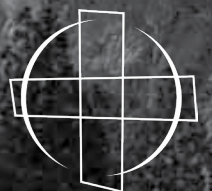


OVERCOME

JANUARY 2021

ADULT
CONNECT CLASS
CURRICULUM



DONALD J. WILLS
SENIOR PASTOR

The purpose of First Baptist Church of Fort Worth is to **introduce** people into a loving relationship with Jesus, **instruct** them in spiritual growth through God's Word, **inspire** them to serve for God's kingdom, and **incorporate** them in authentic worship to glorify God.

A Note From Our Pastor

Dear FBC family and friends,

Our theme this year in 2021 is **OVERCOME!** What a year 2020 was with the pandemic, economic struggles, elections, and unrest. When we have a relationship with Christ, however, there is peace in the midst of the storm. In John 16:33, Jesus said, "In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Because of whose we are, meaning we belong to Christ, it is in our faith in Him by which we overcome. John writes in 1 John 5:4, "And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith." What a joy to know that Christ is the Victor and we belong to Him.

As a reminder, the layout of this Curriculum begins with a 7-day approach for both the teacher and the members to get the most from each study. We also acknowledge that teachers may have their own methods for preparing the lessons and we encourage them to prepare in the way that makes them most effective in presenting God's Word and the weekly lesson. We also encourage each teacher and member to use the suggested 7-day approach for their own personal study and encouragement.

As we look forward to 2021, let us remember that we are made more than conquerors through Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. It is in His strength that our weakness is made strong which enables us to "OVERCOME!" May this year be the most impactful in your life and for the cause of Christ.

-Blessings
Pastor Don



Suggested Plan for Using this Bible Study Guide Effectively

Introduce

Day 1: Read and meditate on the Scripture, asking God to guide you throughout the week as you study His Word and allowing Him to speak to you through the Spirit. Read the **INTRODUCE** portion of the lesson commentary.

Instruct

Day 2: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and read the **INSTRUCT** portion of the lesson commentary. Concentrate on memorizing the focal verse for that particular week.

Day 3: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and answer the focal questions in the **INSTRUCT** portion of the lesson commentary.

Inspire

Day 4: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and begin thinking about tangible ways you can incorporate the principles you learned in your daily life. Read the **INSPIRE** portion of the lesson commentary.

Incorporate

Day 5: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and apply the theological principle that you learned from this week in a tangible way. Use the **INCORPORATE** portion of the lesson commentary to guide you.

Day 6: Read the Scripture, meditate on it, and in the journal section describe how God allowed you to apply this passage in a real and tangible way this week.

Day 7: Review the Scripture and share with others in your Connect Class on Sunday morning at 9:30am. Be ready to share your experience about how God allowed you to apply the lesson for that week.

Contents
January Lesson Plan

3



January 3, 2021

Overcome through
the Right Person

[John 16:25-33](#)

17



January 10, 2021

Overcome with
the Right Plan

[Colossians 3:12-17](#)

31



January 17, 2021

Overcome with
the Right Prayer

[Luke 6:27-36](#)

45



January 24, 2021

Overcome with
the Right Perspective

[Romans 12:9-16](#)

59



January 31, 2021

Overcome with
the Right Practice

[Romans 12:17-21](#)

January 3, 2021



Overcome through the Right Person

John 16:25-33

Focal Verse:

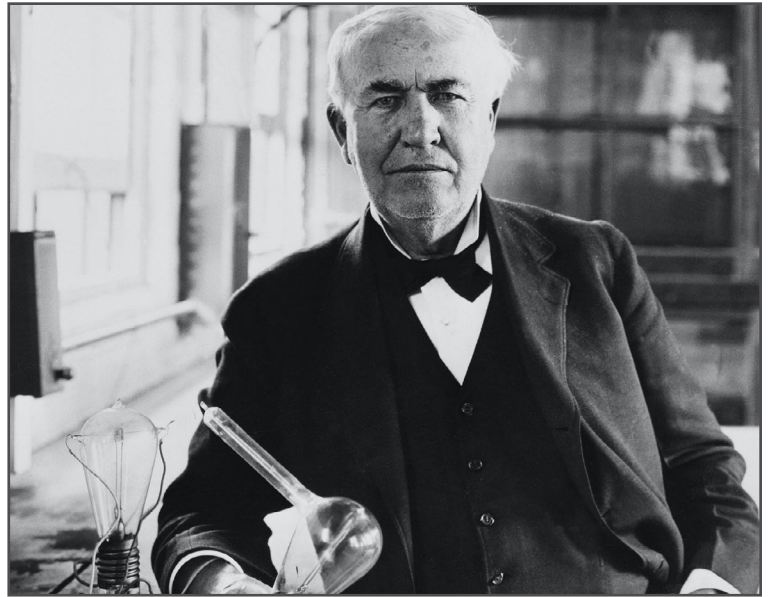
“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

John 16:33

back to
Table of
Contents

Introduce

When we hear the name Thomas Edison, we most likely think of the prolific American inventor from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although we probably remember him best for the development of the incandescent lightbulb, he envisioned numerous devices to improve quality of life and applied for thousands of patents over the course of his career. Some of his inventions, like alkaline batteries (1910), were huge successes which revolutionized how we live. And we still use many of his gadgets today, such as the motion picture camera with sound (1889), albeit with some technological advancements. Other groundbreaking inventions, like the automatic telegraph



(1870-1874) and the phonograph (1877), had significant impacts upon life at that time as well as paved the way for continued development in products widely used today. Despite Edison's successes and historic achievements, some of his inventions were tremendous failures at the time. His first invention, an automated vote recording machine (1869), was not well received in government circles because politicians thought it would deter from last-minute deals and compromises.* The electric pen (1875) he designed to aid in transcribing telegraphs failed because it was too noisy, too heavy, and the batteries leaked. Both the tinfoil phonograph and the talking doll (1888) also met with a bitter fate because the flimsy material with which they were made greatly limited their longevity. Still, these inventions paved the way for similar modern developments. Even during the development and production of the inventions for which we remember him most, like the lightbulb, Edison failed thousands of times before he achieved any success!

Through the numerous interviews that he gave and the memoirs he left, Thomas Edison inspired many future generations to overcome life's challenges and aspire to succeed. In fact, he once said, "Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time."** Edison overcame many obstacles in his life. He never once became discouraged, complained, or demanded people take pity upon him; he simply persisted and rose to meet the challenge,

Introduce

unphased and undaunted in his quest. For example, Edison had a formal education of only three months. Yet, he achieved so much! He had become partially deaf by the age of 12 which spurred him to develop the phonograph. As an accomplished inventor, he lost valuable research, a plethora of blueprints and designs, and nearly became bankrupt in a factory and warehouse fire in New Jersey. Still, this did not stop him. He overcame.

Although Edison overcame and achieved so much in this life, he had one major flaw. He did not overcome through the right Person. By his own admission, he believed in a “divine being” or “higher power” who created the universe, but he wrongly believed Scripture was concocted by man. Simply believing in our own abilities or even in a “higher being” does not truly help us to overcome. This type of “overcoming” is a mere mirage based on the deception of the world. Instead, we must believe in Jesus and have a relationship with Him, for only He can help us overcome.

As much as Edison accomplished and overcame, it meant nothing apart from a relationship with the right Person—Jesus. In the eyes of the world, we may be able to overcome obstacles and achieve great success whether on our own or through “divine intervention.” Edison did. But if we do not have a relationship through Jesus with God the Father, we cannot overcome our sin nature or death. We cannot even truly overcome the obstacles that this world hurls at us either. As we focus on overcoming throughout this year, therefore, we must recognize the Source who gives us the ability to overcome. We must turn to Jesus, allowing our Savior and Sustainer to help us overcome any obstacle that we may face in this life. Let us overcome through the help of the right Person—Jesus the Christ!

Key
Question

What has Christ helped you to overcome in your life?

In Reference



Erica R. Hendry, “7 Epic Fails Brought to You by the Genius Mind of Thomas Edison,” *Smithsonian Magazine* (November 20, 2013);
Alex Ayers, editor, *Quotable Edison: An A – Z Glossary of Quotes by Thomas Edison* (Quotable Wisdom Books 2016).

John 16:25-28

THE COMING OF THE OVERCOMER:

The passage that we will study this week concludes a larger section that began in [chapter 13](#) in which Jesus communicated intimately with His disciples at the last meal which they shared together in Jerusalem in the upper room the night before the crucifixion. Over the course of these chapters, Jesus discusses the events which will soon transpire and He reassures His disciples of the soundness of God's plan no matter how bad things may seem. And things will turn tragic from a worldly perspective as Jesus reveals that one of His own disciples will betray Him with a kiss ([John 13:18-30](#)), another will deny Him three times with his lips ([John 13:36-38](#)), and all will abandon Him.

All **these things** of which He has **spoken** will ultimately culminate in His death ([John 16:16-22](#)). However, Jesus doesn't just spring these details upon His disciples suddenly. Throughout His ministry, He had openly taught that He must suffer and die. Even though He must die for the sins of the world, He had also repeatedly proclaimed that He would be raised bodily from the grave after three days ([Matt 12:38-42](#); [Luke 9:21-22](#)). In the eyes of the world, this still looked like lunacy and defeat. To those who have a relationship with Christ, however, it should bring hope and optimism because sin and death



have now been overcome in Him. Yet, the disciples could not grasp what Jesus was saying. They were still saddened, perplexed, and confused—not only at Jesus' teaching during this meal but also by the events in the days to come as they grappled with His crucifixion, the discovery of the empty tomb, and His bodily appearances after His resurrection.

This prompted Jesus to explain that He had **spoken to them in figurative language, but now the time is coming** that He could **tell them plainly about the Father** (v.

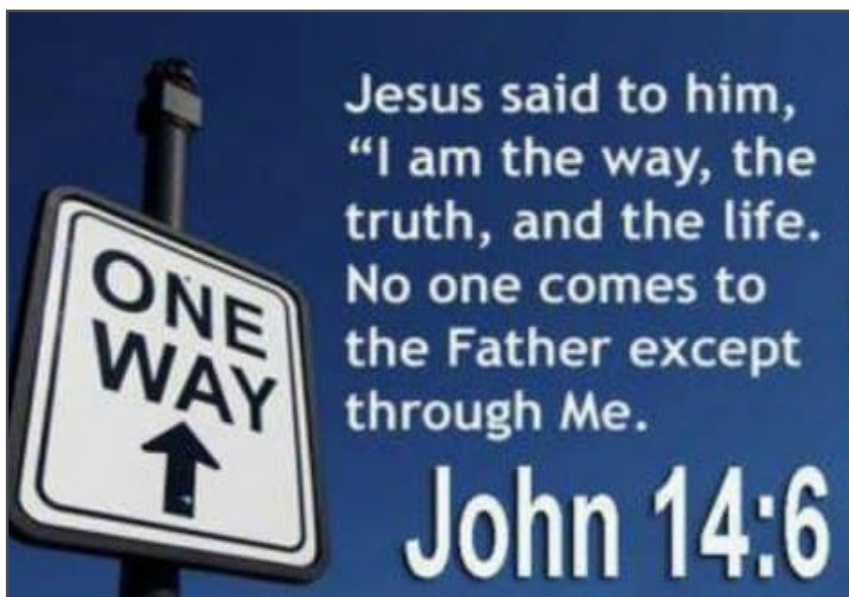
Instruct

25). We must exercise caution ourselves to understand what Jesus is saying here. **Figurative language** in this context doesn't mean that He spoke in code, used cryptic or difficult language to understand, or intentionally hid what He meant from the disciples. On the contrary, He had **spoken plainly** in all His teaching through the use of illustrations (parables) to which they could relate. In fact, He wanted them to understand, follow, and apply His teaching, so He used these illustrations (i.e., **figurative language**) to help them comprehend. But the disciples just didn't get it; they didn't understand.

Only after the resurrection did the disciples begin to put it all together and understand. For this reason, Jesus emphasized that He could speak **plainly** to them **about the Father**. In other words, His teaching would then make complete sense to them at that point! Somewhat ironically, however, Jesus' opponents at times did understand and even remembered what He had taught while those closest to Him did not. For example, His opponents knew that He had taught that He would rise from the dead. Although they didn't believe Him and labeled Him a "deceiver," they did understand what He meant. In fact, this was their entire motivation for asking Pilate to supply guards for the tomb lest the disciples steal His body and claim that He had resurrected ([Matt 27:62-66](#))!

What do you do when you don't understand something? How does God give us wisdom to understand?

Question
1



Much of Jesus' communication that night had indeed focused on **the Father**. First, He explained to His disciples, and us, how we can be intimately connected with **the Father**. A connection to **the Father** requires a relationship with the Son. In fact, no one can have access to **the Father** except through Jesus (John 14:6). Moreover, intimacy with God

entails that we abide in Jesus and follow His commands, particularly motivated by our love for Him and others, which in turn glorifies **the Father** ([John 15:1-17](#)). In all, God has sent His Spirit to help us remain connected to Him and guide us in practicing truth. Both Jesus and **the Father** love us so much that they deeply desire an intimate relationship with us. Even though Jesus will now return to **the Father** in heaven and not be physically present in the world among us ([John 14:1-5](#)), He promises not to leave us as orphans, but that He “will pray the Father, and He will give [us] another Helper” who will “abide with [us] forever” ([John 14:16, 18](#)). Thus, God will send His Holy Spirit to indwell the lives of everyone who has a relationship with His Son. He will not leave us alone to face the challenges of this world. He will guide us in the truth through the Spirit He has sent to live in us ([John 16:13](#)).

Now, however, Jesus contends that the **day** has come when we **will ask in His name**, but He does **not say** that He will **pray the Father for** us (v. 26). Jesus hasn’t contradicted Himself. And this statement doesn’t mean that He isn’t our Mediator or Intercessor ([Heb 7:25](#)). It actually serves to underscore a very important point that Jesus wishes to highlight. It focuses our attention on the intimacy that we have with God through Christ who is present in our lives through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Hence, we can **pray** directly to **the Father** in Jesus’ **name** because we have that intimate and close relationship through the Spirit’s presence who helps us know how we ought to **pray** ([Rom 8:26](#))! For this reason, Jesus goes on to explain that **the Father loves** us because we **have loved** the Son (v. 27). Thus, we have intimacy with **the Father** through Jesus who has already promised to dwell with us forever by sending His Spirit. How blessed we are to have a Creator who loves and cares for us that much!

How does the Spirit connect us with the Father? How does the Spirit help us to pray and know the will of the Father?

Question
2

Second, Jesus not only explains our relationship to **the Father**, but He also demonstrates His own unique connection to **the Father**. He begins by affirming the disciples’ correct belief that He **came forth from God**. Certainly, the disciples had stated this belief numerous times, but perhaps none more clearly than when Jesus asked, “Who do you say that I am?” And Peter responded, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” ([Matt 16:15-16](#)). Here in John 16:27-28, Jesus now connects this right belief that He **came from the Father into the world** with His imminent resurrection and ascension. Consequently, He **came from the Father** and now He will return to **the**

Instruct

Father—foretelling of His resurrection and ascension.

