

1 John 5:4 (NKJV)

⁴For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

In **2 Timothy 3:1** The apostle Paul says, *“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come.”*

He then describes in **2 Timothy 3:2-5** what those perilous times will look like

- I believe this is the world in which we are now living

In this series, we will look at what the Bible says about being an overcomer during perilous times!

2 Timothy 3:1 (NKJV)

But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:

- Know – to know something, emphatically and with absolute certainty
- Something so urgent that it **MUST** be known **MUST** be recognized and **MUST** be acknowledged

The Holy Spirit is saying in this verse is that the following information should not be considered optional

- He wants us to fully grasp what He is saying
- He wants us to be prepared and not be taken off guard
- He is not saying this to scare us but to prepare us
- He wants us equipped for the last day's storm ahead

After Paul writes to the end times church to be emphatically aware of the times in which they are living, he lists the characteristics of a lost society that has run amuck

2 Timothy 3:2–9; 12-13 (NKJV)

²For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! ⁶For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, ⁷always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁸Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; ⁹but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was.

¹²Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. ¹³But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

- We touched on these signs of the times in the first segment of this series
- Now I would like to look at these characteristics in-depth

If we are unaware of what's going on, we will be sucked into the same lifestyle that the rest of the world is

2 Timothy 3:10–11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ But you have carefully followed (*fully known*) my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance,
¹¹ persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of *them* all the Lord delivered me.

- Paul used himself as an example of how to survive and even thrive in perilous times

Fully Known – a word which depicts one who has closely followed someone else with the intention to replicate his or her life

- Paul was reminding Timothy of their close proximity over many years observing moments when Paul was assailed
- Timothy witnessed how the apostle remarkably overcame in the midst of these attacks time and time again

He witnessed how the power of the Holy Spirit and God's Word had been sufficient to empower, sustain, and give his spiritual mentor and example strength to overcome every situation

- Is there anyone in your life to whom you are close enough to observe this kind of personal victory?
- A leader who is bearing fruit in their lives.
- Do you have someone who you can turn to and ask advice on how to endure the trials and make good choices in life?
- Is there someone helping you to fight the fight of faith?

Hebrews 6:12 (NKJV)

¹² that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

- *Imitate* – depicts the way an actor would study a subject in preparation for a role in a play
- The actor starts to act like the person they are portraying
- The writer of Hebrews is not referring to a casual type of following a leader
- He is implying an intentional study of the deeds, words, actions, and thoughts of another person
- Discovering how that person thinks in life
- Then replicating that in your life

This is something that will take discipline, effort, faith, and patience

Doctrine – depicts teaching that is applicable to one's life

- One which is solidly founded on God's words as revealed to man
- Not only theological thoughts but the foundation and reason he was able to overcome every circumstance in life
- This *Doctrine* was something that Paul believed, embraced, and *acted* upon – the bedrock of his life

Matthew 7:24–27 (NKJV)

²⁴ “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:

²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. ²⁶ “But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

- Jesus warned that wind, rain, and floods will come in life
- But if a person’s life is built upon God’s word, he can survive any storm
- All that he is and possesses is built on that immovable rock
- On the other hand, if a person’s life is built on a bad foundation it is like building on sinking sand
- When the rains, wind, and floods come, he will experience great loss
- His shaky faith won’t be sufficient to hold him in place

Manner of Life – Timothy had been close enough to personally observe how this leader’s faith carried him victoriously through every situation

Purpose – this depicts a purposeful plan for life

- His life was not lived by happenstance
- He knew he was born for a purpose and consecrated his life to the fulfillment of that divine plan
- Regardless of the bumps he encountered along the way

Acts 26:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ “Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision

Faith – a powerful force that is forward directed and never in retreat

- Regardless of the attacks and opposition orchestrated against him

Longsuffering – a patient restraint of anger – forbearance or patience

- A candle with a very long wick that can burn for an extended period of time
- A person ready to *forbear* and *suffer long* as he *patiently* waits for an event or result to transpire

When fulfilling the call of God on one's life it doesn't matter what other people do or what disappointments may come in relationships

- Each person is faced with a choice to surrender to the Holy Spirit

Love (Charity) – the Love of God

- A love that gives regardless of how it is responded to
- One that may never be thanked or acknowledged
- It knows no limits or boundaries
- It is far, wide, high, and deep
- It is a self-sacrificial love that moves one into action

