

Overcoming the World

by Zac Poonen

Christians should not be afraid of tribulation and should instead focus on having peace in their hearts through their relationship with God.

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Scripture: Matthew 10:28

Topics: "Overcoming Temptation", "Persecution Faith"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of preparing for tribulation and persecution as followers of Christ. It highlights the need to overcome the world internally by conquering the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. The speaker urges believers to be bold, humble, and not ashamed of their faith, trusting in God's authority and seeking the kingdom of heaven above all else.

Transcript

I want to turn to a verse in John's Gospel chapter 16. These were almost the last words that Jesus spoke to his disciples before he went to the cross. Because after that, in John 17, he's praying to the Father.

So, John 16 and 33. These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage, for I have overcome the world.

And I believe that as we approach the end of the age and the return of the Lord, we will need those words more and more. Because unlike 95% of believers, I do not believe that Jesus will come secretly and take away the church suddenly, before the seven years of tribulation starts. We don't compel everybody in this church to believe that.

You can believe what you like. All I say is, be ready for the tribulation. Don't be surprised when it comes.

So, people ask me, you mean to say that the Lord may not come tonight? I said, I'm absolutely convinced he won't come tonight. And then people say, but if that's the case, people will live carelessly. It's only the fear that the Lord may come any day that makes people holy.

So then I use an example. I said, do you know that we are the bride of Christ? And we are waiting for the bridegroom to come. So think of an earthly example where an engaged girl, her fiancé has gone to some foreign country and says to her, well, I don't know when I'll come, but be faithful to me, because I suddenly may get the opportunity to come back and I'll marry you.

It's something like that, the coming of the Lord. And supposing this girl says, or supposing she gets a letter from her one day, well, I'm not able to come for another seven years, will you be faithful to me, because I'm not able to come back. And supposing this girl says, ah, he's not going to come back for seven years, that's great, I can fool around with a lot of other men till he comes.

You think that girl is fit to be a bride? When you know that the Lord is not coming for the next few years and you fool around, that is the way the Lord tests you and proves that you are not fit to be in as bride. If you really are in the bride of Christ, even if you know that Jesus will not come for the next hundred years, in your entire lifetime, you will still be faithful. This is a false teaching that's been going on in Christendom for years, that the way to make people holy is teach them Christ may come any moment.

Tell this engaged girl, your bridegroom may land up any day, so don't fool around with other men. Is that the way we keep a person as a pure virgin for Christ? These are all psychological human techniques. And unfortunately, like I've often said, money, music and psychology have come into the church to replace the power of the Holy Spirit and devotion to Christ.

Be careful of that. Be careful that you're not attracted to a church by music. Be careful that you're not attracted to a church by money or by psychology.

And psychology can be more dangerous. The human techniques by which you try to make people holy are very often by fear. And one of the ways to frighten people is Christ may come.

So I want to tell you that Jesus said, in the world you will have tribulation. And those were the last words almost that he spoke to the disciples before he prayed in John 17 and John 18. He says, let's go to the garden.

And he went to the garden of Gethsemane. So think of that just before he went off to die. He said, you're going to have tribulation.

So why is it that we hear so much teaching that we won't have tribulation? Or why is it we are afraid of it? In fact, he said, the world will have tribulation. And as soon as you hear the word tribulation, you know fear comes. That's why the very next words Jesus said was take courage.

Courage is the opposite of fear. What is the reason for not being afraid? There are many reasons why we can say, I'm not going to be afraid. One is, well, Jesus said in Matthew chapter 10, that they will not be able to touch even a hair on your head.

Verse 30, the hairs on your head are all numbered. Therefore, don't fear. That is a good reason.

You know, Jesus said that in Matthew chapter 10 in verse 29. The sparrows, two sparrows are sold for a cent. Yet not one of them will fall to the ground without your father.

Verse 28, therefore don't be afraid of those who kill you. So in other words, one reason we don't fear is the reason given in Matthew 10, 28, 29 and 30. That even if somebody kills my body, he can't kill my soul.

And I must be more afraid of God than of men. And the care of God for us who are his children is much more than this for the sparrows. And not one sparrow falls into the ground anywhere in the world.

I don't know how many millions of sparrows there are in the world, but imagine a father in heaven who sees every sparrow that falls anywhere in this huge wide world. He sees it's fallen. There's another

sparrow fallen.

