the Bible says, Whom he has foreknown, he has called. Whom he has called, he has sanctified. He wants every one of us to grow up.

Today is the opportunity. Today is your opportunity to be delivered from yourself. We have to go through the battle.

And if we are faithful, by his grace, we will overcome not only Satan, the world and sin, but we will overcome ourselves. Brothers and sisters, the hardest thing to lay down is to lay down yourself. But what a hindrance is self to the kingdom of God.

So dear brothers and sisters, here we find this is a process God has given us. On the one hand, we hope our Lord will come right away. And take us to himself.

But on the other hand, as long as it is the will of God to leave us behind, we know he has a purpose in it. And that purpose is to mature you. Deliver you from yourself.

But brothers and sisters, again, I will emphasize. God allows us to go through this inward warfare to show us that we cannot overcome by ourselves. But there is one within us who has overcome.

And if we learn to deny ourselves, take up the cross and follow him, we shall also overcome. So at the return of the Lord Jesus, he can receive us to be his bride, to have his statue within us. So brothers and sisters, don't murmur as if God does not love you.

He loves you so much, he wants you to be grown up. So this is what the Lord will do. But I think we all experience how hard it is to give up ourselves.

But through this hardship, through our willingness to be dealt with by the cross, to bear the cross and follow the Lord, dear brothers and sisters, glorious days are waiting for you. So I will say, this is what every Christian must go through. Again, I want to remind you that we cannot overcome.

But thank God we have the overcoming life in us. If we are willing to take the cross and follow the Lord, we too shall overcome. And that will be God's full will to be fulfilled.

So I think what our brother has gone through is the normal thing. But to remain too long is abnormal. We have the overcoming life within us.

Why should we not overcome? So the only wise thing is to look up for your redemption draws nigh. Don't look into your problems. Look up.

Give the problems to the Lord. He is the only one who is able to save you to the uttermost. This is what Paul did after he had believed in the Lord Jesus.

Not I, but Christ. And this is the secret of overcoming. So I hope our brother will be comforted on the one hand and will be encouraged to press on towards the goal until we see the Lord face to face.

The second question. In the Sunday message you say that the hardest thing to overcome is ourselves, not the world, Satan or sin. How in overcoming ourselves different man overcoming sin.

Overcoming sin and overcoming self are two different things. Overcoming sin is something which is outward. But overcoming self is something within.

It is easier to overcome sin than to overcome self. Because sin is without you. But self is within you.

Sin is something that you may commit. But self is what you are. So brothers and sisters it is very evident it is harder to overcome self than to overcome sin.

Do not be content just by overcoming sin. Why? Because there is still self within you. As long as self is there sin will return to you.

So it is not just a matter of overcoming this sin or that sin. It is a matter to overcome the source of sinning. Unless we overcome the source of sinning we will continue to sin.

So the sure way of overcoming sin is to overcome self. I think that is the difference. Because sin is what you commit.

But self is what you are. Unless we overcome self we solve the basic problem. Then we have overcome sin.

Sin will not be able to touch us. So brothers and sisters do not be content just by overcoming some sins that you usually commit. For instance suppose before you believe in the Lord Jesus you go somewhere that you shouldn't go.

But after you believe in the Lord Jesus the Lord begins to speak to you and you stop going as if you have overcome. But as long as your self has not been dealt with sooner or later sin will return to your life. So solving sin is not the final solution.

Solving sin is to deny self. As long as you deny self sin will drop off from your life. Question number three.

How can we be an overcomer after something sudden happens in our life that brings us down spiritually stumbles us. How do we recover from such an event in a short period of time to be ready for the Lord's coming? Life is unpredictable. Sometimes something you don't expect will come.

But if you brood over these things instead of dealing with these things you fall into the trap of the enemy. So when in your spirit you sense it is sin be quick to deal with it. Do not allow it to continue on.

The quicker the better. And if you do that you will be delivered from sin. Our problem is when we have sin we tend to brood over it to think about it but do not take action.

