



# The Christian Life Institute

Friday, May 1

Thank you for joining us today, as we end our series, at the Christian Life Institute, presented through 15-minute encouraging messages three times per week, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 12:45 Central time, on practical ways to grow forward in Christ in uncertainty, unpredictability, and upheaval.

This message is entitled: Victorious Overcomers

Over the last 4-5 weeks, beginning on March 25<sup>th</sup> we have been presenting a series of 15-minute encouraging messages on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 12:45 Central time, on practical ways to grow forward in Christ in uncertainty, unpredictability, and upheaval. We have covered a variety of topics, including How Then Shall We Live, Perseverance and Community, Endurance, among many others all of which are available on YouTube and the PDFs are available at The Christian Life Institute on the Media Page. As we end this series, our focus today is how to persevere, re-enter, as restrictions are lifted in some areas, and live as the victorious, overcomers we are according to Scripture. In 1 John 5:4 we read, “for everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.”

The term victorious in the Greek implies a *conquest* – an expression of *victory*, resulting from receiving (obeying) the faith Christ imparts (i.e. His in-worked *persuasion*). The term “overcomer” in Greek means, “to conquer, prevail, triumph, overcome.” When we combine these words, we find a message of a triumphant, conquering victory. The implication is that we can live in this world, in but not of, as a victorious overcomer. Why is this so important for us as Christ-followers to digest, appropriate and own in our day-to-day in this world life?

First, we must choose to recognize that this world is not for us and is not our friend. John writes “do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along

with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever” (1 John 2:15-17). We know that living in this world is hard and that it draws us in through all of its distractions, as we shared in the message on Monday. We also see in this passage the pull of the flesh and how the world draws us through our flesh and its desires. We know from Paul’s letters that the flesh is antithetical to the Spirit. Our flesh will never draw us close to Christ, in fact, our flesh will pull us away from Christ. Living in intentionality, as we shared in the message on Wednesday, is of the utmost importance in standing fast in the power of the Spirit.

Paul learned that his flesh would be a constant battleground and that his exhortative messages and the testimony of his own life would need to be the cry that “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me (Galatians 2:20). You and I, as Christ-followers, have been crucified in Christ. It is not you and I who live (metaphorically speaking) but Christ who lives in us. We probably have heard these words too many times. We are probably too familiar with 2 Corinthians 5:17, “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.”

We also know from Paul that we battle against spiritual forces. In Ephesians 6:12 we read, “for we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.” Paul’s remedy in those familiar verses in 6:10-17 is to put on the armor of God, stand, and pray. What equips us to stand and pray is the digested truth that we are victorious overcomers and the Who - Whom equips us, is the Holy Spirit within us. This power in us includes *power to gain more and more victory over sin* in our lives. We must understand that while we are in a spiritual battle, and we have the ultimate victory in Christ and we must believe that if we choose to walk in the Spirit, as Paul says in Galatians 5:16, “but I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh and in Romans 6:14 and 1 Corinthians 15:17 “sin will have no dominion over you,” even though we will never be perfect in this life we can live as victorious overcomers.

Living as a victorious overcomer is a choice, attitude, and lifestyle. This victorious overcomer life in Christ requires a whole-hearted commitment to Christ and a relinquishment to the power of the Holy Spirit within – as He is our Helper, our Guide, our Truth (See, John 14). He will make your way and

my way as we seek to follow Him. We must first remember to align ourselves vertically in the Truth and Hope, who is Christ. We then pause, breathe and remind ourselves that He who is in us has equipped us with the ability to turn into and rest in Him who is exceedingly abundantly able to do more than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us (Ephesians 3:20).

As we shared on Monday, The Christian Life Institute exists to spread a passion for growth in Christ and the cultivation of a deep, rich, and intimate relationship that stems from one's commitment to one's personal, spiritual formation. As we end this series of messages today, we invite you to pray about your support of the Christian Life Institute. There are numerous free resources on the website and many to come, Lord willing, as we are in our infancy. We pray that you would choose during disruption, discontent, upheaval, unpredictability – in every circumstance and season to live more intentionally of placing God in His place of honor and of power and to have a confident expectation of His saving power and life-changing grace. Let us choose to have our whole heart turned toward God and draw away from reactions and distractions which so easily entangle, corrupt, and become idols in our lives. Pray for intimacy with your Savior. Pray for His transforming work and growth in Him. Find community (even when virtual) so you can grow hand-in-hand with another, as “we are members of His body.” Pray the Lord provide you with an intentional heart and pray for the courage to step into the fullness of Him who loves you beyond all measure.

Let us close with Romans 8:31-39:

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that

neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

As we prepare for re-entry let us remember each day is a day to honor Christ. Each day is a day to reflect His love. Each day is a day to, as Christ-followers, have opportunities to, through His strength and His power reflect Him to a broken and hurting world – so, let us persevere and come together, even when technology weary. Let us agree together to:

“Walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7)

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

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