There's another sparrow fallen. I mean, I have a feeling that sparrows must be falling almost every second. And God sees that.

And if I can believe that, if I can believe the words of Jesus, you think he doesn't know what's happening to me or you? And he said, the hairs on your head are numbered. You think he doesn't know when some sickness comes to you? He doesn't know about it? You're going to be crazy. I mean, I'm more afraid of getting sick than losing a hair from my head, even though I have very little.

I'm not so scared about losing a hair on my head, but sickness is worse. What does it mean when he said the hairs on your head are numbered? Not one of them will fall without your father knowing about it. You see, a hair falling from the head is the most insignificant, unimportant thing that any of us can ever face.

Can you think of anything more insignificant or unimportant that doesn't even bother you if you wake up in the morning and you find one hair on your pillow? How much does that bother you? It doesn't even bother me. Jesus took that example, take these words seriously. His care for you, my brother, sister.

If you're a disciple of Jesus, remember, he didn't say this to the multitude, he spoke this to his disciples. So if you're not a follower of Jesus, forget it, this is not for you. But if you happen to be a follower of Jesus, then, a learner and a follower of Jesus Christ, then this word is for you, that not one hair in your head can be touched without your father knowing about it, not one hair can fall without your father knowing about it.

Therefore, we do not fear. Everything much worse than that, somebody hitting me or trying to kill me or whatever it is, we don't fear, we have more value than many sparrows. But that's only physical harm.

There's a worse harm that the world can do to you and me and I don't know whether you realize this. I think many believers do not. The world can harm me in two ways.

One is physically, hurt me, kill me. And those promises that I just read are referred to that part of the world harming me. But there's another way in which the world can harm you and me and that is through cinemas, television, pornography, dirty books, the love of money, many things like this.

And I'll tell you, you'll discover, if you don't discover it now, you'll discover it in eternity, that that harm is much worse than if somebody cut off my hand because I'm a Christian. It is much worse. And when we realize that, we will be afraid of that also.

The two ways in which the world can harm me and I want to be scared of the most serious one first and then I won't be afraid of the other one which is not so serious. And that's why Jesus said in verse 33 of John 16, These things have spoken to me that in me you may have peace. Peace is the word which Jesus always used after his resurrection when he met the disciples, peace be unto you, peace be unto you.

The Bible says in Hebrews chapter 12, verse 13 to 17 that we must pursue peace with all men without which we will not see the Lord. Peace between me and God, between me and other people is a very very important part of our Christian life and in Christ I must live in that peace at all times. In Colossians 3 verse 15 it says, Whenever that peace goes out of my heart, consider it like a referee blowing a whistle in a football game.

The peace of Christ must be your referee. It says in the margin of Colossians 3 verse 15. Referee means one who blows a whistle saying something is wrong.

The whole game must stop. So whenever I lose that peace in my heart, I have to say something is wrong now, I don't know what it is. I want to find out what it is.

You go to the empire, you go to the referee and say what is the foul that was committed. The referee says bring the ball here and I'll tell you what the foul is and then we'll start the game again. That's exactly what we have to do whenever we lose peace in our heart.

Please remember this, my brothers and sisters. It's been a very helpful guideline for me for many many years. Whenever I lose the peace, it can happen to any one of us, to the best of us.

The referee blows a whistle. It may not be something you did wrong. It may be something that the other team did wrong.

Another person did wrong, the game has to stop. Somebody did wrong but it disturbed you and you lost your peace. Haven't you discovered that sometimes? Somebody else does something wrong, maybe in your house, maybe your servant, maybe somebody in the office or somebody in the church.

You didn't do anything wrong, the other person did something wrong and your peace is disturbed. It's happened to me, not so much now but I remember in the early days when we'd give responsibility to somebody in the church to do some part of the maintenance or cleaning and they didn't do it. That would disturb me.

And I found I lost my peace because somebody else didn't do his job. And then I had to set something right in my heart that I don't have a grudge against him or bad thought about him but imagine maybe he was sick and that's why I couldn't come. Imagine the best about him.

Then my peace comes back. I would be very very careful because our tendency is when somebody does something wrong to attribute the worst possible motive to him. And not imagine any good reason why that didn't happen but some very bad reason.

And that shows how corrupt our heart is. And if you cleanse yourself whenever you discover that type of corruption in your heart that you think the worst possible thing about somebody instead of the best possible thing, you will gradually become a better person. You discover that when somebody says something to you and you attribute the worst possible motive to it.