To be an overcomer in this life and into the next, we must hold the right belief about Jesus. Jesus is the eternal God who created the universe; He Himself came in the flesh in the form of sinful man to save His disobedient creation by providing the perfect, sinless sacrifice ([Rom 8:3](#)). There is only one way to attain that eternal life and that is by responding to Jesus' death on the cross and accepting the gift He has offered us. To accept that gift, we must confess our sin, turn from it, and surrender completely to Him. Any other belief about the Person or work of Jesus is errant and a distortion of the truth. These false beliefs only lead to death and destruction rather than overcoming through Christ to obtain eternal life in Him. Believing and responding to the right Person is the key to overcoming!

What distortions does the world perpetuate about the Person and work of Jesus? How should we respond to these distortions?

Question
3

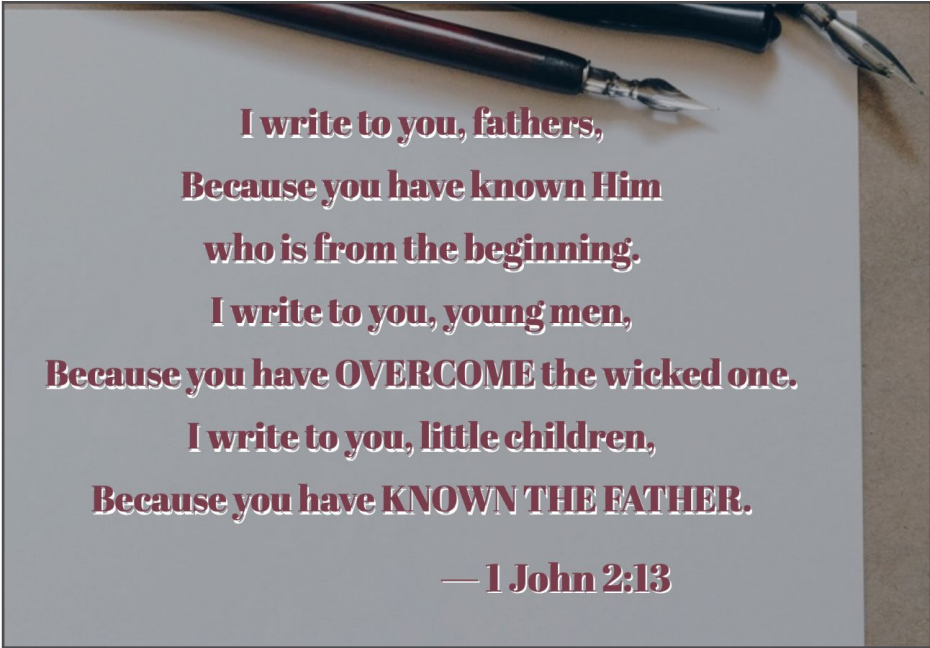
John 16:29-30

THE CONFIDENCE IN THE OVERCOMER:

The disciples exclaim they get it! They excitedly rejoice in their newfound knowledge by asserting that Jesus is **speaking plainly now** and not **using a figure of speech** (v. 29). But Jesus hadn't actually changed the way He was speaking! He hadn't done anything differently! The disciples just claimed that they understood even when

they really hadn't. We can see their failure to grasp the significance of Jesus' teaching during the time He spent on earth after His bodily resurrection when He had to remind them what He had previously taught as well as to correct some of their misunderstanding ([Luke 24:44-49](#)).

As the book of Acts opens,



**I write to you, fathers,
Because you have known Him
who is from the beginning.
I write to you, young men,
Because you have OVERCOME the wicked one.
I write to you, little children,
Because you have KNOWN THE FATHER.**

— 1 John 2:13

for example, the disciples still misunderstood the nature of the kingdom which Jesus had come to establish. So, they ask if Jesus would now restore the earthly kingdom to Israel ([Acts 1:6](#)). He had come to do something even much greater! Jesus opened His kingdom to the whole world which would rescue people from sin and restore them into right relationship with the Father. Eventually, the disciples understood and became witnesses who shared how we all can find life through this great kingdom in Christ.

Although the disciples still didn't understand everything, what they did have going for them was that they had confidence in the right Person who knew **all** these **things**. They didn't claim to **know all things** themselves even though they did claim that they now understood. In verse 30, they displayed tremendous confidence in Jesus rather than in their own knowledge. They announced that they **are sure** He knows **all things** and no one has any need to **question** Him on these matters. In the end, they do confirm their belief that Jesus had come **forth from God**. They believed in the right Person and they knew that He alone was the source of truth and knowledge. They could trust Him!

We live in a day when people claim to understand, but they truly don't. Because we have access to an abundance of information at our fingertips, people assume they know things and many of them perceive themselves to be experts in a variety of areas. Just because we have access to information doesn't make us an expert and it doesn't mean the information we have received is the truth. We must evaluate the source. For instance, many websites allow us to input symptoms to determine approximately what may ail us. Without any lab work or the expertise of a doctor, the website churns out a list of possibilities. We must then guess what we may have which could cause a plethora of problems down the road. However, we need to know what the right source says—in this case a trained medical doctor. The same applies to spiritual matters which determine how we now live and where we'll spend eternity. We need the Word of an Expert—in this case the Bible which reveals God's plan through Jesus. We can't afford to get this one wrong. We must know the Source which is truth! So, let's turn to Him just as the disciples did.

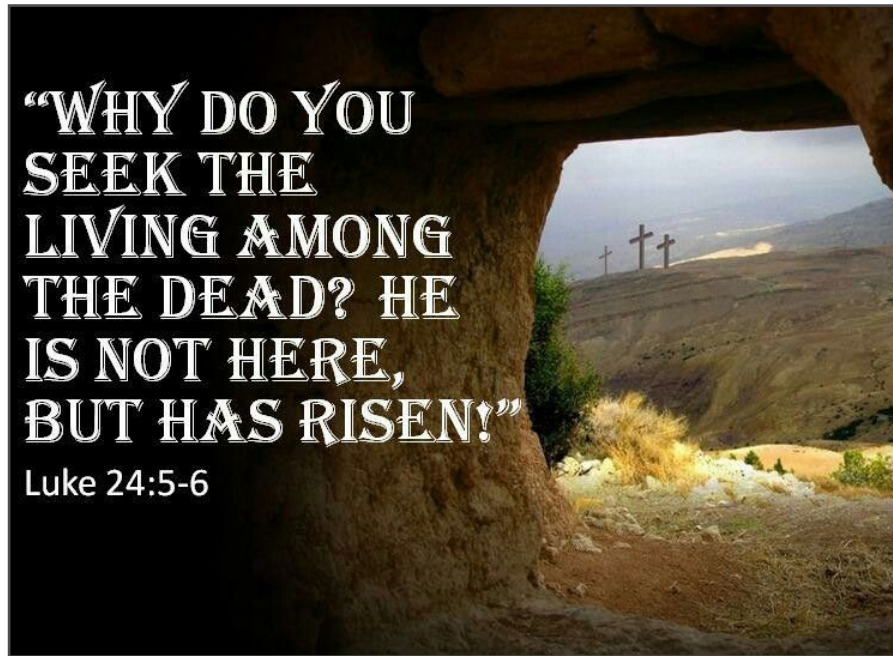
How can we know that Scripture is true?
Why should we use Scripture to evaluate the truthfulness of all other information that we receive?

Question
4

John 16:31-33

THE CRISES TO OVERCOME:

Realizing that they still didn't truly understand, Jesus gently chides them by asking, "**Do you now believe**" (v. 31)? Based on the context and the events that unfolded



during the crucifixion and the subsequent resurrection, we can observe how the disciples had not fully understood the scope of Jesus' teaching yet. Therefore, we could even phrase the question this way: "**Do you really now believe?**" In the days after Jerusalem had discovered the tomb miraculously vacated, we can observe how the disciples did not yet fully understand

and believe. An angel at the tomb, for instance, had to remind the women who had come to anoint Jesus' body that it was empty because He had been raised. He said to them, "Remember how He spoke to you in Galilee" ([Luke 24:6](#)). We see Peter and John's astonishment as they ran to the tomb to see for themselves and verify the women's account.

But in Thomas we see the ultimate display of skepticism when he refused to believe the other disciples' testimony that Jesus had appeared to them in a locked room. He adamantly declared that he would not believe unless he could see for himself and place his hands upon Jesus' scars. When Jesus appeared to Thomas, this doubt prompted Him to say, "Because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen Me and yet have believed" ([John 20:29](#)). Through these events in the immediate days after the resurrection, we can see how the disciples had not yet fully understood Jesus' teaching during His three years of ministry.

Even before the events of the resurrection, Jesus had warned the disciples that their resolve would be tested. Twice in the course of His teaching that night He had already warned that they would not escape persecution ([John 15:20](#)) and that they

would be kicked out of the synagogue and even killed by those who think that they are doing God a favor ([John 16:2](#)). He now forewarned His disciples that **the hour has indeed come** that they will abandon Him (v. 32). They will **be scattered, each to his own** home presumably, and they **will leave** Him **alone**—even Peter who had presumptuously promised to fight for Him. Indeed, that very night most of them did scatter as they fearfully fled from the Garden of Gethsemane when the mob came to arrest Jesus. Those who did remain watched in horror from a distance, including Peter who vehemently disassociated himself from Jesus!

How do you deal with doubt when it arises?
How does Scripture tell us that we ought to deal with doubt?

Question
5

Before journeying with His disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray, Jesus concludes His teaching by offering hope and reassurance. He has **spoken these things** that His disciples, and we, **may have peace in** Him despite the trouble and **tribulation** we will have in this **world** (v. 33). We can have this **peace** and assurance because He has **overcome the world!** To be overcomers regardless of what we may experience in life, we must turn to the right Person. Jesus didn't say that we can have **peace** and **overcome** through the power of positive thinking. He didn't say that we can **overcome** tribulation by the collective effort of mankind. He didn't say that we can **overcome** by trusting in ourselves, turning to a wise human counselor, or simply trying until we succeed like Thomas Edison suggested. Jesus clearly identified Himself as the only one who can **overcome!** In fact, He emphatically says, "**In me.**" Only in Christ we can find **peace** and **overcome the world.**



Recently, the church received a mailer for a supposedly Christian conference which would offer valuable training in reaching the modern world in troubled times. In large block letters on the front of the advertisement, it heralded, "Together . . . We Overcome." At first, this slogan may appear encouraging and inspiring, but in reality it is misguided. This is humanism at its finest which asserts that mankind can **overcome** any challenge if only we would work together; when we work together, we can accomplish anything.

Instruct

Apart from Christ, we may be able to **overcome** some challenges short-term. But the challenges that we face in the twenty-first century are far greater and more complex than we can solve on our own—especially the problem of sin and death! This doesn't negate our need for community nor does it mean that we don't need to work together. On the contrary, it means that we need Christ to **overcome**; we need Him to work through us to resolve our problems permanently! Therefore, the advertisement should have read: "In Christ . . . We Overcome Together."

What problems have you tried to resolve on your own without God? What lessons did you learn?

Question
6

Injustice, for instance, has become a topic of great debate in our society today. We cannot and will not be able to resolve this complex issue on our own because it revolves around mankind's sinful nature. Although this particular passage here in John doesn't specifically address injustice, it does feature One who had grave injustice perpetrated against Him. We often overlook the injustice that Jesus suffered for our own sakes! Jesus had a hasty and illegal trial conducted by the Jews because He threatened their authority and challenged their misguided teaching. The Roman leaders weren't much better in offering a fair trial. Pilate and Herod tried to pass off the case to each other.

When Pilate was finally forced to adjudicate the case, he could find no guilt in Jesus. But this spinless leader appealed to the mob and based his decision upon their will—an



innocent Man received the death penalty. No one championed Jesus' cause and no one stood in solidarity with Him, but the crowd cried crucify Him. Jesus suffered ultimate injustice! He was scourged beyond recognition of a man, hanged upon the cross, and a spear pierced His heart—even though He had done nothing wrong. Despite all this, Jesus

forgave. He forgave the ones who mocked Him while on the cross because they did not know what they were doing. Jesus had a far greater purpose and willingly suffered injustice for us. He died to save you and me from the death that we justly deserve! And He will forgive us when we ask!

We need to share Jesus' response to this injustice done upon Him if we ever have hope of overcoming this world and seeing true change. Therefore, our response to any injustice—perceived or real—in the world today must begin with the injustice that Jesus suffered. The only way that we can **overcome** injustice is not to focus on past actions, but point people to a better future in Christ. He is the only way to **overcome**. Injustice can never be **overcome** in our world because of the self-centeredness of mankind apart from the transformative work of Christ. One group who crusades for justice will often become the perpetrator of those who act unjustly toward others. It's human nature. To resolve injustices in the world, we need to see things through the eyes of Christ who values all people and desires all people to come to know Him regardless of race or nationality—not merely through the eyes of the other person who has a limited perspective. We don't need theoretical discussions about how to change the world when we have the transformative power of Christ who allows us to **overcome** and be transformed from the world. We just need to **overcome** with the right Person—Jesus—and introduce others into a relationship with Him so that they may **overcome** too. Then, with Christ, we can **overcome** the challenges that face us as a world when we fully surrender to Him and are guided by His Spirit.

Why is sharing the gospel the primary way that we can combat injustice?

Question
7

Thomas Edison overcame many obstacles and challenges in his life to achieve many great things. In many ways, we are the beneficiaries of his ability to persevere and overcome until he succeeded. Many people over the course of their lives also rose to the occasion to achieve extraordinary feats. As inspiring as these stories may be, there is more to life than overcoming temporary challenges that we may encounter. In fact, there is one challenge that no one can overcome: death. As hard as we may try, we cannot delay it or circumvent it—and we definitely cannot escape it. To overcome sin and death, we must know the right Person and have a relationship with Him. All our confidence must be in the work of Christ who can help us overcome sin and death through the blood He shed on the cross.

When we have a relationship with Christ, we can overcome anything that we face when we turn to Him for guidance. It may not look like what the world envisions or expects as overcoming. We will still experience problems and hardships at times. But now we have someone greater who will walk through life's turbulent times with us! We have a Savior who will give us the ability to endure and will see us through whatever difficulties we may encounter. To overcome in Christ, therefore, we must follow His plan, adopt His perspective, and practice His righteousness. Being an overcomer means that we have been thoroughly transformed to live according to Christ's standards. When we have been transformed and have truly submitted to Him, then we can overcome any obstacle the world may face. In Christ, we can overcome we together as His church!

Incorporate

How well do you know Scripture? What areas of Scripture do you need to know better?
How has the understanding of Scripture helped you to overcome?

To what evidence in your life can you point that shows your confidence is truly in Jesus? In what areas do you need to give Him control?

How does Christ help us to overcome this world? Why is it so important that we work together as a church with Christ so that we can overcome together rather than just as individuals?

January 10, 2021



*Overcome with
the Right Plan*
Colossians 3:12-17

Focal Verse:

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

Colossians 3:12-17

back to
Table of
Contents

Introduce

Every day we plan what we will wear. Our outfits and accessories will depend largely upon where we go, what activities we will do, and what type of weather we can expect.

