

## Becoming an Overcomer in Today's World Part 2

In this series of messages, we are dealing with what it means to **Becoming an Overcomer in Today's World**.

*We live in a world that presents many challenges to our faith.*

- *We must* be able to overcome and cope in such a way –
- It proves that greater is He who is within us than He who is in the world.

**1 John 4:4** - You are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

CEV - Children, you belong to God, and you have defeated these enemies. **God's Spirit is in you and is more powerful than the one who is in the world.**

In this message I want to talk about how *we must maintain Christ-like attitudes in a world that is heavily influenced by the evil one* and all of his evil attitudes and devices. **Being a Christian in a Non-Christian World**

**1 John 5:19** - We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.

When it says the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one, it means

- The world is under the controlling influence of the devil. It means
- The devil is using all his ability to exercise influence and authority.

Jesus warned us of these attitudes and Paul warned Timothy in a letter to him.

We find many passages in the Bible that *give us a good idea of the kind of attitudes* that are being promoted and influenced in today's world with much authority.

**Matthew 24:12** - And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

- Evil will spread and cause many people to stop loving others.

**2 Timothy 3:1-5 - Perilous Times and Perilous Men** - - 3 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

**CEV – What People Will Be Like in the Last Days** - You can be certain that in the last days there will be some very hard times. 2 People will love only themselves and money. They will be ***proud, stuck-up, rude, and disobedient*** to their parents. They will also be ***ungrateful, godless, 3 heartless, and hateful***. Their words will be ***cruel***, and they will have ***no self-control or pity***. These people will ***hate everything good***. 4 They will be ***sneaky, reckless, and puffed up with pride***. Instead of loving God, ***they will love pleasure***. 5 Even though ***they will make a show of being religious, their religion won't be real***. ***Don't*** have anything to do with such people.

- These are many of the attitudes ***that Christians must deal with*** and ***contend with*** every day of their lives.
- They are also attitudes that are ***promoted heavily through the media***.

**If the world were full of godly characteristics**, wouldn't it be easier for us to put on the wonderful characteristics of Christ's nature.

**But it is not** and that makes it **much harder** to **put on the clothing that belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ**. **The world hates those attitudes.**

**John 15:19** - If you belonged to the world, its people would love you. But you don't belong to the world. I have chosen you to leave the world behind, and this is why its people hate you.

**John 17:14** - I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

**The Challenge for The Christian in Today's World - Being a Christian in a Non-Christian World**

**1. We Are Encouraged to be Blameless and Holy**

**Philippians 2:14-16** - 14 Do all things without [a]complaining and disputing,[b] 15 that you may become blameless and [c]harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

**James 1:27** - Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

**CEV - Religion that pleases God** the Father must be pure and spotless. You must help needy orphans and widows and **not let this world make you evil.**

This *means* that we **cannot afford** to allow ***our attitudes and characteristics*** to be **molded by the world.** We are called *to resist the mold of the world.*

**Romans 12:2** - And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

## **2. We are Called to be Salt and Light.**

- **Our calling and destiny as Christians** are to be **salt and light in the world**

**Matthew 5:13-14 - Believers Are Salt and Light** - 13 “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

14 “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

What this Scripture is encouraging us to do, is to be **the controlling influence in the world.**

- ***To be the controlling influence in the world that God has called us to***
- Mean each one of us ***takes the responsibility of putting on the Lord Jesus Christ and all His garments.***
- **When** we do this, ***we become salt and light*** and **act as a preserving agent.**
- And begin to **flavor the world around us.**

**Christ-like Attitudes that Help us to Resist the Conformity of the World.**

## 1. We Should Conduct Ourselves with Simplicity and Godly Sincerity.

**2 Corinthians 1:12 - Paul's Sincerity** - For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in [a]simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you.

**CEV - Paul's Change of Plans** - We can be proud of our clear conscience. We have always lived honestly and sincerely, especially when we were with you. And we were guided by God's gift of undeserved grace instead of by the wisdom of this world.

## 2. We Must Exercise a Righteousness that is Not Phony.

**We must strive to be holy without being self-righteous**

- Or appearing as if we are snubbing the world.
- Our goal should be to become more and more like Christ,
- **Whose presence** welcomed sinners and made them comfortable.

**A description of Christ's character concerning righteousness gives us a glimpse of why He was able to resist the conformity of the world without being self-righteous is found in Hebrews.**

**Hebrews 1:9** - You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy."

**Jesus did not merely act righteously; He loved righteousness.**

- **He didn't** merely abstain from sinful deeds; **He hated wickedness.**
- **His holiness** was more than skin deep.
- **It wasn't outward conformity** to a moral or religious code.
- **It went beyond** His thoughts, words and deeds.
- **Jesus' emotions** were holy.
- **His motives** were holy.
- **Everything He did** was with the intent of pleasing His Father.

**The key to walking in a true holiness and righteousness is that of putting on Christ's characteristics as well as putting off that which is worldly and sinful.**

**Ephesians 4:22-24** - 22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

**If I am just merely trying to put off without putting on**, then what will happen is that *I will become very self-righteous in my attitude towards the world and the people caught up in its snare.*

**Just as we desire to put away the sinful practices**, we should be **equally pursuing positive character traits** such as:

**Galatians 5:22-26** - But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control**. Against such things there is no law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 26 **Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.**

**If my focus is simply on what I need to put off rather than what God is calling me to put on**, I will begin to **walk in a holier than thou attitude**, which is a great **turn off to unbelievers**.

**It is when we are walking in the fruit of the Spirit** it allows us to preserve and flavor the atmosphere of our world. **It is through my fruit that the light of the gospel shines** through.

**Matthew 5:16** - *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*

### **3. We Must Exercise the Proper Response When we are Reviled.**

**2 Timothy 3:12** *Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*

We know from the Word of God that when we try to *live a godly life before unbelievers and the world*, we will experience persecution, mockery, etc.

- How does Christ want us to respond when we experience these things?

Jesus answered this question for us when He was being persecuted for righteousness' sake!

**John 18:36** - Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place."

**1 Peter 2:21-23** – 21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 22 "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." 23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

We must purpose in our hearts to always respond with Christ-like attitudes  
Otherwise, we put out the light and our persecution and suffering are *all in vain*.

As Christians we must learn to handle rejection, because if we don't, we will compromise and be drawn back into the mold the world is trying to impose on us.

**CLOSE:** *We have seen in this message that, as Christians, God does not want us to get caught up in the sway or the influence of the world*

- But rather to seek to be blameless and holy
- And to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.

Am I just merely trying to put off without putting it on?

We have seen that we can do this by conducting ourselves with :

- Simplicity and Godly sincerity
- Exercising a righteousness that is not phony
- Then don't criticize in angrily insulting manner when we are mistreated.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control...

This is what enables us to be blameless and walk as an overcomer in the world.