That shows the corruption and filthiness of your own heart. Why not attribute a good motive to why he said that? Why should it be the worst possible motive? You know, there's a verse in Proverbs which says as in water, face answers to face. So the heart of man to man.

That means when you look in a clear stream of water you can see your face there or we say a mirror. And what that verse is, is what you see in another person's heart is what is actually in your heart. You imagine that guy's motive is bad because that's how you are.

When you do something like that or say something like that it's with a bad motive. And so you imagine that other people are also like that. But brother, sister, let me tell you, a lot of people are much better than you.

Their hearts are not as bad as yours. So it's good to think something good about other people. That will make you a better person too.

So whenever peace is disturbed in our heart for any reason even somebody else's error, stop. The referee has blown the whistle. Jesus said, in me you will have peace.

I have spoken these things to you that in me you will have peace. And I tell you it's very, very important in the coming days to develop this habit and to learn this lesson of remaining in peace under all circumstances whatever may happen in the world around, whatever you read in the newspaper. And when I read of all the terrible things that are being done to little children these days, we're scared for our own children.

Little children in an evil world. We've got to have peace. We've got to believe that the angels in heaven take care of the little children of God's people.

Otherwise there's no hope for any of us. And so we must believe that. We must have peace.

We must not allow our heart to be disturbed because when the heart is disturbed it's like in a clear lake you can see your face but when there's a ripple on that lake you can't see your face. So in the same way when our heart is at peace and at rest we can see the face of the Lord clearly and hear the voice of the Lord clearly but when there's a disturbance and a lack of peace you can't see the face of the Lord clearly and you can't hear the voice of the Lord either. It's like a disturbance on the telephone, on the phone if there's a lot of disturbance you can't hear the voice.

And very, very often this is the reason why believers say I can't seem to hear what God is saying to me. I'll tell you brother, there are a lot of things that are disturbing the peace in your heart. Get rid of them and the line will become clear because all the disturbance is gone and you will hear the Lord clearly.

That's been my great longing for many, many years to hear the Lord clearly because of one reason, the Lord said the only way for a man to live is by hearing the word of the Lord not by food. The entire world thinks food is necessary to live but in the midst of the world and things like that, God has a few people who realize that more important for me than food is to hear God speaking to me and that does not mean just reading the Bible for half an hour in the morning and easing my conscience. It's good to read the Bible for half an hour in the morning or whenever you do it but hearing the word of the Lord is something I must be always alert to and I must not allow anything to prevent me from hearing that.

That is why I must recognize the whistle of the referee when I lose my peace. In the world you will have tribulation but in me you will have peace. That is the greatest preparation for the coming days and for the troubles and difficulties that Christians may face in every country.

Jesus said you will be hated by all nations. He said that. You will be hated by every nation because of me and the only way to escape being hated is to compromise and hide the fact that you are a disciple of Jesus Christ.

I remember in the years when I worked in the Navy and if I was in a ship even for a few days and just joined a new ship I felt that within a few weeks everybody in the ship must know I am a Christian. Not by wearing a badge or anything like that but just that there must be something different about my interests and my way of speaking and everything from the senior officer down to the junior sailors they must know that I am different, that I am a Christian and I am not ashamed to carry a Bible or keep a Bible with me on

my table. There is no law in the world which says you can't keep a Bible on your table.

No. I'd keep that and people would say, hey this guy is a different type of Christian. There are many ways if you want to let it be known that you are a Christian if you want to, if you are ashamed of course you won't do that because you might lose your promotion with some fanatic anti-Christian who is your boss and you don't want him to know that you are a Christian.

But there are going to be difficulties for Christians I tell you that. But in these times of relative ease if we are bold and not ashamed to be known as a Christian in the more difficult times to come you will become more bold. I'll tell you honestly, I was a very timid person.

Very timid. I was the shortest and the weakest in my class in school and when they heard I was joining the military academy they made fun of me and said, you are going to defend our country? That's the type of person I was. And I said fine.

And even in the military academy I was the shortest and the weakest and very timid. But when God filled me with the Holy Spirit I became a different person. And that's why I know that the fullness of the Holy Spirit can make a world of difference in your life.

It doesn't matter what your basic personality is. If you are filled with the Holy Spirit you will really become another person. That's the real thing.