Yet, the planning of these outfits begins long before we wake that the morning and wander to our closets to sift through our clean clothes and pick out what we will wear that day. We actually begin planning when we first start shopping. While shopping, we will generally ask two questions at some point before purchasing an item: 1) Does it go with anything



that I already have and 2) what will it go with that I might also need to buy? Coupled with how it looks on us and whether it fits, we want outfits that match, fit properly, capture our sense of style, and don't look sloppy. We may not intentionally seek to impress others through our choices, but we never want others to look at our outfits in horror, disgust, or ridicule. So, we plan!

Probably having closets overflowing with clothes, we have many choices to make. And many factors will weigh into what we choose to wear or take with us that day. Most likely, we will first listen to the weather forecast or glance at an App that quickly tells us what we can expect. When it rains or a cold front passes through, we can usually tell who hasn't spent time planning based upon what they have worn and their reactions to the weather as they scurry to avoid the rain without an umbrella or they fold their arms crisscross and rub furiously to warm themselves as they shiver in short sleeves without a coat. To avoid being caught off guard and unprepared, we need to plan how we will respond to the environment around us. We have the technology to help us in this endeavor even though at times things may transpire for which we could have never planned. Nonetheless, we still don't truly have an excuse for dressing inappropriately except that we haven't given forethought or we have deliberately chosen to be unprepared.

In addition, we will plan what we wear based upon our activities that day especially if they take us into the public domain. If we have a job interview, for example,

Introduce

we wouldn't grab sweatpants, a t-shirt, and sneakers. To do so would be unwise regardless of the position that we seek. Instead, we would select something that looks professional and appropriate for the type of interview. At work, similarly, certain jobs have uniforms while others only have a dress-code expectation. We would, therefore, plan our attire based on those expectations. Whether we spend little or much time thinking about what we will wear, we all still plan to some degree even if we simply stay at home for the day!

As much as we plan for our physical attire, we also need to plan what we will wear spiritually—or, as Paul says, “put on” ([Col 3:12, 14](#)). This means that we must wear values, virtues, and attitudes that honor Christ and reflect His presence in our lives to the world around us. We have no excuse for being unprepared and inappropriately dressed to respond to our environment regardless of the circumstances. We don't have to rely upon man's flawed technology and Apps to tell us the conditions; God Himself has outfitted us with a wardrobe to wear!

We should never just react to a situation; we must always think about the attitude which we must wear in response to hurt, disappointment, injustice, animosity directed toward us, persecution, wrongdoing against us, or even invitations to compromise and participate in immorality when things seem to be going well. We need to be properly dressed for all occasions. And this requires knowing God's Word, planning accordingly, and relying on His Spirit to help us make the right choices according to His expectations. Let us consider how we can overcome with the right plan by selecting godly attitudes to wear in our lives daily.

Key
Question

How would you evaluate the time you spend selecting your “spiritual” attire? In what areas have you done well and where do you need to improve?

Colossians 3:12-14

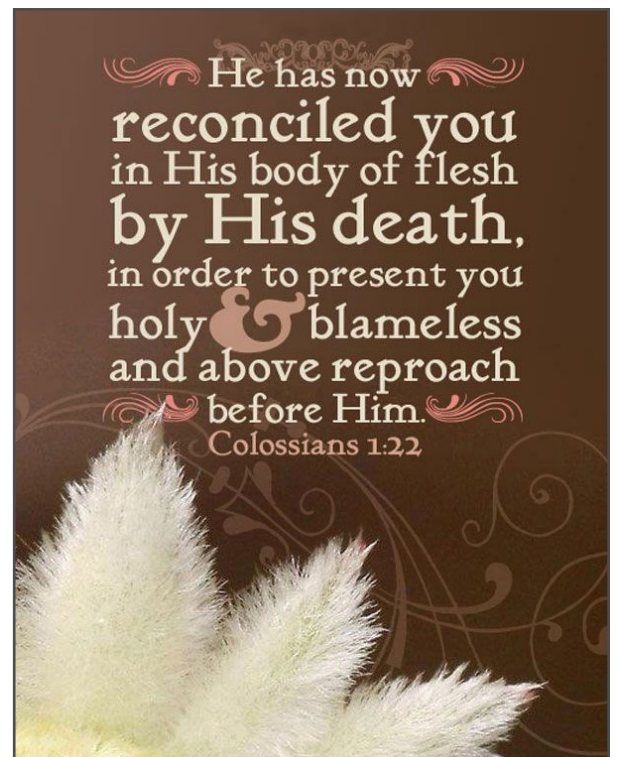
PLAN WHAT TO WEAR:

After a long day with much physical activity, most of us would come home, remove our soiled clothes, and take a bath or shower to refresh ourselves. Then, we would select clean clothes to wear. We would never **put on** the soiled and stained clothes that we have just removed before getting clean. Yet why do we do this spiritually with our attitudes and actions stained by sin when we have been cleansed with the blood of Christ? In writing to the Colossians, Paul recognized this propensity to revert to our old lifestyle of sin and participate in unrighteous activities. So, he warns those of us who have been “raised with Christ,” that is we have a relationship with Him, to “seek those things” which glorify Him ([Col 3:1-4](#)) and “put to death” those things which are immoral and sinful in our lives (Col 3:5-9). Because Christ has transformed us into a “new man” conformed to His righteous “image,” our character should match the new life He has given us and not the old life which we have removed in Him ([Col 3:10-11](#)). **Therefore**, God has called us to **put on** righteousness and refrain from sin (v. 12).

How closely do your actions, attitudes, thoughts, and values match those of Christ?

Question
1

Paul identifies us as **the elect of God** to highlight our calling to be **holy**. Unfortunately, many people distort this title because they remove it from its context to promote a particular system of beliefs foreign to Scripture. **Elect** in this context does not refer to salvation in the sense that God has chosen to save some while condemning others. Nowhere does Scripture teach this belief. God has given mankind the choice whether to receive the salvation He has freely offered to all people in Christ. God is not arbitrary in His decisions and unjust in His judgments, but He “desires all men to be saved” ([1 Tim 2:4](#)). Because we have responded to His call to salvation, God



has chosen us to live **holy** and blameless lives before Him ([Deut 7:6-7](#)). This is the whole purpose of this passage! We can also illustrate the principle this way. Just as we are not saved by doing good works, God has called or chosen us to do good works when we have a relationship with Him ([Eph 2:8-10](#)). Good works, therefore, are a result of our salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus. Likewise, our holiness is a result of the salvation we now have!

Because God loves us (i.e., **beloved**) and has chosen us to be **holy** in Him, it shows that He wants us to have the very best life possible. By giving us boundaries and principles by which to live, God demonstrates His love for us because He has equipped us with everything that we need to have this abundant life. He hasn't restrained our fun and killed our joy as some errantly view it. Rather, He has given us a way to find success and have joy even during the most difficult times in life if only we would follow His plan. In this letter, God's plan features eight character traits that we must consciously **put on** and allow to be visible in our lives daily. Certainly, there are many more traits than these, but the Spirit led Paul to concentrate on these eight to encourage the Colossians. We will even look at many of these characteristics in depth throughout the year as we continue our study of what it means to overcome.

First, Paul urges us to clothe ourselves with **tender mercies**. In the Greek, the phrase employed here literally means "bowels of compassion." Today, we would say "hearts of compassion." To describe compassion as originating from our bowels or hearts signifies the depth and genuineness of our concern for others which emanates from the core of our being. We typically associate compassion with acts of kindness bestowed upon someone suffering hardship or misfortune. Although the concept of compassion does focus on having empathy and doing kind deeds as implied by the translation of the Greek as **mercies**, it actually entails much more. For example, compassion leads us to think about the affect our actions will have upon others. We will no longer see the world through selfish lenses and do things simply to please ourselves. On the contrary, we will carefully examine how our actions display Christ, build community, and affect individuals.

Moreover, compassion offers grace that points people to Christ when they need restoration. Sometimes the type of compassion that people exhibit today enables others to continue sinning, promotes the abuse of grace, and makes a situation worse by allowing others to continue down a path of unwise choices. This is not

biblical compassion! Biblical compassion always points to God's Word and seeks transformation through Christ. For this reason, compassion, at times, requires godly correction. In fact, God Himself displays His compassion through correction: "For the Lord will not cast off forever. Though He causes grief, yet He will show compassion according to the multitude of His mercies" (Lam 3:31-32). We must certainly help people in times of need when God has given us the means and ability. True compassion, however, never



enables or encourages people to continue making destructive choices by unwisely helping them when they refuse to change and live according to Scripture.

How do you show compassion to others in a Christ-like way?

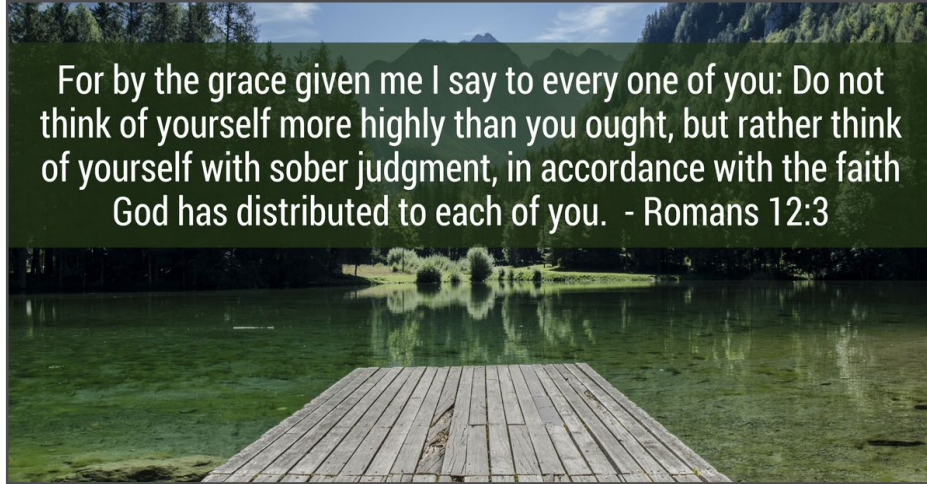
Question
2

The second attribute we must **put on** is translated **kindness** in the NKJV and most other modern translations. It can mean **kindness** which dovetails off the compassion in which we should engage, but the primary meaning it bears is moral goodness and integrity. We should never overlook this aspect of the word by focusing solely on "kind" deeds. In a sense, therefore, this concept lies at the heart of the "Golden Rule" ([Luke 6:31](#)). We should always treat others with dignity and respect regardless of how they may treat us. This is the very essence of integrity.

We should always respond in a Christ-like way no matter what we may face and how people treat us. We will study this much more in the last two weeks of this month when Paul warns us "do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom 12:21). Our character should always be consistent in the way we live and how we respond to our environment. We should strive to imitate Christ and match His moral purity in our transformed lives which means we should avoid doing something which may even appear like sin ([1 Thess 5:22](#)). Let's, therefore, live morally good lives with integrity which will be evident in the way that we treat others around us.

We'll deal with the next two characteristics in this list together: **humility** and

meekness. We often misunderstand the concept of **humility**. It refers to having the right perspective whereby we don't think arrogantly or have a false sense of self-worth or value (i.e., false humility). **Humility**, consequently, requires that we adopt Christ's perspective and see the world through His eyes as guided by Scripture and the Holy



Spirit—which we will discuss further in two weeks ([January 24](#)). **Meekness** also follows a similar line of thinking in which we should treat others with respect with whom we disagree and try to correct them gently according to God's Word without being

overbearing and causing them to become defensive. Thus, **meekness** doesn't mean that we make ourselves a doormat to suffer all kinds of abuse. Jesus wasn't a doormat so to speak, but He did willingly lay down His life for us! Nonetheless, we are to respond to disagreements and arguments in the same way that He did. We should remain calm, speak without compromising Scripture and its principles, and speak the truth no matter what the other person may say or do.

How did Jesus respond with meekness and humility toward others? What examples can you cite where Jesus responded meekly which we should imitate?

Question
3

The next two qualities are also inter-related: **longsuffering** and **bearing with one another** (vv. 12-13). **Longsuffering** is often translated as patient, but it can also mean endure. The phrase **bearing with one another** carries a similar meaning, but actually means rather tersely "to put up with" which we would identify as tolerate today. This does not mean that we should tolerate sin and compromise the principles of Scripture. The Bible nowhere calls for tolerance and endurance of this nature, but tells us that we should persist patiently in trying to lead others to restoration. Rather, Paul urges us to tolerate one another's preferences and the quirkiness of our personalities for the sake of the community. In a sense, we must exercise patience and endurance when we deal with other people just like other people must do when they deal with us. As

we will see in the next section, our personal preferences and opinions take a back seat to the community. We can have our preferences and opinions (if they indeed match Scripture), but they shouldn't be the focus. When they become the focus, then we can experience hurt and dysfunctional relationships which require the offering of forgiveness.

Next, Paul sets a high standard for us to emulate in forgiving **one another** (v. 13). We are to forgive **anyone** who **has a complaint against** us just as **Christ** has forgiven us! Again, we'll study this more in-depth later in the year. But, for now, we can say that God has called us to forgive others regardless of what they do to us and the emotional hurt they may have caused us—even if they don't seek forgiveness from us or say that they're sorry. Jesus did all this when He hung upon the cross. He forgave even those who persecuted and rejected Him. If they never receive Jesus' forgiveness, it's their own fault and they will suffer the punishment they themselves have chosen. Still, Jesus doesn't harbor bitterness, animosity, and vengeance. He freely forgives everyone. And we must forgive also in this same manner.



Paul concludes this list of characteristics with **love** which is the capstone from which all the others come. He urges us to **put on love above all these things which is the bond of perfection** (v. 14). We know from 1 John that God is the very essence of **love** ([1 John 4:8](#)). His **love** for us motivates everything He does for us. It certainly motivated Him to send His Son to die a sacrificial death on the cross so that we could have life ([John 3:16](#)). It motivated Him in establishing boundaries for us by which to live and leads Him to correct us when we sin ([Heb 12:5](#)). It motivates His grace and mercy which leads to forgiveness. God's **love** determines everything that He does. In the same way, **love** should be our motivating factor! We should **love** God which leads us to **love** others ([Luke 10:27](#)). Let's follow this same pattern of **love** that God Himself emanates as we grow and mature in Him!

In what ways do we show love by putting on all these character traits listed here?