With sin we need to take drastic action. We will not allow sin to remain in our lives even for a moment. Deal with it.

Cast it off by the grace of God. And of course I know we cannot do it by ourselves. But thank God the life that God has given to us is a life that overcame sin.

So we can overcome not by ourselves but by the spirit of God within us. So dear brothers and sisters if you have any known sin remaining in your life if you do not deal with it right away but brood over it instead of dealing with it you will find you will be still under the grip of sin. When the Holy Spirit begins to show you a sin you need to deal with it right away.

I remember when I was a young Christian. By the grace of God I do love God. I want to follow Him.

I want to be His disciple. I always am afraid to be rejected by the Lord. But there was one thing I cannot overcome.

And that is my love for my father. My father is not only a good man he is a good Christian. He loved the Lord.

He gave himself totally to the Lord. And I love my father. My father was a Methodist pastor.

But I was sprinkled on my head when I was a baby. So after I was saved in seeking the Lord my friends talked to me about baptism by immersion. I always argued with them.

I said no. I have been baptized. My father has sprinkled some water on my head and baptized me in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

I cannot bless me in the name of God. Therefore I refused to be immersed. My friends tried for years to convince me.

And when I looked into the Bible I myself was convinced that immersion is the right form. But I refused to do that. I always argued against it.

Why? Because I love my father. I did not want to disturb him. I secretly told the Lord when I have grown up I have my own family then I will be baptized by immersion but not now.

It is not convenient. You know the last time my friend tried to persuade me I argued with him again. So he went to bed and slept.

He thought I was hopeless. And I was sitting in his room meditating, praying. I said Lord, I know to be baptized by immersion is the right way.

But I cannot do it because I do not want to offend my father. After I have grown up I have my own family. I will be baptized by immersion.

You know how we argue with God. And then suddenly a voice came to me. This is the first time I heard a voice.

Almost audible. He who loves his father and mother and so forth cannot be my disciple. And that word came in such power.

I capitulated. I told the Lord if this is your will I will do it. And it so happened my friend lived next door to Watchman Lee.

So I quietly left the room and knocked the next door. So Watchman Lee came down to open the door. He knew me.

He knew my father. So he asked me, what do you want? I said, I want to be baptized by immersion. He said, did your father know? I said, no.

But God told me to do it. And I did. But I hid it from my father for a whole year.

Whenever in the Methodist church they broke the bread once a month. Whenever the day come I try for finite excuse to be away. My father never say a word.

He was Watchman. I believe he knew something had happened to me. But he didn't say a word.

After a whole year the Lord began to convince me I had to confess to my father. So I did. You know, our family is very strange.

We honor our father. If we want to talk to our father we have to make appointment. But we are very close to our mother.

So I made the appointment with him. And I told him that I was baptized by immersion. You know his reaction? He was sad.

He said, I was sad not because you were baptized by immersion. If you want to be baptized by immersion I will do it for you. And that hurt him because I do not trust him.

But thank God that baptism by immersion is the beginning of my spiritual life. It opens up the spiritual world to me. It starts me on the way of following the Lord.

So brothers and sisters how important it is even if it is a small thing in your life. But if you know it is not the will of God. Do not let it remain in you.

Because that will be the end of your spiritual life. When the Spirit of God reveals anything to you capitulate yourself. Deal with it that a way may be open for you to grow in Christ Jesus.

So it is really not that if there is something in your life that hinders you that you know it. It is not a matter of how long it will remain. But if the Lord shall come before your problem is solved I'll say you will be.

You will be in outer darkness and gnashing your teeth. In other words regret for what you have done. So dear brothers and sisters may I advise you if there is something in your life that you know stands in your way of following the Lord do not allow it to remain.

But by the grace of God deal with it. Hand it over to the Lord. You do not have the strength but he is your strength.

So the way will be clear for you to follow the Lord with clear conscience. And this is what every one of us must do. So these are the problems as given to me.

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