But the Lord sees if you are ashamed of being known as a Christian, why in the world should God fill you with His Holy Spirit? You can pray for 50 years but the Lord will say, you are ashamed of me. I'll be ashamed of you before my Father. You pray for the Holy Spirit and I'll tell my Father not to give you the Holy Spirit.

Because you are ashamed of me. I want to tell you this. I believe in my heart that the reason why some people pray and pray and pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit and they are not filled or get some fake counterfeit filling is because they are ashamed of Christ.

In the place where they should be bold for Christ they are ashamed. And Jesus said, if you are ashamed of me before men, I will be ashamed of you before the Father. So I want to encourage all of you before the days of greater trial come don't be ashamed to stand up for Christ in your office, in your factory.

I'm not saying you should start preaching but by your way of life without causing offense to others that you make it known that you are a disciple of Jesus Christ and not the ordinary type of Christian whom everybody knows who's compromising, tells lies and cheats and all that a different type, who's upright, who's concerned about others. I often think, I remember Joseph when he was in prison instead of being occupied with all his sorrows that my father and my brothers are all far away and I've been accused falsely, my brothers hate me this woman hated me and I'm in jail wrongly instead of being occupied with all that he saw two people discouraged in the prison and he went to them and said why are you discouraged?

I've often been challenged by that even in my younger days when I was working I said Lord, when I work and there are people around me in my office who are working I don't want to be occupied with my sorrows and my problems I want to see if somebody is discouraged or gloomy to go up to them and say hey, why are you discouraged?

Can I encourage you in some way? and do you know that one single question you read that story in Genesis opened the way for Joseph to become the second ruler in Egypt if he had not asked that question why are you looking so discouraged? the story would have been very different God honors those who have a concern for others and that's one way we can be a witness in our office not just by giving out tracts, any idiot can give out tracts but to have a concern for others to just encourage them not just to preach to them you don't have to preach to them the very first day maybe help them in some practical way if you do that, you don't know what can happen so let's seek to be bold for Christ because we have peace in our heart and never be ashamed of losing a promotion not getting a job not

being selected in an interview because they know I'm a Christian it's one of the things I decided very clearly because when I joined the Navy, I had an ambition a real great ambition to go to the top but when I became a Christian I knew if I stand up for Christ, that will be impossible then I have a choice, my earthly ambition or Christ I said I couldn't care less I don't care if I don't get a promotion, I don't care for money I want to be a witness for Christ and I've never regretted that decision I made more than 55 years ago and you won't regret it because the Lord will lead you on from one degree of glory to another always keep that peace in your heart that is more important than anything that the world can do to you the hairs on my head are numbered I'm more value than many sparrows

but more than that, there's a peace of Christ in my heart and as I said, the second part of the world ruining me through its influences that can also take away my peace you cannot allow a worldly thought if you're a sincere Christian or attitude to come into your heart and remain at peace that's not possible if you can have a worldly, selfish attitude towards another person and remain at peace I would question whether you're really born again because when a person is born again he comes alive and he becomes sensitive you see, if you put a one ton weight on a dead man he feels nothing but, I mean, people like us even a small weight in our hand, we can feel it there's a weight there because we're alive and so, when we're in our heart if some worldly influence comes in and you're sensitive,

that means you're alive but, for example, I'm amazed how a believer can sit in front of a computer and watch pornography and watch it, and watch it, and watch it, and it doesn't disturb him I wonder if such a person is even born again or if he's born again, whether he's lost his salvation can you have somebody stab you and you don't feel it and somebody stabbed you for 10 seconds 15 seconds, 20 seconds, whatever amount of time you watch pornography, and you don't feel it brother, you better check up whether you're born again and if you were, once upon a time check up whether you've lost your salvation repent, before death completely enters in and you won't feel anything after some time it's the same way with having a bitterness against somebody the world coming in and making you bitter

bitter, bitter, bitter, and you can keep it bitterness is somebody stabbing you and you have a bitterness against your mother-in-law or somebody else, bitterness, bitterness, bitterness and you're quite happy, you must be dead that's why you don't feel it I've had temptations to bitterness come to my heart and I feel it, and I say, Lord, I don't want it if you feel it, it's okay if you feel it, it's okay, because that means you're alive I want to be so alive that even a little pinprick I'll feel it ask God to make you sensitive like that when he says, the world coming in is not only through external tribulation it's the world coming in, the world you will have tribulation, and the world will come into your heart and try to disturb you and the only way to be strong in the coming days is by