Question
4

Colossians 3:15

PLAN FOR WELL-BEING:

Paul now describes how “wearing” or applying these characteristics individually will look collectively when we gather as the church—the **body** (v. 15). He implores us collectively to **let the peace of God rule in our hearts to which we were called in one body**. When we wear these attitudes and align ourselves with the perspective of Christ, it will undoubtedly cause strife and arguments to cease. But **the peace** mentioned here envisions so much more than physical tranquility. **Peace**, in Jewish thought, signifies the complete well-being of the person. To wish someone **peace**, therefore, includes their complete well-being physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially. The **peace of God** in the church is no different. It encapsulates the complete well-being of the community. In a sense, we could say that it produces a healthy “body”



through unity which works together to accomplish God’s plan and purpose. To have a healthy church, we must have a single focus; everything we do should glorify the Lord. Consequently, a healthy church maintains a Christ-centered balance in every area. For example, such a church will take the gospel to the community as

much as they care for other members whom God has entrusted to them. They will have a healthy bond of fellowship which leads them to participate and serve rather than merely assembling for their own benefit without contributing. They will also correct and hold each other accountable with the intent of seeing maturity and life-change as much as they seek to comfort and restore. A healthy church, above all, teaches the inerrant and timeless truth of Scripture without compromise—which is where Paul heads next.

How can you ensure that we have a healthy church which abides in the peace of God?

Question
5

Before we leave this section, however, it will prove instructive to remind ourselves of the unity we must have as **one body** into which Christ Jesus has **called** us. Many individuals and churches today are not healthy because they have failed to follow this single purpose to glorify Christ by allowing His **peace to rule in their hearts**. As a result, their emphasis doesn't lie on transformation by imitating Christ and following His Word. Their focus lies with affirming people's opinions, tolerating their sinful actions and in some cases celebrating them, and catering to their own desires based on their personal choices where they find value. This doesn't bring unity as culture claims; in the end, it will create an untenable attitude in which everyone seeks his or her own interests. Even more importantly, such churches don't engage the culture. They have allowed culture to influence and manipulate their views which they use to attract people by telling them what they want to hear ([2 Tim 4:3](#)). Therefore, in unhealthy churches, people seek their own desires, elevate their own opinions even above Scripture, and promote the cultural idea that we should get our own way rather than seek what God wants which is ultimately best for the community.

What do your actions and attitudes in the community say about you? Do they say that you are a healthy member who contributes or an unhealthy member who needs to make a lifestyle change in Christ?

Question
6

Colossians 3:16-17

PLAN BASED ON THE WORD:

Just as we should **let the peace of God rule** among us, so also should we **let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom** (v. 16). In fact, **teaching and admonishing** one another are as much a part of worship as **singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs**. God has given us a perfect plan if only we would know the content and follow His **Word** under the direction of the Holy Spirit. God's perfect plan will always lead to functional relationships with everyone around us when we apply it. Every familial relationship, marriage, friendship, business partnership, and relationship with neighbors, acquaintances, and even strangers would be radically different if we followed God's plan. The problem is that we and other people deviate from that perfect plan at times as evidenced by Paul's expectation that we forgive one another as Christ has forgiven us.

Instruct

To know this plan, we must study Scripture (i.e., **the Word of Christ**) purposefully and intently. In some modern literature, publishers and authors often carelessly ask, “What does this passage mean to you?” Perhaps, they actually mean, “How does it apply to you?” Nonetheless, taken at face value according to their words, it doesn’t matter what Scripture means to us. It matters what God has clearly said to us through His **Word!** The interpretation and understanding of Scripture isn’t guesswork, but it depends wholly upon what God has written and safeguarded through the Holy Spirit ([2 Peter 1:19-21](#)). Thus, we must rightly ask, “What does Scripture mean or say?” We don’t give Scripture “meaning” when we read it. God gave it meaning when He wrote it to us. And we need to follow and apply Scripture just in the way it was first written by God in order for us to live effectively according to God’s expectations.

As part of our corporate worship when we gather together, Paul tells us to both teach and admonish **one another in the Word**. We use the word **admonishing** rather infrequently today. It can refer to one of two ways of teaching—and here in Colossians it most likely refers to both. First, it can mean that we exhort or encourage one another to follow the principles in Scripture. In other words, we teach each other to know the content of Christ’s **Word** and apply it. Second, it can mean to correct each other when we fail to follow these principles. We need to gather as a community regularly to study God’s **Word** because He has equipped teachers to help us learn and the church as a whole to help us remain accountable and consistent in our walk. We need each other! We can and should have a daily quiet time on our own, but we also need personal, intimate fellowship with **the body** of Christ. In the church, we will find people who will love us, encourage us, and spur us on to do good works in the name of Christ.

How are teaching and admonishing part of worship? Why do we need the church to help us in both of these endeavors?

Question
7

When we know the content of Scripture and apply it in our lives, it will always lead to right practice. For this reason, Paul instructs us that in **whatever we do in word or deed** we should do it **all in the name of the Lord** and give **thanks to the Father** (v. 17). Thus, we need to do and say things with the right motives—to glorify the Lord. We shouldn’t do things because it brings us attention, gives us notoriety, or focuses attention on us. Our attitude must be to focus people’s attention on the Lord and

remove anything that may distract them in worship. And we need the church to assist us in this endeavor. Sometimes we need others to admonish us or point out some areas in which we are inconsistent or perhaps even outrightly not following the **Word** of God. We must be open to legitimate correction from God's **Word** from others who have a gentle spirit which is encouraging and loving. We must also be willing to listen to the Spirit and exhort, teach, and admonish each other from Scripture when the need arises. Let's join together through genuine corporate worship which seeks to teach God's plan as well as live by it in all we do and say.

Scripture gives us the right plan for how we should relate to both God and people. His plan is designed specifically to be implemented and followed by His people whom He has saved and called to live righteous and holy lives. From Colossians, we can even say that His plan is meant to be worn or “put on” through our character which is visible to everyone around us. To know His plan, we must study His Word which has given us every principle we need to have an abundant life. We must also meet as the church regularly to remind ourselves of these instructions and be strengthened and encouraged to overcome the sinful nature of the world and live for Christ.

Injustice in our world today results from man’s sinfulness and his refusal to clothe himself in Christ’s character. The world, and unfortunately some Christians, see things from a selfish perspective which promotes their own agendas regardless of how it may affect others. On the contrary, Christ calls us to exhibit a biblical compassion that seeks transformation through the Word. We should also live with integrity by practicing humility, standing on God’s Word firmly, but gently, and forgiving one another through the love lavished upon us in Christ. To overcome injustice, iniquity, and dysfunction in the world, it requires the right plan. And God has given us this right plan clearly stated through His Word. Let’s apply it in and to our lives!

Incorporate

Why do we need to “wear” or put on all the character traits Paul lists and not pick and choose what we want? How consistent are you in wearing all these traits in your life?

How does the health of the church depend upon the health of individual members? What are the things you’re doing that contribute to the health of the church? What things do you need to start doing?

Why do we need to meet regularly for corporate instruction in God’s Word in both Bible study and worship? How can you as a class connect people to the church and show them the value and need for this instruction?

January 17, 2021



*Overcome with
the Right Prayer
Luke 6:27-36*

Focal Verse:

"Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you."

Luke 6:27-36

back to
Table of
Contents

Introduce

In 1955, five independent missionaries and their families from various walks of life throughout the United States sensed God's call to reach the Auca people in the jungles of Ecuador.* So, Jim Elliot, Nate Saint, Peter Fleming, Ed McCully, and Roger Youderian banded together to devise and implement Operation Auca to penetrate this isolated land with gospel. Each of these men knew the extreme risk of this endeavor. Moreover, they were also well acquainted with an attempt ten years earlier to take the gospel into a similar situation in Bolivia which met with unspeakable tragedy with the murder of those missionaries.

The Auca people had a notorious reputation for extreme hostility toward any outsider. Attempts by the secular world had been made to contact and establish friendly relations with the tribe. But each of these attempts ended in the death of the visitors. The Auca trusted no one. They didn't even have friendly relationships with their closest neighbors. Anyone who ventured into their territory was greeted by the tip of their spears. Yet, these five men had a burden to share the love of Christ with these people. Consequently, they formulated a plan to establish relations with them from a distance. Nate Saint would pilot a small airplane as the other missionaries would shower them with gifts while shouting friendly greetings in their language taught to them by Dayuma—an Aucan woman who had fled the violence of her own people. The team began their mission in September of 1955. They continued these airdrops until the Auca responded by sending a gift in return which the missionaries then joyously interpreted as a gesture that a friendly relationship had commenced.

Without consulting Dayuma who knew firsthand of the Auca's tactics which could be misconstrued as friendly and peaceful all the while they were planning a violent attack, the team hastily decided that on January 3, 1956 the time had come to land in the jungle and make personal contact. So, they did. They established a base of operations near a river landing strip and slowly made plans to contact the Auca. From their treehouse base, they even observed the Aucas slowly approaching their camp which they perceived as a non-threatening sign that they desired to know more about their visitors. Suddenly, however, the team's radio communication with the others back in town ceased. Other missionaries were then dispatched to the region. Upon their arrival, they made the gruesome discovery of four of their coworkers' bodies badly mutilated with a fifth presumably washed down the river. The Auca had attacked and killed all five missionaries.

Introduce

The story doesn't end there, however. The relatives and widows of the martyred missionaries didn't abandon their calling. Although they took a slower, more cautious approach, Rachel Saint (Nate's sister) and Elisabeth Elliot (Jim's widow) continued preparation to minister to the Auca people. They could have very easily given up; they could have harbored resentment and bitterness against those who had killed their loved ones. Instead, they displayed the unconditional forgiveness of Christ to the people who had killed their relatives and who now may even seek to kill them. Learning more of the Aucan language from Dayuma, who had also become a Christian, all three of these women risked their lives to return to share the gospel with these people! This time many in the tribe received Christ and welcomed the ladies' with open arms—including the very men who had killed their loved ones. What a testament to the love of Christ and the power of the gospel to overcome this is!

I did not include the account of these missionaries as a call for us to act recklessly by intentionally putting our lives in physical danger or to encourage us to act impulsively without seeking God's wisdom and direction. Too many times people hear such stories and needlessly endanger themselves because they have not truly sought the Lord. God never asks us to seek out danger like daredevils! In life, trouble and persecution will find us; we don't have to seek it! When we do encounter trouble and hostility, however, we must evaluate the situation from Christ's perspective and follow His teaching to "love our enemies" and "do good to those who hate you" (Luke 6:27). When we respond with this Christ-like love and forgiveness, we can overcome whatever challenges we may face. To overcome any injustice and persecution that we may encounter in life, we must have the right perspective when we pray just as Jesus taught us in [Luke 6:27-36](#).

Key
Question

How do you pray for those who have hurt, wronged, or treated you unjustly?

In Reference

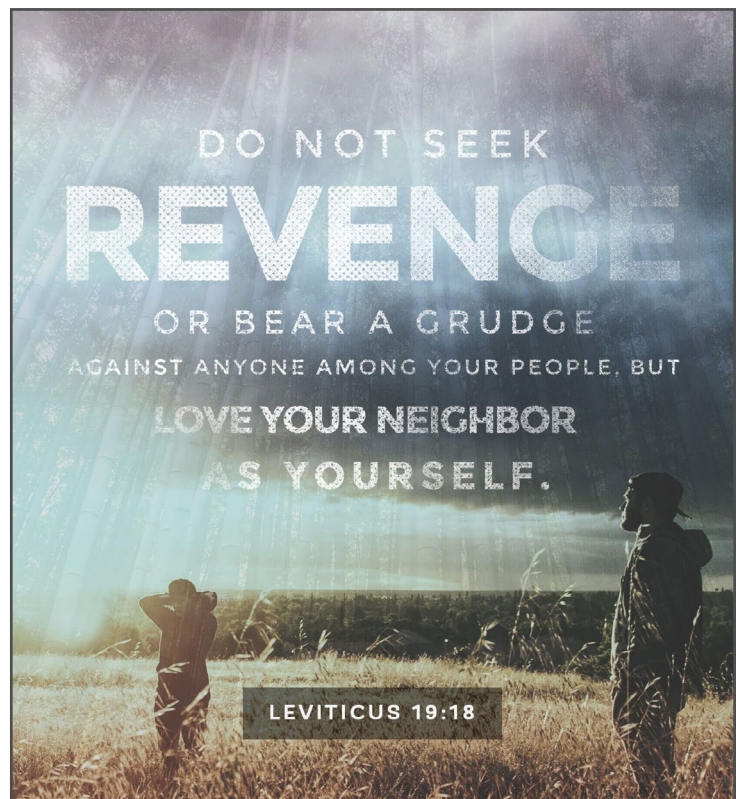


Ruth A. Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), pages 313-19.

THE PRESCRIPTION FOR OUR RESPONSE:

A major part of Jesus' ministry while He walked upon the earth was to help people understand Scripture so they could rightly apply it in their lives as God intended it. His teaching, however, stirred up extraordinary controversy particularly with the religious leaders of the day who thought they had understood Scripture and were motivating others to follow it correctly. We often vilify groups like the Pharisees, but they actually had noble aspirations in worshiping the Lord in purity and educating people to follow the law obediently. However, their misguided understanding of Scripture actually obscured the true intention behind it. Thus, they challenged and condemned Jesus for both picking grain ([Luke 6:1-5](#)) and healing a man with a crippled hand ([Luke 6:6-11](#)) on the Sabbath. Through their legalistic lenses, they had missed the higher purpose whereby Jesus was teaching us to honor the Lord through acts of service which fulfilled the intention of the Sabbath.

Consequently, the Pharisees' desire to follow the law to the letter missed the point behind the Sabbath which was to serve the Lord and worship Him by concentrating all our activities on Him. When following the law to the letter, one of three outcomes generally occur. First, we become so focused on "doing" that we miss the relationship for which we were created. Second, we become so consumed with fulfilling what we ourselves see as important that we miss other opportunities to serve the Lord and glorify Him. Third, we do as little as possible to fulfill the requirement of the law that we fail to see the much broader responsibilities we have and the higher ethic by which Christ has called us to live. Jesus centers His teaching here in [Luke 6:27-36](#) on this third point when He describes how we should treat others, especially in



Instruct

loving our enemies and responding with goodness toward those who act in hostility toward us.

Why is the rejection of legalism not a call to live however we want? Why and how are we called to an even higher standard of living in Christ?

Question
1

Hence, Jesus begins verse 27 by asserting **“but I say to you”** in order to correct this legalistic misunderstanding about **love**. Scripture teaches us to **love** God and **love** others ([Luke 10:27](#)). Specifically, both the Old and New Testaments bid us to **love** our neighbors as ourselves ([Lev 19:18](#)). In that same chapter in Leviticus, God even expands the recipients of our love to the “stranger who dwells among you” ([Lev 19:34](#)). In fact, Israel was to **“love”** the stranger as themselves. Legalism, then confines us strictly to these two categories alone—the minimum requirement to fulfill the law. We can see this attitude displayed when a “certain lawyer” who wanted to test Jesus and “justify himself” asked, “Who is my neighbor” ([Luke 10:29](#))? In his narrow view, neighbor only applied to those immediately around him, particularly his relatives and fellow countrymen with whom he had good relationships and good standing. But Jesus shows us through the parable of the “Good Samaritan” that a “neighbor” has a much broader view.

How does legalism blind us to the true purposes of the Lord?

Question
2

Consequently, here in [Luke 6:27](#), Jesus makes that connection more explicit when He instructs us to **love** our **enemies** and do **good to those who hate** us. Jesus Himself has supplied the highest example for how we ought to fulfill this command. He loved us! He loved both you and me while we were yet sinners ([Rom 5:8](#)). He loved us even when we loved the world and were disobedient toward Him. Not only does Jesus’ teaching confront legalism, but it also breaks cultural norms and expectations which push us to get even and seek revenge upon those who have hurt or wronged us. According to this worldly perspective, injustice becomes an endless cycle which can never be broken. The pursuit of what the world labels as justice often leads directly to other injustices as people selfishly seek placation which benefits them and their cause

rather than promote love, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

In what ways does love temper anger and conquer revenge?

Question
3

For example, let's say our homeowner's association acted unfairly and unjustly—whether perceived or actual—toward us in dictating what we can do with our personal property. We crusade for our cause, condemn the leadership, call them names, and make threats. Still, we don't receive restitution and our issue remains. So, we gather other people in our neighborhood who believe they have been slighted as well. Anger in the assembly explodes, causing emotions to run wild which leads to structures in the neighborhood



to be defaced and destroyed in the name of justice. What has been resolved other than perpetuating injustice upon others who had no actual involvement in the matter, but had their property destroyed?

Jesus recognized the cycle that this kind of injustice, revenge, and hatred would create. So, He compels us to **love** our **enemies**! While **love** does lead us to resolve our differences wisely and constructively through the legal and lawful means that God has given us as a society, it never depends upon the outcome or verdict of the situation! None of us, for instance, would ever take the place of a convicted criminal facing the death penalty. But Jesus did! In fact, He took our place. His **love**, however, wasn't predicated upon our response to the gospel—whether we repented and accepted His sacrificial gift or we persisted in sin and rejected it. Jesus still loved us and died for us anyway. In this way, **love** transcends the wrongs done to us and looks for a way to reconcile relationships regardless of how people may respond.

What examples in the Bible can you cite where people were motivated by anger / vengeance or love / forgiveness? What were the outcomes of these situations?

Question
4

Instruct

Jesus also instructs us to **bleed those who curse** us and **pray for those who spitefully use** us (v. 28). Apart from adopting a biblical world view and being completely led by the Holy Spirit, this attitude is impossible. Typically, we will respond to people in the same manner in which they treat us. If a person raises his voice, most likely we will raise our voices in response. We will respond to people who insult us by insulting them under the guise of defending ourselves. Jesus warns us not to respond in like manner; we should respond in a completely different way that demonstrates His character. We should **bleed** rather than **curse**. This doesn't mean that we should speak in a way that distracts from sin, distorts the truth, and disseminates false hope. These actions aren't loving! It means, however, to speak the truth in love without condemning and demeaning the other person, but rather point them to restoration in Christ. Similarly, we should **pray for those who spitefully use** us. Just as we sometimes respond to people in the same way they have treated us, we will allow selfish and vengeful motives to infiltrate our prayer lives. Sometimes these emotions run so deep that we're not even aware of their presence in corrupting our prayer life. We've probably all said at one time or another, "They'll get what they deserve one day" as a way to write off the situation and move forward. But in reality, how should we **pray**? First, we should **pray** that the ones who wronged us receive God's grace and accept His



gift of salvation if they haven't already. We should never **pray** for their demise! Second, we should **pray** that they hear God speak through His Word, that they would learn to apply the wisdom and knowledge God has given us, that they would be convicted and led by the Spirit to live according to God's principles, and that they would repent. Third, we should **pray** that God will act with justice in resolving any problems that we

may experience with them.

Furthermore, we need to **pray** for ourselves in this endeavor which is also a means of praying for that person who has wronged us. Hence, we need to **pray** that the Lord will give us the right perspective and help us to evaluate our own lives to ascertain if indeed we are in right standing with Him. Therefore, we must make sure that we haven't contributed to the problem, participated in the wrong, or seen things from a selfish perspective which will blind us to the true nature of the situation. In addition, we also need to **pray** that we have the right attitude when we meet or are around these people who have wronged us in some way. Above all, we need the Spirit to guide us in every way so that our response will be Christ-like and He will lead us to exercise forgiveness ([Eph 4:32](#)).

How does prayer give us the right perspective when someone has wronged us? How have you prayed for the people who have wronged you?

Question
5

Jesus now shows exactly what this radical **love** entails when He exhorts us to **offer the other cheek** when someone **strikes us on one** (v. 29a). Jesus isn't telling us to go out and look for trouble with this illustration; He doesn't demand that we put ourselves in dangerous and life-threatening situations to test our loyalty to Him. Even more important, He isn't saying that we should incite violence in order to effect change and then endure the consequences whatever they may be—which some today believe is the only way to produce lasting change. This completely misses Jesus' point in this passage!

Rather, Jesus employs hyperbole in order to help us understand that we should never seek revenge or respond in the same hateful way in which someone has treated us. On the contrary, we should exercise **love** and forgiveness in all we do. In fact, this phrase in Greek mostly likely refers to an open-handed slap to the **cheek** rather than a close-fisted, violent punch to the face. Thus, the strike here represents an insult and not so much life-threatening violence perpetrated against us. This fits with everything that Jesus has already said and even heightens the necessity of responding with blessing to those who **curse** us. Therefore, we are to respond with **love** and not with the same actions that others have directed toward us. This is a radical principle for the world to understand and those outside of Christ truly can never fully grasp it!

THE PATTERN FOR OUR RESPONSE:

Jesus now offers two more examples to establish a pattern for how we should respond



to any situation. He asserts that we should **not withhold** our **tunic** from the one who has taken our **cloak** (v. 29a). He follows this by imploring us to **give to everyone who asks**—even the one who borrows (i.e., **takes away your goods**) and does not return them

(v. 30). Once again, Jesus is using hyperbole to underscore the point that we should never seek revenge. Jesus isn't telling us to invite abuse in the form of becoming easy targets for thieves, scammers, and those who wish to swindle us. He also isn't saying that we should **give** everything away and suffer without being discerning. This entirely misses His point.

On the contrary, Jesus is teaching us that we should never allow anything to become an obstacle that stands in the way of forgiveness of others or prohibits reconciliation. In this context, Jesus' instruction about giving comes in the form of willingly helping someone through a difficult time when God has given us the means. Frequently, someone may ask to borrow money and even commit to paying it back. But they never do. Finances, in fact, are probably the single greatest strain on any relationship—marriage, friendship, and business partnerships. Later in this passage, Jesus even poses a rhetorical question: "**And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you**" ([Luke 6:34](#))? Consequently, we should never allow lending or helping others in a tangible way to hinder our relationship or compromise our holy testimony in Christ.

We should also respond to those who take unlawfully from us in this same way which emphasizes reconciliation and restoration. For instance, some people may deceive us when asking for aid. Although we should never knowingly give to someone or some cause that clearly misuses the funds for ungodly purposes, we will still at times be deceived by people who claim they need the funds for one thing but then use them

for something else. In the end, they have defrauded and deceived us intentionally. Nevertheless, we should not retaliate, but we should lovingly help them see the error in their ways. We should always seek reconciliation while taking steps to ensure such fraud doesn't happen again. Above all, however, we need to continue to point them to Christ.

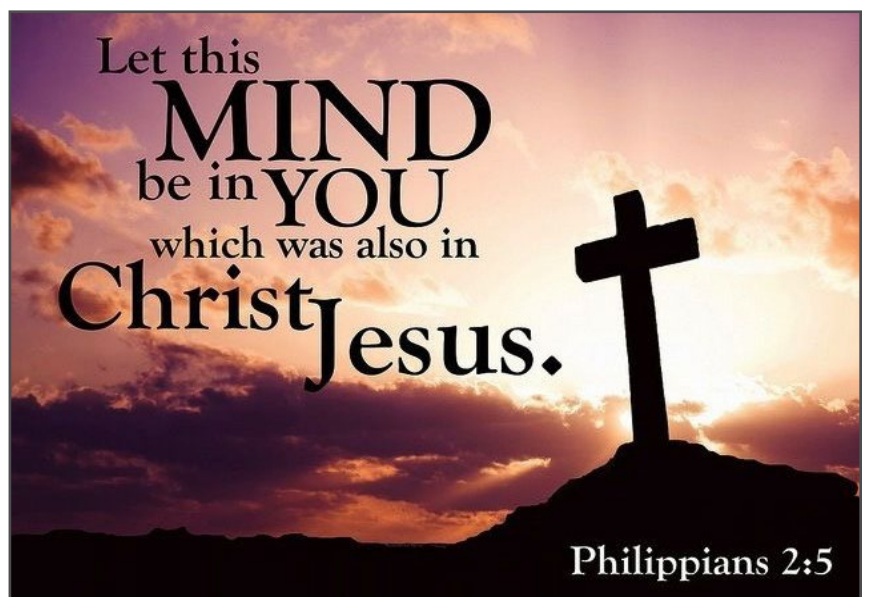
How can finances create dysfunction in relationships? How have you had to apply Jesus' teaching on lending and deception in your life personally?

Question
6

From these examples, Jesus establishes a pattern and broader principle by which we should live. Colloquially, we call this principle "The Golden Rule." Jesus states, "**Just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise**" (v. 31). The world, however, has perverted this teaching and transformed it to sinfully state: "Do unto others as they do unto you." This is the antithesis of Jesus' teaching! Instead, we must think about both the appearance and consequences of our actions upon others. This is a radical call to strip ourselves of self-centeredness and to think about how our actions affect others.

We could ask, "If I were in their shoes, how would I want to be treated?" Even better, however, we should ask, "If I were in their shoes, how would Christ treat them according to His Word?" Herein lies the quintessential point that we must understand in Jesus' teaching. Christ has called us to follow His example and be His ambassadors to the world! Paul states it this way, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" ([Gal 2:20](#)).

When we have a relationship with Christ, He will transform us and we should bear His image in everything we do. Thus, we should imitate His holy character. Ultimately, we should want others to see Christ reflected in our lives. When we adopt such a perspective, we will have a much



Instruct

more positive impact upon the world around us. To understand “The Golden Rule” properly, we must assess it through the new life which Christ has called us to live! The only reason we have life is because He paid the penalty for our sins and paved the way. Therefore, we should treat others how He Himself has treated us with grace, mercy, forgiveness, and love!

How does ‘The Golden Rule’ keep us from being self-centered in our perspective?

Question
7

Luke 6:32-36

THE PROFIT OF OUR RESPONSE:

In the last five verses, Jesus shows us the profit or value of living honorable lives which display love and forgiveness rather than anger, bitterness, and vengeance. The profit in responding differently than the world is that we can easily be identified as the children of God and **sinner**s can be pointed into a relationship with Him by our testimony of how He has transformed us! Hence, the world will immediately know to whom we belong based on our response. That’s why Jesus asks three successive rhetorical questions based upon the teaching He has just given followed by a variation of the phrase that even **sinner**s do these things.

For example, Jesus asks, “**If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you**” (v. 32)? He then explains, “**For even sinners love those that love them.**” Jesus continues this line of reasoning with merely doing **good** to others who do **good** to us (v. 33) and lending to others with the **hope** of receiving **back** (v. 34). The sinful world who has no relationship with Christ does these things naturally. It comes without effort. As followers of Christ, however, we are called to be radically different and set apart from the world. The difference should be visible to all.

How would you evaluate your life in terms of whether it reflects Christ or the world? In what areas are you doing well and where do you need to improve?

Question
8

For this reason, Jesus briefly summarizes what He has just taught as a way to emphasize the differences that we ought to manifest in our lives. We ought to 1) **love** our **enemies**, 2) **do good** in every situation, and 3) **lend, hoping for nothing in return.**

We aren't to do these things because we will receive notoriety or some kind of **reward** or even because it makes us feel good and appeases our consciences. These are the wrong motives! Yet, we will indeed receive a **reward** from our heavenly Father for doing these things. Our **reward** is that we have the privilege of being His children (i.e., **sons of the Most High**). Jesus carefully qualifies this statement when He explains that God **is kind to the unthankful and evil** (including us). The word translated **kind** means compassionate which in the context signifies an act of grace. As sinners, we become God's children by His act of grace and nothing we do on our own. By its very definition, we cannot earn God's grace and favor. He has freely given it. Therefore, our **reward** is that we have the privilege of representing Him to all creation because we are indeed His children. Our **reward** should always be to bring glory to our heavenly Father and the joy that it brings Him. Jesus concludes this section of His teaching with a call to emulate the **Father** and **be merciful as He is merciful** (v. 36). We have the great honor of representing Him and being His ambassadors. In the greatest act of mercy ever shown, God provided salvation to us through the sacrificial death of His Son. As His children who bear His image, we also ought to respond with mercy and love when people wrong us, hurt us, and we experience injustice in life because of the sinful condition of mankind.



How is showing God's character to the world in how we live rewarding?

Question
9

In the introduction, we learned about three women who overcome animosity, violence, and injustice to share the love of Christ to an indigenous tribe in Ecuador that had murdered five missionaries. They could have abandoned the mission, washed their hands of the situation, and left the country with bitter thoughts that one day these people will get what they deserved for their unprovoked acts of violence. But they didn't. The love of Christ compelled them to love their enemies despite their ill treatment. When we face such a tremendous challenge and experience the extreme heartaches of life, we must have the right attitude in prayer so that we can know and adopt the right pattern in Christ which will help us to overcome injustice and hurt that we encounter.

Through prayer, the Spirit will guide us to the right prescription for overcoming hurt and heartache which always points the other person to restoration rather than seeking revenge. Prayer gives us the knowledge of God's Word and the power to apply it no matter what situation we may face. As Christians, we are to be radically different from the world around us so that others may see Christ in us and be pointed to the same transformed life that we now live. Therefore, let us demonstrate the character of Christ in overcoming injustice, hurt, and wrongs done to us by following the principles Jesus taught us here in Luke whereby we show love to our enemies, bless those who curse us, and pray for those who persecute us. Only this kind of love can radically transform sin and injustice in the world and this can only be accomplished through Christ.

Incorporate

As a church, how should we pray for those who disparage us, persecute us, and act unjustly toward us? In what ways should we pray for each other as we experience hurt and injustice in the world?

Why should our response to injustice in the world always be to point others to Christ? Why should we forgive unconditionally without seeking repayment or even restitution?

How can we as a church overcome the cycle of injustice? How should the church implement and practice these principles in [Luke 6:27-36](#) to effect true and lasting change in the world today?

January 24, 2021



*Overcome with
the Right Perspective
Romans 12:9-16*

Focal Verse:

"Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good."

Romans 12:9

back to
Table of
Contents

Introduce

In college, I took Introduction to Psychology as one of the general education requirements for my Bachelor of Arts degree. Midway through the semester, we began learning about operant conditioning which is a system of teaching that uses rewards or punishments to influence a subject's behavior to achieve a desired outcome or result. B. F. Skinner, who became a renowned expert in this field of study, designed a box or cage with a series of levers which could be pressed by a mouse. The researcher would then "condition" or teach the mouse to press a specific lever which would dispense a piece of cheese. In theory, the mouse would learn to distinguish between the levers and select the one which rewarded it with cheese rather than those that offered nothing.