being very, very sensitive to the little things that disturb your peace within, in me you will have peace and the thing that's come to take away that peace is the world, the spirit of the world the lust of the eyes, the

lust of the flesh the pride of life which makes me offended that somebody spoke to me like that or somebody didn't show consideration to me or somebody didn't smile at me or shake my hand or all types of things the pride of life that makes me feel I'm very important these are the things that take away that peace so when we think of the world coming in in order to be prepared for the day when the world may persecute me physically, let me now overcome the world that's trying to conquer me in my spirit in my heart, and if I conquer the world in my heart, I'll be able to stand

firm against the world when the world comes to hurt me or persecute me because I'm a Christian so Jesus said in the world you'll have tribulation but take courage because, and here's the answer he has given us be bold, this is the word of the Lord for us today be bold because Jesus has overcome the world I have overcome the world and you say Lord how does that help me because Jesus says if I have overcome the world you can overcome the world too you say no Lord you are God, no I am God but I lived on the earth as a man otherwise it's no use God telling me I have overcome the world what encouragement is that to me it's like a bird telling me I can fly so what, or an angel telling me I can fly that doesn't help me and if it's God telling me I have overcome the world that doesn't help me but

though Jesus was God on earth he overcame the world as a man very very important and that is why I can be bold otherwise you know to tell me that he has overcome the world how does that help me, he didn't overcome the world physically he didn't overcome the Roman soldiers who came to fight with him they overcame him they overcame him so badly that they nailed him to a cross which was the world that he overcame not the world that Caesar in Rome overcame, that is a physical world the world that Jesus overcame was the lust of the flesh the lust of the eyes and the pride of life turn with me to 1 John chapter 2 and I'll show you that when you compare scripture with scripture you have the answer 1 John chapter 2 verse 16 all that is in the world and it's mentioned here all that is in the world

in other words the lust of the flesh all the passions in our flesh the lust of the eyes I like the, I think it's a living bible paraphrase one of those which says the lust of the eyes is the desire to buy anything that you see you see something in a shop, I want to buy it you see another sister wearing a pretty sari you want that or you want one like that this is called the lust of the eyes you can read it and think only men have it women have it just as much as men the desire to buy anything that you see in a shop or with somebody else the lust of the flesh is the sexual passions and many other passions in our flesh and the third is the pride of life that makes me offended, that makes me bitter that makes me refuse to forgive that wants to show that I am better than other people that

makes other people feel small always treats other people as though they are inferior to me this is all the pride of life, so many things offended because of the way somebody spoke to me or the pride of life that makes me feel I will only speak to certain important people I remember one or two brothers, I think of two brothers particularly who used to be in CFC and thankfully they are not here now they used to always want to see me they had no interest in the other brothers in CFC till one day I told both of them please don't come to my house again till you learn to visit all the other brothers in the church there is a pride in you which makes you feel I only want to see the leaders I don't want to see the ordinary brothers what arrogance, it's like saying I don't want the little fingers

and the toes and all, I am going to cut them off you can't do that in the body of Christ 1 Corinthians 12 says the head does not say to the feet I don't need you do you know that? have you ever read that verse? if not let me show it to you the attitude of Jesus to the lowest member in the body of Christ you really want to become like Christ? have this attitude, 1 Corinthians 12 it says here 1 Corinthians 12 verse 21 the eye

cannot say to the hand I don't need you or the head to the feet I don't need you see the feet are the lowest part in the body think of someone who you know is the lowest most insignificant brother here in CFC who do you think is the lowest most uneducated most uncultured most insignificant very shy to talk not very interesting to talk to think of somebody like that you

have no interest in meeting that person do you know that Jesus is interested in that person and if you are like Jesus you will also be interested in meeting such people and Jesus does not say to such a person I don't need you I can dispose with you fellows I want all the important people here who can do something I don't believe that if I believed that I would never visit a single village in India I'd always be in the cities with the educated people the graduates fellowships and high level people there are churches like that where only high level educated people go it's the pride of life and I've seen it in so many believers and that's why they don't get grace because God resists the proud and if you want to know one reason why you are not getting victory over some sins that are keeping