When I purchased my textbook at the beginning of the semester, it came with a plastic pocket attached to the back which held a 3.5-inch floppy disk with a picture of a mouse and was labeled "Sniffy the Virtual Rat." To complete an assignment over operant conditioning, we were required to install the program and teach Sniffy to press a bar on his own to receive a piece of cheese. After installing the program and spending two hours trying to complete the assignment, Sniffy refused to learn! He would continually spin in circles in the



cage, become consumed with sniffing like his name suggests, and then drink from the spigot which contained his water source. He repeated this same pattern for two hours! He never once pressed the lever to receive the cheese. I could never condition Sniffy's behavior.

Eventually, I became so frustrated that I punched the side of my computer tower and exclaimed, "Learn something, you stupid rat!" After leaving for a while, I returned to try once again. But the result remained the same. Before class, I began talking to others. None of them had experienced this same problem. They had successfully trained their virtual rats in twenty minutes. Upon hearing my plight, someone suggested that I check the program's settings to see if they had somehow become corrupted. Sure

Introduce

enough, the settings had given Sniffy the maximum level for thirst and the lowest levels for intelligence and attention span. So, I pressed the “Restore Defaults” button to reset all the parameters. After twenty minutes, Sniffy could press the bar and obtain cheese on his own!

The world conditions us to respond to the stimuli around us by repeatedly impressing its standards and perspectives on us. Thus, it teaches us to respond according to its pattern. Sin, however, has thoroughly corrupted this perspective and pattern, distorting all the parameters by which God had initially created us to live in holiness and righteousness. Rather than “abhor what is evil” as Scripture says, we “cling” to it instead of that which “is good” ([Rom 12:9](#)). Our “default” settings have become corrupted in this way through sin! Therefore, we need to restore our “default” settings to those which God originally instilled within us. If we don’t restore them, like Sniffy the Virtual Rat, we will persist in following the same unproductive, corrupted pattern with no hope of change!

We cannot restore these “default” values on our own. We need the Master Programmer to reset them! Only Christ can restore our settings to the way they should be as if sin had never corrupted them in the first place. When Christ restores us, we can then begin functioning in the way that we should. When we completely surrender to Him and follow the restored parameters He has instilled within us, it will change our perspective to match His and it will condition our response to reflect the pattern found in Scripture rather than the corrupted pattern of the world. As we go through life, let us live by these restored principles and overcome the pattern of the world by maintaining the right perspective in Christ.

Key
Question

How does sin corrupt our perspective?

Romans 12:9

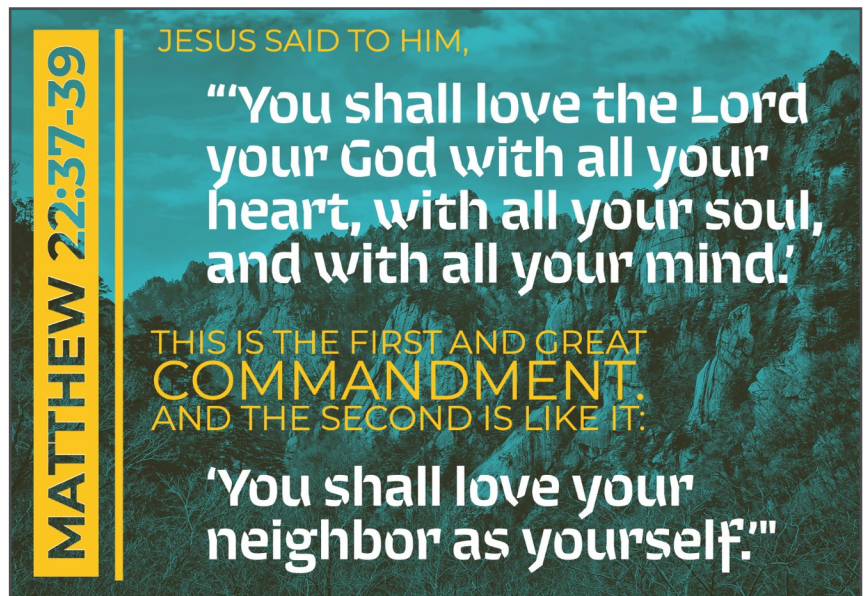
SPURN HYPOCRISY:

In his letters, Paul usually employs a similar pattern whereby he first communicates to his audience how we are saved then follows that with a description of what salvation produces in our lives in terms of how we should live. The book of Romans is no exception. [Chapters 1-11](#) relate how everyone, both Jew and Gentile alike, is saved by grace through faith on account of the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. [Chapters 12-16](#) then demonstrate how we should live because of that relationship with Christ who has “reset” our default perspectives by renewing our minds, transforming our hearts to His, and focusing our attention on worshiping and serving Him.

In 12:9, Paul shows that genuine **love** should be the guiding principle that motivates how we live and how we interact with others around us. Even before our relationship with Christ, **love** motivated what we did. **Love** for ourselves and the yearning to

fulfill our selfish desires dictated everything we did. Now, however, Jesus has transformed our **love** to reflect His selflessness whereby our **love** for God leads us to **love** others both in the church and the secular community. This type of renewed **love** should now dictate and guide us in everything we do. Jesus taught us the importance of maintaining this kind of **love**

when He implores us to **love** God with all our being which translates into loving our neighbors as ourselves which actually fulfills the entire Old Testament ([Luke 10:27](#)). Genuine **love** does not masquerade itself in doing **good** because of how it makes us feel or what we ourselves can get out of the relationship. On the contrary, genuine **love** guides us to **abhor evil** and **cling to good** because it glorifies and pleases God; it's also simply the right thing to do based upon our renewed character in Christ. To help us understand, let's examine how we made decisions before Christ versus how we should now make them in Christ. Before Christ, we weighted our decisions heavily on



Instruct

how they benefited us. Thus, we would ask, “Is the reward for us greater than the risk?” For example, children who have been restricted from eating cookies by their parents may try to sneak them from the cookie jar because the immediate joy and contentment in eating the morsel outweighs the risk of punishment from their parents should they find out. This type of thinking translates into every decision a person makes apart from Christ whether he is consciously aware of it or not.

In Christ, however, our focus should be how do our actions benefit and glorify Him. Although we must understand that we may suffer for doing right and the costs for



following Christ may be high ([Luke 14:25-33](#)), our **love** for Him enables us to overcome any obstacle and challenge and direct our service toward Him. Let’s return to the illustration with the cookie once again. A selfless perspective would compel children not to sneak the cookie because their obedience honors their parents, it pleases them, and, above all, it demonstrates their genuine **love**

for them. Consequently, their genuine **love** for their parents overcomes and conquers their personal desires. The same should be our motivation in Christ.

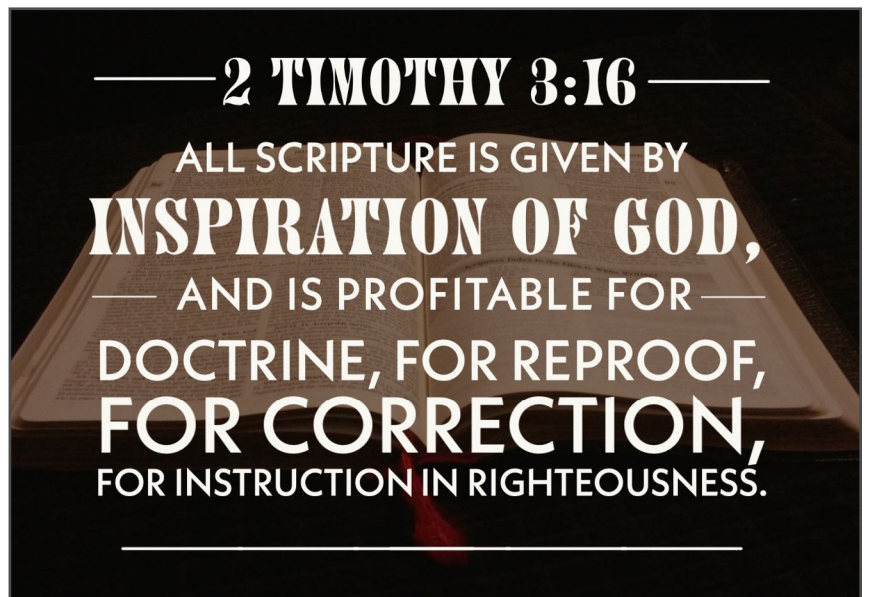
How does genuine love for Christ motivate you and impact the way you live?

Question
1

If we aren’t intentional and constantly focused, we can revert to our former desires and selfishness can resurface in our lives obscuring our genuine **love** for Christ. Therefore, we must continually evaluate our motives and monitor our perspective by remaining connected to Christ and surrendered to the Holy Spirit who guides us. Therefore, let us **abhor what is evil** and **cling to what is good**. Scripture aids us in this endeavor. From God’s Word, we can know absolutely **what is good** and **evil**. Yet, as we learned last week from the example of the Pharisees, we should not be legalistic in our actions, seeking to do only the minimum to eke by. We should pattern ourselves on the highest standard—Jesus Himself.

Nevertheless, some still wrongly evaluate their participation in certain activities at times because they have become distracted in their true focus. They reason that Scripture clearly states *this*, but I can get away with *this* because it isn't specifically stated. Still, others will wrongly interpret Jesus' teaching and assert that He has abolished the Law (Old Testament) in the sense that it no longer applies to us, giving us the freedom to do anything we want ([Matt 5:17-20](#)). All Scripture, however, is useful for instruction by which we can live ([2 Tim 3:16](#)). So, let us have a different perspective from that of the world which looks at what they can get away with.

If there is any debate about whether or not we should do something, then we should not participate in it. We never need to debate about doing something which is right or "good." We instinctively know to do these things. For instance, do we need to debate whether to help or at least seek help for someone gravely injured? No, the debate comes in our consciences when we try to justify why we didn't do something to help. Scripture doesn't explicitly say that we must help someone in a car accident or someone gravely wounded, but it does teach us to help others. Therefore, we should apply this test to everything we do, so we will always **cling to what is good** and not get mixed up with **evil**.



What criteria do you use to evaluate whether something is good or evil? How does Scripture and the Spirit factor into your decisions?

Question
2

Romans 12:10-13

SERVE HONORABLY:

Not only does **love** motivate us to do **what is good** without any hint of hypocrisy, it also motivates us to serve with humility. **Love** should spur us to treat one another as family—especially through the bond we all now have in Christ. Hence, Paul urges us to **be kindly affectionate with brotherly love** (v. 10). The phrase **kindly affectionate** carries with it the idea of being devoted to each other. Most likely, we've heard the

Instruct

old axiom “blood is thicker than water” and understand the most basic meaning of the inseparable bond that familial relationships produce. As family, we each have distinctive personality traits, mannerisms, preferences, and ways of doing things. Sometimes these ways create conflict or annoy others to the point that it causes some type of dysfunction. But in the end familial bonds transcend these petty differences and our **love** for **one another** overcomes such superficialities so that we lay aside our personal preferences and wants for the sake of the other person.



When we truly **love one another** as a family, therefore, we will set aside our own needs and desires for the benefit of others in our lives. We will often make sacrifices for the members of our families more so than we would for any other person on earth. For this reason, Paul qualifies the manner of love as **giving preference to one another in honor**. In Greek, this phrase is somewhat difficult to translate. The verb literally means to “go before.” In other words, Paul is telling us not to act

selfishly, but to honor others or “put others before ourselves.” Just as Christ provided the ultimate example of what selfless **love** should look like, we should also seek to emulate that type of selfless **love** in all our relationships! In fact, Paul states something very similar to this in [Philippians 2:3-4](#): “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”

How do you honor or give preference to others that God has placed in your life?

Question
3

Next, Paul contends that we should **not lag in diligence** (v. 11). Literally, the phrase means “in zeal do not be lazy.” **Love** propels us to not become complacent, but to seek ways to serve God and by extension serve one another. If the pandemic which we have had to endure has had one major side effect, it’s that it has promoted laziness and taken it to a new level in some ways. Certainly, businesses have had to adapt and

employees have had to work harder in many cases, but the unprecedented ways in which we are now served can make a tremendously negative impact upon our lives if we allow it, speeding a process that was already set in motion before COVID. Shopping online, food delivery, and many other things have greatly increased convenience and choice. In addition, many churches, like businesses, have had to adapt their schedules and models, offer online programming, and reassess ways of getting the gospel to people. In some ways, this has produced laziness among believers.

Understandably, some at-risk people or those helping and living with at-risk people must make the right choices to protect themselves; and those who are quarantined must utilize online services as a way to remain connected. In fact, God has given us wisdom to help us make the right decisions to keep us and our loved ones healthy. If you're reading this lesson and fall into these categories, we understand the choices you have to make. You've still remained faithful in worshiping and serving the Lord with how He has given you opportunity.

Others, however, now use these opportunities as a matter of convenience for themselves. Instead of worshiping and **serving the Lord** as their main priority, they do other things and watch the service when they have time at their convenience even if they watch it at all; they study God's Word and attend Bible study when it fits their schedules; and even more rarely do they serve because the church has become more centered on the spectator than the participant. We must lovingly correct the course of these individuals and help them to see the danger of their actions which will result in laziness rather than service to the Lord.

What is the danger of failing to serve and becoming increasingly more isolated as a people—particularly believers?

Question
4

Because of the pandemic, we no longer even need to leave our houses if we so choose. We can visit the doctor online; we can have groceries, food, and medicine delivered. Entertainment comes directly to us at our convenience. We can bank and take care of



Instruct

business online. Literally, the only thing for which we would need to leave our home is our funeral. Without meaningful connections and relationships, without opportunities to fulfill our God-given purpose in serving Him, and without ways to interact with the world around us productively, our funeral will indeed be hastened because we will have no direction, no motivation, and no purpose ([Prov 29:18](#)).

Consequently, we cannot afford to become lazy and give in to this mentality of becoming a spectator rather than a participant. Two problems exist with this mentality: 1) we need avenues for personal, intimate relationships that we can't effectively cultivate online through a computer and 2) being isolated and watching at home doesn't truly hold us accountable in **serving the Lord**. Honestly evaluate how you spent most of your time during the pandemic. Did you creatively find ways to serve the Lord or did you place that on the back burner? Did you personally find ways to share the gospel and invite people to church (even online) or did you yourself simply tune in and watch? Did you actively participate in service projects to make a difference in the secular community to share the love of Christ? Certainly, we should faithfully tithe to undertake the work of the Lord, but tithing and watching on the internet or television should never replace serving the Lord and sharing the gospel!

What can you do as an individual and collectively as a Bible study group to serve the Lord whether in person or online and reach people with the gospel?

Question
5

And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Romans 5:5

When we have fully surrendered to the Lord, His Holy Spirit will provide the impetus which will motivate us. Paul, therefore, urges us to be **fervent in the Spirit**. The NKJV does not translate the definite article (the) before Spirit here in verse 11. But in context, Paul refers directly to the Holy Spirit who ensures that we have the



right perspective in life which removes any self-centeredness we may have, focuses our attention on **servicing the Lord**, and connects us with other believers through whom we will walk in life together. In fact, the Spirit unites us as one family in a cohesive community characterized by **love**, doing what is right, and **servicing the Lord** which we have seen thus far. Now, we will see how the Spirit unites us into one body to face the challenges of life together. We need each other to be this community spurred by **love** and guided by the Spirit to endure these challenges together.

As a community, we can overcome any obstacle we encounter when we rejoice **in hope**, remain **patient in tribulation**, and continue **steadfastly in prayer** (v. 12). To overcome our troubles, we must look to a **hope** beyond ourselves. One that even transcends, but unites the church. Certainly, we can find **hope** and inspiration through the testimony of people who have endured and overcome, especially if they've faced a challenge similar to ours. But we need an even greater hope! Therefore, our **hope** as a community doesn't come from within ourselves collectively; it comes from Christ who loved us so much that He endured the cross and conquered sin and death for us! As a church, we need to remind each other of that **hope**. Others need to see the hope of Christ manifested in the way we live and how we express our joy through confidence in Him alone!

As a community, how should we express our hope in Christ? What tangible ways can we disseminate and bear that hope visibly to others?

Question
6

We can have such **hope** which allows us to endure tribulation when we remain connected to Christ **in prayer**. Since we studied **prayer** last week when we learned how to have the right **prayer** to overcome trials, particularly when people treat us unjustly, we won't spend much time on this topic. However, in this context focused on the church as the community, we need to remember to intercede for the body as a whole so that we maintain a selfless perspective that exalts Christ and meets the needs of others—a topic to which we will now turn.

In addition, **love** guides us to meet the **needs of the saints** and show **hospitality** (v. 13). These are selfless acts that look beyond our own situation to see how we can serve others in the Lord. Thus, these are two specific ways that we can fulfill the admonition to put others before ourselves in honor (v. 10). As believers, we should look for ways that God has given us the opportunity to help others in the body so they can maintain



hope and persist in **tribulation**. Although we don't have time to discuss these principles in detail, we must make sure that we help people in the right way. We need to help them so that they can overcome whatever obstacle they face so that they glorify Christ and give back by ministering to others in the community. We should never minister and show hospitality in a way that promotes abuse of the system or produces entitlement where people take rather than give.

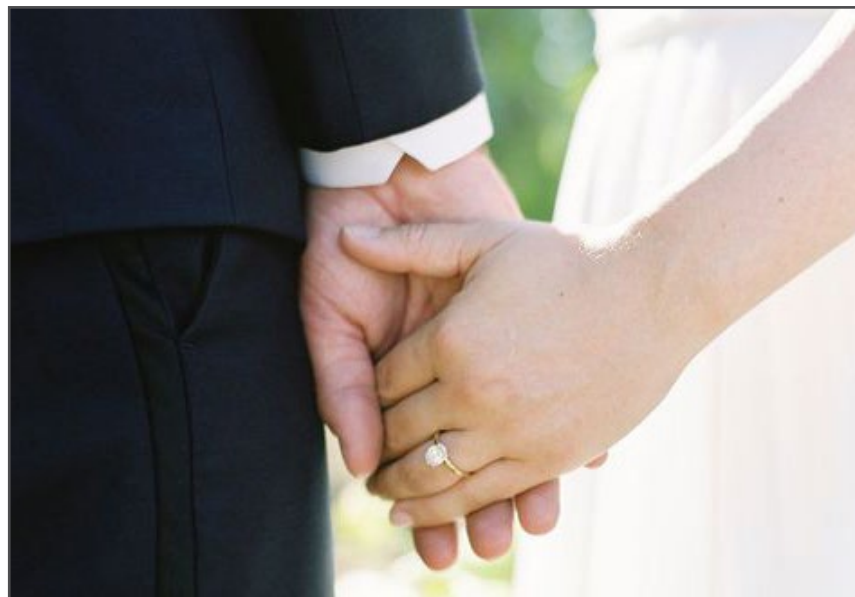
How can we give and show hospitality in a way that doesn't produce entitlement, but does produce people who give rather than take?

Question
7

Romans 12:14-16

SEE THINGS HUMBLY:

In Christ, our perspective should compel us to function as a community—rather than individuals—which selflessly cares for each other. In verse 14, Paul reminds us of Jesus' teaching to **bless** and **not** to **curse** those who spitefully use us. Having discussed that last week, we'll advance to verse 15. There we see the need to support one another



as a church family whether in good times or bad. Therefore, Paul encourages us to **rejoice with those who rejoice** and **weep with those who weep**. This demonstrates the importance of the community. God hasn't called us to traverse life alone; He has placed us in a community to support one another. Just as He saw that it was not good for man

to be alone at the dawn of creation when He created Adam, God also recognizes that

we need each other to offer comfort, extend compassion, encourage, correct, exhort, challenge, and edify one another through the Spirit. He gave us the church to do this! Within the church, we need to have the right perspective collectively. Just as marriage unites two different individuals into one body, so does the church ([Eph 5:22-31](#)). No longer in marriage can two individuals think just about themselves as a single person may. That kind of marriage would never work. Instead, they must think about each other; they must think collectively about their decisions. The church must function in the same way. For this reason, Paul instructs us to be of **the same mind toward one another** (v. 16).

He goes on to explain what he means by this **same mind**. Those who have the **same mind** look out for the interests of others. They don't act unilaterally or selfishly. They seek the best for the other person. Consequently, Paul explains that we should **not set our mind on high things, but associate with the humble**. In other words, humility should govern everything that we say and do. **Humble** people will always first think about others. They will think about how their words and actions will affect others before they engage in them. They will think about how they can encourage others and help them grow in their faith. More important, **humble** people never rely on their own wisdom, but they give godly counsel and advice from Scripture. Hence, Paul warns us **not to be wise in our own eyes**.

What does humility look like when practiced in the church? What examples of humility can you give from Scripture?

Question
8

To overcome, we must have the right perspective in Christ which espouses selflessness and connects us to the church where we can support each other collectively. Unfortunately, the mindset of the world has encroached upon the church today and people have focused inwardly, seeking to placate the individual rather than build community. We need to emulate Christ. We need to work together selflessly as a community to give hope to the world through the gospel. To do so, we must apply its principles and maintain the perspective that it teaches.

In the introduction, we observed how Sniffy the Virtual Rat's default settings had become corrupted which meant that they needed to be reset for the program to function properly. In life, sometimes we need to reset our outlook and perspective so that it matches Christ. The pressure of the world and our environment can cause us to look inwardly and see things from a selfish perspective at times. We can very easily fall back into the pattern of the world which deceives us into making choices which are concerned only with ourselves, our convenience, and our personal preferences. The world appears to cater to us, especially in our consumer-driven society.

In Christ, however, we must make choices which honor and glorify Him. In addition, our choices must be driven by love for Him rather than for self. Love should motivate every choice that we make. Thus, we must first demonstrate our love for God by making Him the priority of our lives. And then we should demonstrate our love for people as a way of serving the Lord and pleasing Him. Christ bore this same mind or perspective when He came to earth to save us. When we have a relationship with Him, we should also bear that same mind toward Him and others! Let's overcome injustice in the world with the right perspective by connecting people to Christ and loving others enough to share the gospel with them to see them transformed.

Incorporate

What does genuine love look like in the church? How can we as individuals emulate the love of Christ in our lives?

Why should every person in the church be involved in serving and sharing the gospel? Why should we have no excuses about serving? How can a lack of serving indicate our misplaced priorities?

How does humility produce unity in the church? How does a humble attitude glorify the Lord?

January 31, 2021



*Overcome with
the Right Practice*
Romans 12:17-21

Focal Verse:

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

back to
Table of
Contents

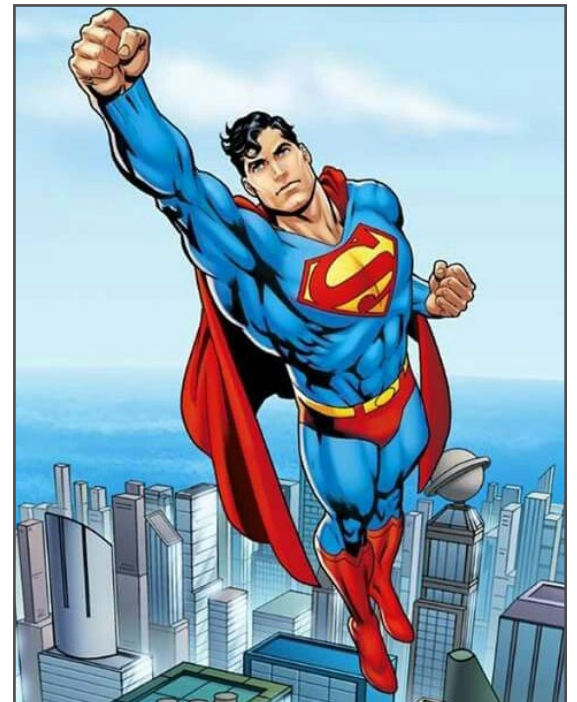
Romans 12:21

Introduce

As we learned last week through the illustration with Sniffy the Virtual Rat, the world's perspective and pattern have been corrupted by sin. Because of our sinful flesh, we continually struggle to do what is good and we often find ourselves practicing evil in the sight of the Lord. For this reason, Paul urges us "not [to] be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" ([Rom 12:21](#)). Even those of us who have been restored by Christ still see this battle between good and evil play out in our lives daily. Paul, like us, had to admit that he knew the good things he should do, but that he often found himself participating in the things which he knew he shouldn't do ([Rom 7:19](#)). Therefore, we need to look to Christ who will ensure that we engage in the right practice whereby we do those things which are holy and right while avoiding those things which are evil and immoral. Christ has rendered this battle null and void from the beginning if we would only surrender complete control to Him!

In many comic books and movies, we find a similar theme of good versus evil—not so much in the sense of a moral struggle within an individual but as two opposing forces which fight for control over the world. Such works of fiction can at times communicate good moral stories and teach valuable lessons about life. When we compare them to Scripture, however, we will notice subtle differences which can give tremendous insight into how society and culture have influenced our view of the world. As we think about this titanic struggle between good and evil, let's identify three differences between these secular works and Scripture that will help us

understand how we can "overcome evil with good" and practice righteousness in Christ. First, comic books and movies portray good and evil as two equal and opposing forces usually exemplified by two individuals that we broadly call a hero / heroine and a villain. Within works of fiction, heroes and villains have similar power, intelligence, and opportunity to influence the world. In many cases, good is never assured of triumphing over evil even though it typically does. Unfortunately, many people apply such understanding to good and evil in Scripture embodied by God and Satan. According to Scripture, however, they're clearly not equal opposing forces! God is infinitely greater.



Introduce

It's no nail biter as to who will win. In fact, it's really anticlimactic because God has already won the battle even before it began. Before He spoke the world into existence, God predestined His Son to come as the Light that would provide salvation through His death. Although darkness (sin) tried to overcome Him, it couldn't (John 1:5).

Second, comic books and movies sometimes show how the heroes and heroines suffer defeat, lose control, and must reformulate their plan of attack with a different and better strategy. Understandably, they do this to make it more exciting to read or watch. The Bible, on the other hand, communicates that God has never lost control at any point from before creation began until now! Even though He has granted man the freedom to make his own choices whether to obey or disobey, He sovereignly remains in control.

Moreover, Scripture tells us that God has formulated a plan from the beginning ([Eph 1:3-14](#)). He is never surprised; He never has to retreat and regroup. He has perfectly carried out His plan in Christ. In comic books, evil or disaster usually strike and then the hero responds in the nick of time just before it's too late. But this is not the case with God! God doesn't wait for sin and evil to occur before He responds. In His omniscience, God foreknew the evil or sinful choices that we would make and He responded with a plan prior to creating the first molecule in the universe! In this way, God acts rather than reacts!

Third, comic books and movies depict the "human" element at the mercy of evil forces and powerless to act against them. People are captured by the villain and then rescued by the hero. They have no choice in the matter. Scripture, on the contrary, places the onus on us. Certainly, we cannot save ourselves and need to be rescued by Christ. But we must make that choice to turn to Him and be saved. He doesn't just swoop in and save us; we must call upon Him for our rescue! At the same time, we're not helpless victims imprisoned by sin; we're implicitly involved. We ourselves make the choice to sin. As a result, we are completely responsible for the choices we make in life!

Why mention these differences between the portrayal of good and evil in comic books and movies with that of Scripture? Many people resign themselves to sin. They live in defeat. They believe that they just can't help sinning and are powerless to change. On their own apart from Christ, this is a true statement. But we actually have no excuse for not overcoming and continuing to live in sin. It's a choice. We must choose Christ and allow Him to transform us to practice righteousness. Christ has permanently defeated

sin and death. He has granted us that same power to overcome through Him! Let us overcome evil and sin through Christ so that we can engage in the right practice with works that glorify Him!

Key
Question

What is the danger of portraying ourselves as helpless victims of sin who are powerless to overcome it?

Instruct

Romans 12:17

OVERCOME WITH CAREFUL CONSIDERATION:

Teaching us how to respond to and overcome adversity in life, Paul continues to demonstrate how love should be the primary principle that shapes our perspective and determines what we practice. Because of our love for Christ which is manifested in our love for others, we should never **repay evil** with **evil** (v. 17). This statement further develops Jesus' instruction to which Paul has already called attention in verse 14 by reminding us to "bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse." In theory, we probably wholeheartedly agree with this principle, but in practice it's very difficult to actually apply! And apart from the Holy Spirit it's truly impossible to practice according to our own human nature. By nature, we tend to treat others in the same way they treat us.

Rather than **repay evil for evil**, we should **have regard for good things in the sight of all men**. In Greek, the word translated **have regard** means to meditate, think carefully, or consider intently. In other words, we must think carefully about our actions, especially how we respond to adversity and deal with anger. For this reason, Paul challenges us to do **good things in the sight of all men**. Unbelievers and believers alike should see our "renewed" mind in Christ borne through our transformed actions which distinguish and differentiate



us from the world ([Rom 12:2](#)). The world often responds to adversity through revenge and retaliation. When they can't overcome these difficult circumstances on their own, they become depressed, discontent, and distraught. As believers, we can and must respond differently by turning to Christ who is working on our behalf. Even in the midst of the most troubling times, we can still maintain joy, have peace, and find contentment unlike the world.

Consequently, we should always do **good** regardless of what happens to us—not in a pretentious way that draws attention to ourselves, but in a way that points others to Christ. We are to live out the gospel for the whole world to see! We must, however, be careful to define what is **good** according to Scripture rather than the world. As we know from Isaiah, among other sources in Scripture, the world will confuse **good** and **evil** at times ([Isa 5:20](#)). Many of the ways that the world chooses to deal with adversity and anger, therefore, are not moral or **good** in the biblical sense. On the contrary, Scripture compels us to live as blameless examples to a wicked generation ([Phil 2:15](#)), to conduct ourselves blamelessly and above reproach ([Col 1:22](#)), to avoid the appearance of impropriety ([1 Thess 5:22](#)), and to be perfect like our heavenly Father ([Matt 5:48](#)). Scripture sets a high standard that the world can never attain and we can only attain because of Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit guiding our lives.