on harassing you and troubling you this may be the reason there is a pride in your life which is preventing you from overcoming the world judge yourself and be cleansed from that and when we overcome the world in our daily life that is the best preparation for tribulation for persecution from the world around how do you think Paul could face prison and be in prison there and have no complaints from the prison he wrote Philippians where he says rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice and from that prison he wrote be anxious for nothing how could a man write like that because before the external world troubled him externally he had overcome the world internally so the way to be prepared for persecution and difficulty is by overcoming the world today in times of ease we were

taught in the military the more you sweat in peace the less you will bleed in war that means the more you work hard in times of peace to prepare for war then the more victories you will win in war the more you sweat in peace the less you will bleed in war and I apply that to the Christian life today we are living in relative peace around us we are not persecuted we can meet like this here there are countries like China where they cannot meet like this persecution has already overtaken them and before it comes to India how shall we be prepared for it by making sure we overcome the world inside and the more you sweat in peace the less you will bleed in wartime the less you will deny Christ in the time of persecution you know I am not a natural bold person I am naturally a coward but when

the Holy Spirit fills me and I lean upon the Lord then I am bold and I don't want a natural boldness a natural boldness will not help me in time of persecution many bold people have denied the Lord Peter was a naturally bold person see what happened to him he was afraid of a servant girl asking him if he was a disciple so if you are one of those naturally bold people you are in danger but if you recognize your weakness the Lord says when you are weak then my power can be manifested in you and you cling to the Lord that is what I do I say Lord I am not a naturally bold person but I cling to you and therefore I want to cling to you all the time I want to cling to you right now so that this world does not overcome me and then in the time of persecution that world will not be able to trouble

me either so please keep these things in mind because I believe that the Lord is preparing the church in India for difficult times ahead and by the church I don't mean CFC I mean every individual believer who is whole hearted a disciple of Jesus Christ Jesus said all nations will hate you it will happen so I am just trying to tell you how you can be prepared for that day not just by taking comfort from the fact that your hairs will not be touched or that you are more valued than sparrows but by being prepared in our heart by facing that world which is trying to conquer me today saying no to watching those television programs that

are not helping you at all some people spend hours and hours watching what they call serials oh such an interesting story sister, it's usually sisters, have you

read the bible? do you know the bible? you don't know that and you want to watch all these I'll tell you there are more interesting stories in the bible if you take the time to read it it's something that God can help you there to know get rid of these bad habits you will deny Jesus in the day of persecution because you spent your time watching television serials instead of reading the bible and being bold that day you will cry oh lord I denied you well you got to be prepared for it now don't waste your time with allowing the world to grip you inside with pollution and dirty pictures and bitterness and an unforgiving spirit you will not stand in that day so let's take the words of Jesus seriously in me you will have peace, in the world you will have tribulation and before that external

tribulation comes the world with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life will try to overcome you make sure you overcome it I have overcome the world he said what did he mean by I have overcome the world let me expand it from 1 John 2.16 I have overcome the lust of the flesh, I have overcome the lust of the eyes I have overcome the pride of life people don't believe that Jesus has overcome these things let me show that to you again 1 John chapter 2 and another verse before that 1 John 2.16 all that is in the world the lust of the flesh the lust of the eyes Jesus did not want to buy everything that he saw he was quite happy with what he had and the boastful pride of life is not from the father it's completely different that is of the world and he says in verse 15

the last part, if anyone loves this world the love of the father is not in him so these things that are mentioned the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, pride of life if you love these things if you love these things that are polluting your mind I want to say to you in Jesus name, in love for you you do not love God even if you sit in CFC the love of the father is not in you you won't hear it straight like this in other churches but you will hear it here if you love the world the love of the father is not in you and therefore verse 15 do not love the world nor the things that are in the world and it's not talking about possessions it's not saying that you shouldn't have a house or a car it's talking about the lust of the flesh the lust of the eyes all that is in the

world, he didn't say money, car, house no, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes it's not these things but the possessive attitude towards these things that you have to be careful about turn also to Revelation chapter 3 verse 21 there are two verses in scripture that tell us how Jesus sat upon the throne Revelation chapter 3 and verse he who overcomes I will grant to him to sit down with me on my throne and listen how did Jesus get to the father's throne the reason is given as I overcame and I'm sat down with the father on his throne you ask God, God father why did you allow Jesus to sit at your right hand the answer because he is my son, no because he overcame the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life therefore he sits at me on the throne and Jesus says