How does the world choose to deal with adversity? How do those ways compare to Scripture?

Question
1

To deal with adversity and anger properly, we need to think carefully and intently about how we respond—not in a way that causes resentment and bitterness to fester, but in a way that leads to a healthy resolution in Christ ([Eph 4:26-27](#)). With a proper biblical understanding, we can always respond in the right way and do **good** even when the situation is ongoing and remains unresolved. Let's examine a list of dos and don'ts for responding to adversity. First, follow the advice in this very passage and consider everything carefully. Counting to ten, so to speak, is sage advice. When we respond in anger immediately, we can never take back our words or undo our actions if we lose control in our haste. In reality, it may take much longer than counting to ten to think through a complex issue. But the principle applies the same. Therefore, don't jump to conclusions or make assumptions because in anger we often overlook details and have

cloudy judgment.

One early Spring day as a child, I looked forward with great anticipation to an Easter presentation at the book club of our local library in my small hometown. My sister, however, had other plans which primarily included stopping the sink and flooding the bathroom. I witnessed all this unrighteous activity, but was powerless to stop it. As I stood nearby pondering how to respond, my sister fled the crime scene and I was there alone by the bathroom directly across from my bedroom. Upon seeing the mess with me standing there, my mother became irate; no matter how much I pleaded and protested my innocence, she still blamed me. After reflecting upon the situation, my mother discovered my sister's wet clothing and then came to feel my pant legs to see if they were indeed dry—and they were. She had found the culprit, so she apologized to me which still didn't really make up for the injustice of having to miss the book club for something I didn't do. Situations aren't always what they may appear! Therefore, we must slow down, think, and evaluate things from every angle before responding.



How could we prevent many injustices, invalid conclusions, and wrong assumptions if we would simply spend time thinking and evaluating things before responding?

Question
2

By taking time to reflect, it gives us time to seek counsel from God's Word, pray, and follow the direction of the Holy Spirit. When we don't take time to seek the Lord, we are left to our own devices which lead us to react rather than plan and engage in a Christ-centered response whereby we measure our words, temper our actions, and represent His character. Many years ago, the phrase WWJD became popular before texting and all its cryptic abbreviations and acronyms. WWJD stood for "What would Jesus do?" which served as a reminder to reorient our thinking to how He would have responded to a particular situation. Although this statement has noble aspirations to help us see Jesus' perspective, we must tweak it a bit. We need to know what Jesus did and how He lived from a scriptural point of view rather than what modern culture says;

we also need to ascertain what Jesus instructed us to do and how He taught us to live. Scripture provides all the tools we need to navigate life successfully if we would only read and apply it.

Second, we must trust that resolution will come from the Lord. That resolution, however, may not come until He calls us home. Sin leads to all kinds of injustice and unrighteousness. Sometimes we are involved ourselves because we surrender to our fleshly desires while at other times it is directed toward us. Until Christ returns, we will continue to experience the effects of living in a sinful, disobedient world. However, we don't have to live in defeat; we can overcome in Christ. As we learned last week, we must have the right perspective. The right perspective involves a proper evaluation of our own life to ensure that we're in right standing with the Him; it's not just our perspective about "others." We must evaluate ourselves.

Why must we make sure that we're in right standing with the Lord when we are angry or face adversity?

Question
3

When we have the right perspective and know that we're in right standing with the Lord, then we can properly deal with anger, frustration, disappointment, and anything



that comes our way. Sometimes we're in the wrong ourselves and need to be corrected. At other times, we may face a situation that we can never resolve amicably because the resolution depends upon another person. In such cases, we must forgive and turn it over to the Lord. God has given mankind the ability to make choices—even bad ones. Although some may seem to get away with their bad choices that have hurt us, justice will always be served by the Lord in the end.

Therefore, we should never bottle up our anger, but deal with it by turning the situation over to Him. When we bottle up our anger, the results are never "**good**." Usually, we become bitter, jaded, more frustrated, and perhaps even end up blaming God. For those situations which we cannot reconcile this side of heaven, let's resolve to turn them over to the Lord and allow Him to deal with

them on His timetable.

Finally, if we must seek counsel about a particular situation, we must make absolutely sure that it's godly counsel based upon Scripture. Many times, people will appeal to the court of popular public opinion to find some type of comfort and resolution. Generally, they will do one of two things when they seek public input. First, they will tell their story to others and seek to manipulate them so that they will agree with the opinions they hold and the actions they propose. They don't truly want advice or counsel. They want justification for their own response! Second, they will often collect opinions of others and apply the one which seems best to them without ever evaluating the soundness of the advice. These two approaches will never resolve a problem. In fact, they will most likely make it worse!

On the contrary, we need to seek godly counsel from someone who is well-grounded in Scripture and has a consistent relationship with the Lord as evidenced in how they live led by the Spirit. Such people will speak the truth according to Scripture no matter whether we want to hear it or not. They may also provide a different perspective of the situation that will help us evaluate things correctly and know how to respond in a godly way. Above all, they will respond with reason rather than emotion always points us to a relationship with Christ. When we follow these dos and don'ts in how we respond to adversity in our lives, it doesn't mean that trouble will instantly flee. But it does mean that we can live in a way in which we **have regard for good things in the sight of all men.**

What characteristics should we look for in someone from whom we seek counsel?

Question
4

Romans 12:18-20

OVERCOME WITH GOOD CHARACTER:

Paul now exhorts us to **live peaceably with all men if it is possible as much as it depends upon us** (v. 18). To **live peaceably** means that we must lay aside our opinions and preferences at times for the sake of the gospel to attain unity. It does not mean that we lay aside the truth of Scripture or compromise our integrity to avoid conflict. Frequently, the world will assail us for standing on the principles of Scripture and the reaction will often be harsh. In this case, we must remain consistent with God's Word no matter what may happen and endure whatever persecution we may face. But when it comes to our personal preferences, that's an entirely different story. In [12:10](#), Paul



writes, “Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another.” It’s not about us; it’s not even really about the “church.” It’s about Christ! We should prefer one another for the sake of the gospel—to see people connected and transformed by Christ.

Because we live in a fallen world and God has given us the freedom to make choices, it’s not always **possible to live peaceably with** others for the simple fact that we cannot control what they believe, what they say, and what they do. Paul’s point in stating his admonition this way is to focus our attention on what we can control: *ourselves*. We can control our perspective, the choices that we make, and the actions we perform and the words we say. This doesn’t mean that we shouldn’t try to get along with others or that we can simply write some people off as hopeless with whom we’ll never be able to get along. On the contrary, Paul urges *us* to do what *we* can—**as far as it depends upon us!** If we want to deal effectively with an adverse situation in a Christ-like manner, we must begin with the only things over which we have control: our attitude, actions, and speech.

Why is it important for us to look at both a resolution to an adverse situation as well as our response?

Question
5

Once again, Paul reiterates that we should not seek revenge or retaliate. The Lord Himself will dispense justice and He will come to our defense on behalf of a truly unjust cause. Thus, he warns us **not avenge** ourselves, but instead to **give place to** God’s **wrath** (v. 19). To make sure that we don’t misunderstand whose **wrath** we should **give place to**, Paul quotes from [Deuteronomy 32:35](#): “**Vengeance is mine, I will repay; says the Lord.**” In other words, we must not become angry ourselves, but allow God to dispense justice—just as He does mercy and grace. As the perfect Judge, God is not susceptible to human motives, emotions, or partiality; He is not blinded by incomplete and inaccurate information. He can see the heart. Therefore, God is in the best position

to offer judgment and we should wait on His pronouncement. God will extend grace and mercy to those who respond to His call to repent, but He will also uphold justice against those who reject Him. They will suffer His **wrath** based upon their own choice to continue unabated in their sin.

Because we have control over our own actions and represent Christ, we should respond with **good**. Paul cites [Proverbs 25:21-22](#) which provides a clear picture of what this goodness should entail: “**If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing, you will heap coals of fire on his head**” (v. 20). The **good** that we ought to direct toward our enemy is clear in this context. However, many people misunderstand the reference to **heap coals of fire on his head**. We’ve all heard the colloquial phrase: “Kill them with kindness.” The acts of kindness behind this phrase typically have an ulterior and deceitful motive when we actually examine them closely. Culture believes that we should treat people kindly who mistreated us because it angers them and produces torment—in other words it kills them to have their enemy act so kindly! In reality, such a motive is nothing less than revenge, which Paul warns us directly against in this very passage! Even if we treat people kindly, it’s no guarantee that they will take notice and understand the reason behind their actions. They may not know they have even wronged us. Even more likely, they may not even give their wrongdoing a second thought. We ourselves have then become consumed with “revenge” through kind deeds and it then begins to torment us when it has no effect on them!

To **heap** burning **coals** in the biblical sense means that our actions should seek to lead others to repentance. Burning **coals**, therefore, signify repentance and cleansing one from sin. Isaiah’s lips, for example, were touched by burning **coals** because he lived among a wicked generation and recognized his own sinfulness in the presence of the Lord ([Isa 6:5-7](#)). Thus, our purpose should always be to spur repentance rather than seek revenge. Through **good** deeds and acts of kindness, we may lead some to repentance in Christ. Some, however, may never repent and continue to mistreat us. If this happens, we must continue to respond with goodness while allowing God to be the one who exercises His **wrath**.

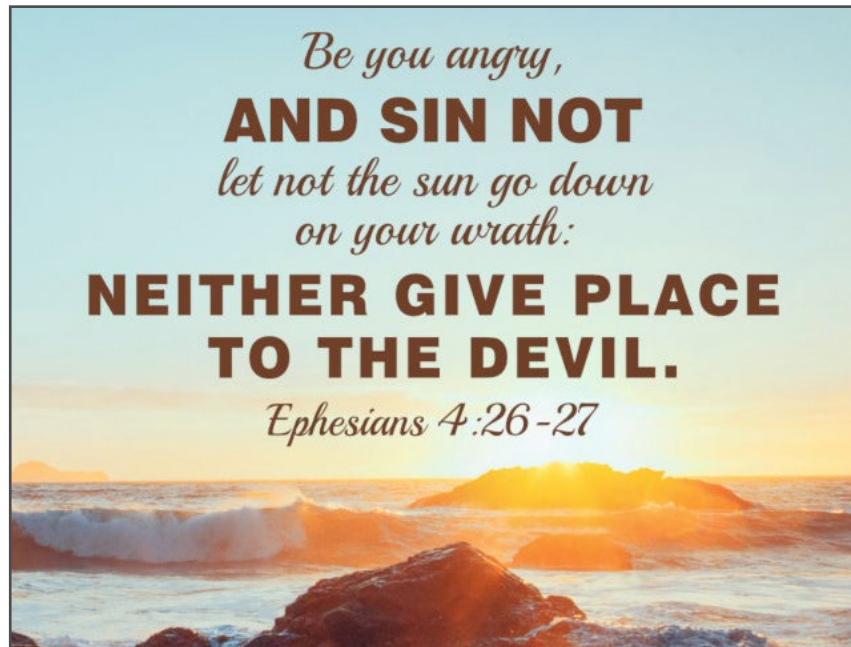
Why should our focus in adversity always be restoration by leading someone to repentance?

Question
6

Romans 12:21

OVERCOME WITH GOOD CONDUCT:

Paul concludes this section on human relationships by imploring us **not to be**



overcome by evil, but to overcome evil with good (v. 21). Through Christ, we must **overcome** the world through both good character and good conduct. First, we must keep ourselves from sinning (i.e., being **overcome by evil**). Anger can lead to a whole host of problems, but most important it provides an easy target for sin to enter our lives.

This is why Paul tells us to deal with our anger so that it does not "give place to the devil" ([Eph 4:27](#)). As we saw earlier in this lesson, we must begin addressing adversity by first examining our own lives and determining if we are in right standing with the Lord!

How can anger lead to or produce sin?

Question
7

Second, we must actively seek to **overcome evil** with our **good** conduct. In the previous verse, Paul used [Proverbs 25](#) to show how we are to meet the needs of our enemies in hopes of leading them to repentance. We can point to no greater example of this than Jesus. Certainly, Jesus met the physical needs of people in the form of feeding the hungry, curing the sick, healing the blind and lame, delivering from demons, and raising the dead. Jesus exhibited extraordinary compassion. But most of these people to whom Jesus showed compassion weren't outrightly hostile toward Him although all were sinners and needed a relationship with Him.

Yet, Jesus endured the greatest act of grace and compassion ever conceived for both His "friends" and His "enemies." In His moral perfection and goodness, Jesus died for the ungodly and unrighteous. Scripture even notes the rarity in which a man would perhaps die for a "righteous" person ([Rom 5:7](#)). But Christ died for all so that we when

repented of our sins we might have life in Him! Let us emulate Jesus' goodness when we face adversity in our own lives so that we can point people to Him. In Christ, we will find the strength to **overcome**. So, let's **overcome** with the right practice that reflects His holy character.

How has Christ helped you to overcome adversity with goodness in your life?

Question
8

Inspire

In the introduction, we learned the vast differences between good and evil portrayed in a comic book versus that of Scripture. Comics present people as without a choice and most often helpless to respond to the power of evil. This is not the case in life which is clearly shown in Scripture. We have a choice of how we will respond. And if we have a relationship with Christ, He has not left us powerless and helpless. He has provided everything we need to overcome. To overcome injustice and adversity we must look to Christ. We can certainly use the earthly means and platforms He has afforded us to address relevant issues and exact change. But we must do so with impeccable conduct in which we exercise integrity by remaining holy and blameless in our walk so that it glorifies Him.

If restitution doesn't occur in this life, we are not to take matters into our own hands which often leads to sin and more injustice. On the contrary, we are to surrender the matter to the Lord who will judge justly in the end. Scripture calls us to point people to Christ—even our enemies. We can only point people to Christ effectively when we are in right standing ourselves. Therefore, as we go through the remainder of the months in 2021, let us seek to overcome evil with good and not to allow ourselves to be overcome by evil no matter how great the temptation may be. Christ has already won the victory. In Him, we can overcome. So, let that ability to overcome in Christ then shine through our conduct as we deal with adversity whenever it may arise.

Incorporate

Why is it good to have a general plan for addressing adversity even before we face a specific situation? What plan have you developed based on Scripture?

Why must we not dwell upon the past but still think carefully about how we have dealt with adversity in the past? What have you learned from the things you've faced?

How can our good conduct lead someone to repentance when coupled with the gospel? What should we do if they don't respond by repenting?

JANUARY 2021

WRITTEN AND PUBLISHED BY
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF FORT WORTH

FOR MORE INFORMATION
OR FOR QUESTIONS
PLEASE CONTACT
MIKENEAL@FBCFW.ORG

INTERACTIVE PDF AVAILABLE ONLINE AT
CURRICULUM.FBCFW.ORG

Visit us on the web
www.fbcfw.org



@FirstBaptistFortWorth



@FBCFW



@FBC_FortWorth

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF FORT WORTH
A place to belong!

5001 NE LOOP 820 • FORT WORTH, TX • 76137
(817) 485-7711 • INFO@FBCFW.ORG