if you overcome the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life I will grant to you it means it's not something we deserve I will grant to you the privilege of sitting down with me on my throne I don't know what that means but it must be something precious not for honor to me that emphasizes nearness to Jesus Christ the reward I've said to the Lord many times the only reward I want in eternity is nearness to Jesus Christ and that's what's referred to here I will grant him to sit with me on my throne and the other verse that tells us why Jesus was exalted is in Philippians 2 Philippians 2 it's very interesting to see that when God sent his son to the earth as a man he did not make different laws for him than he's made for us for example he never made a law like ok the

law of gravity will not operate on Jesus Christ he can fly he can jump up without falling down no, same laws applied to him that applied to us you know that he even got sick I'll come to that in a moment Philippians 2 it says here verse 8 being found in appearance as a man he humbled himself very important word he humbled himself meaning read it carefully being found in appearance as a man he humbled himself I'll read it again tell me what you get out of it being found as a man being found as a man he humbled himself what does it mean it means that if you are a human being the only right thing for you to do is to humble yourself that's the meaning of that the only proper thing for any human being to do is to humble himself and he did that even obedient to the father to the point of death

the death of the cross therefore God exalted him and put him on that high place so you ask father, father why did you exalt Jesus to the high place because he humbled himself and if you humble yourself the bible says God exalts the humble I'm absolutely sure if God does not exalt a person over any sin it's because he has not humbled himself if you find anger crushing you down brother, sister you're not humble whatever you may say God doesn't think you're humble you can think you are, other people think you are but when anger can conquer you you mean anger is more powerful than your God you mean anger is pushing you down and God is trying to exalt you and he can't because anger is so powerful you got to be off your head like those Israelites who felt that the giants were more powerful than

God why does anger conquer you be honest today and say I am a proud person therefore God does not exalt me over anger he keeps on pushing me down I think I'm bigger and more important and better than other people so God keeps pushing me down why does sexual lust keep on conquering you in your thoughts answer it, don't say because brother there's so much temptation in the world it's got nothing to do with that say I am a proud person, identify the root cause of that disease and you'll be cured, otherwise you'll be giving the wrong medicine and you don't get cured, the root cause of the disease is you are proud and God just does not exalt proud people over any sin so if you are defeated by any sin in your life say to yourself God is not exalting me the law was not different for Jesus Christ

God exalted him because he was humble he's sitting at the throne because he overcame and that is the same Lord Jesus who says to us take courage I have overcome the world you don't have to be afraid and because he had overcome the world so thoroughly you know I'll never forget this beautiful picture it's always been before me in my mind in John chapter 19 first of all I'll show you the secret of it in John 18 then go to John 19 John 18 Jesus, you've got to picture this in your mind sometimes we must use our imagination picture in your mind Jesus, stripped just a few torn clothes on him all torn crown of thorns on his head bleeding from numerous whippings and beatings standing before Pilate with all the Roman soldiers and the Jewish chief priests and Pharisees all waiting to see him being

killed and Pilate in his grand robe sitting on the throne and down below there at a lower level Jesus standing and Pilate saying, are you the king? verse 33, John 18 33 are you the king of the Jews? and Jesus said my kingdom, I'm a king but my kingdom is not of this world how could he say that? because the world had no power over him the lust of the flesh the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, 33 years and a half years he had conquered it, conquered it and said my kingdom doesn't belong to this world I have no interest in anything this world can give me money, honor, position can you say that? can you say that? my kingdom is not of this world you say then why do you do your job?

I do a job to earn my living, that's all so that I don't become a beggar or dependent on rich brothers in the church supporting me or being a parasite on society, I don't want that I don't want to be a beggar, why do we educate our children? because we don't want our children to grow up to be beggars or dependent on

rich people helping them when they are in need no, that's why we earn our own living that's why we educate our children so they can earn their own living so they can stand on their own feet and not be dependent on anyone but we don't love this world, we are not interested in the honor position, greatness, money anything this world gives if you are like that, you can say my kingdom is not of this world, I belong to another kingdom here is another proof of your kingdom being of

the world verse 36 if my kingdom were of this world my servants would fight and I will also fight are you the fighting type? that is one of the clearest proofs your kingdom is of this world you fight in your home, you fight in your office you fight with the auto rickshaw driver you fight with the porter in the railway station you fight everywhere, your kingdom is of this world you want to save 5 rupees here and 2 rupees there that's why you fight with the vegetable vendors and auto rickshaw drivers your kingdom is of this world you fight with people who earn 10% of what you earn can you imagine that? fighting with some poor man who earns 10% of what you earn I have seen Christians do it, their kingdom is of this world my kingdom is not of this world, Jesus said be like that my brother if

you want to overcome the world determine in all your life, 24 hours a day your attitude to everybody in the world my kingdom is not of this world if you are going to fight with me, I am not going to fight I am not going to fight for promotion in my office or advancement or anything, promotion comes from the lord it says in psalm 75, it comes from the lord it doesn't come from man, from me if you believe that you will trust him and you won't be going currying favor with your bosses my kingdom is not of this world and I do not fight everybody who fights with others is thereby shouting out my kingdom is of this world whatever I may say on Sunday morning, whatever beautiful songs and hymns I may sing on Sunday morning in the church listen to me, my kingdom is of this world and the devil says

yeah I can see that and God says I can see that too now such a man, Jesus when Pilate tried to threaten him remember you got to understand this before you go to the next verse Pilate tried to threaten him a few verses later John 19 verse 10, don't you know that I whose kingdom is of this world, Pilate have authority to release you or to crucify you what does a normal person say please let me go, I won't do it again not like that for Jesus Christ he stood there and I see him there standing as a king real king, maybe his clothes are torn maybe he is bleeding but he is the king in that court that day and says you can have no authority over me unless it is given to you by my father wonderful words, when I was taken to court once by religious people, I said those words you have no authority

over me except what my father gives you I believe that in any situation that you face in life remember this, your boss who threatens you your landlord or anybody, your neighbor some enemy you have no authority over me except what my father gives you but before you come there don't forget you have to go through John 18.36 my kingdom is not of this world if your kingdom is of this world, you won't have the boldness to say what Jesus said in John 19.11 that is the reason why many believers cannot say what Jesus said in John 19.11 don't you think the name of Jesus is so dishonored not before people but before the devil the devil watches how Christians are so scared scared to stand up for the Lord, ashamed of the Lord and the devil taunts God and says these are your people, see how he is

behaving in his office see how he is behaving there on Sunday morning they are all very bold to say they are disciples of Jesus but see him now dear brothers and sisters, I am not saying this to condemn anyone I am saying this so that we shall be ashamed of ourselves and say Lord forgive me I never want to be ashamed of you I often thought of Jesus hanging on the cross not ashamed to die for us publicly in my younger days that is the thing that always used to grip me it was very difficult for me to stand up as a 23

year old officer in the Navy to proclaim that I am a Christian but the thing that always used to encourage me Jesus was not ashamed to be stripped to hang on a cross for me and I said Lord help me that I will look at that and never be ashamed to stand up for you whether I lose

my job or anything I want to tell you this my brothers and sisters if you are a disciple of Jesus you may not get very high up in this world but you will have no regret for thousands and thousands of years in eternity thousands and thousands of years in eternity you will have no regret for the way you lived for the few years that you were on this earth take it seriously you won't get another chance in heaven to show your love for Jesus Christ as you can do it now now is the only opportunity determined by the grace of God to conquer those filthy habits that are dishonoring Christ in your life give up watching those filthy things that dishonor Christ in your life give up that fighting and quarreling in the home and in the office and on the roads say Lord make me a man of peace and let's be

witnesses for Christ by the way we live and one day when persecution comes and whoever may come before us we will be able to say you have no authority over me except what my father gives you we won't say that in arrogance we will say that in humility I am a child of my heavenly father you can't touch me without my father's permission no weapon formed against me will prosper if somebody comes to you with a knife or a gun what do you do I know what I'll do I'll say in the name of Jesus put that down we got to be bold God is on our side he won't let us down mighty authority in the name of Jesus Christ if you are seeking the kingdom of heaven first and not the kingdom of this world that's what we are seeking to prepare people for in this church he who has ears to hear let him hear let's pray

our heavenly father we thank you for not only your love and your goodness forgiveness so many things you've given us but also the tremendous authority that is ours as children of God as children of the king of kings the authority there is in the name of Jesus Christ the devil tries to rob from us through fear, through compromise through sin Lord we want to be overcomers we want to humble ourselves continuously down to the ground to fall on our face before you thank you that you hear us and I pray for everyone here Lord who is sincere, fill them with the Holy Spirit and the recognition of their authority as believers in Christ we pray in Jesus name Amen

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