In a day where even many in the church are prone to be selfish and self-seeking it is imperative that we learn to function in the *agape* love of God

- If Paul could love difficult and disappointing people so can you and me

Patience – the ability to stay and remain in one’s spot; the ability to keep a steadfast position; or the attitude of one who has resolved to maintain territory that has been gained at any cost – *Endurance*

- To maintain a military position in the face of fierce combat
- To definitely stick it out regardless of the pressure against the one who is “*holding fast*”
- An attitude that holds on, holds out, outlasts, preserves, and hangs in there
- Never giving up, refusing to surrender
- Turning down every opportunity to quit
- It depicts a person who is under a heavy load but refuses to bend or break, no matter what

Paul and many of the early believers faced tremendous persecution and confronted by hostile powers that were arrayed against them

- Culture, pagan religion, government, unsaved family, and friends
- They were under constant pressure to forfeit their faith and return to their old ways

The early Church called patience the queen of all virtues

These believers knew that if they had this quality working in them it wasn’t a question of if they would win their battles, it was only a question of when

It is one of the major weapons you and I can wield to outlast any difficulty or time of stress and pressure that comes our way

Persecutions – the actions of a hunter who strives to follow after, apprehend, to capture, or to kill and animal

- A well-planned strategy to track down in order to abuse, hurt, or apprehend

Afflictions – emotional suffering, struggles, or mental agony

- Circumstances, even other people had put Paul under a tremendous amount of emotional or mental grief
- Nonetheless, it all passed, and he had remained unaffected, secure in the love of God
- Possessing a sound mind in spite of it all

Endured – to bear up under as one who is under a heavy load

- Used to depict an undercurrent of a river that carries one downstream to a place of safety, away from danger

‘and *Out of them All the Lord Delivered me*’

By using these three words Paul was saying that he was able to escape or make an exit from every single event miraculously

- The Lord snatched or dragged him out of danger
- The Lord intervened with a rescue operation to remove him from physical danger

If he could experience this kind of power again and again that same power will work for anyone who will believe it and embrace it

The Power of Staying on Track

2 Timothy 3:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

- Paul was telling Timothy that every jot, tittle, letter, or character recorded in God's word were able to make you wise
- Not one mark of ink on a page should be overlooked
- Each one of them is holy, sacred, and filled with the awesome power of God
- They are full of might and able to produce "*beyond human*" results
- Able to give special insight into all of life's questions

Something that is progressive, including but beyond eternal salvation

- Providing deliverance and wholeness in every part of life

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV)

¹⁶ All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Inspiration – spirit or breath, life force, energy, or power – the powerful force of God

The Jewish version of this exact word is used to describe the creative life-giving power of God in the creation story

– **Genesis 1:2; 2:7**

- Restoring a world that had become chaotic

When Scripture is believed and embraced in one's life the very creative power and nature of God Himself is available to be released in our lives

Romans 8:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Inspiration – also used to describe a musician's breath while blowing into a musical instrument

- Paul is in fact describing God's musical presence in the Scriptures
- Recalling the divine moments that the Lord blew on humans who delivered His Word
- You and I need only to speak or sing the scriptures to release the Rhema power of God's word

Depression can go, mood swings can be positively changed, unpleasant sounds in your life and home can be changed

- Your life can be invaded with the sounds of Heaven!
 - He has ordained *strength* or power in *praise*
- **Psalm 8:2; Matthew 21:16**

Inspiration – the Greek word was also used to depict fragrance or aroma

- The very breath of God Himself is in the Bible
- The creative power, music, and fragrance of heaven itself
- All scripture is God breathed!

Its like when you blow up a balloon

- Little by little as you blow into the balloon you physically change its shape
- It becomes bigger and bigger
- You would tie a not in it to retain its shape
- If you were to have the contents of the balloon analyzed you would find more than air
- You would find some of the person's DNA inside
- The very substance of the person who breathed into it!

When we speak or sing God's word we are releasing the very substance, power, creativity, music, and fragrance of God Himself

Matthew 5:17–18 (NKJV)

¹⁷ “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸ For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

Matthew 24:35 (NKJV)

³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

When the word of God is working in you, it will heal you, remove the hidden scars in your soul, and undo anything that a calloused world or society has done to you

Profitable – an absolute requirement, essential, mandatory, or obligatory

- The word of God is an absolute requirement in a believers life!

Doctrine – A well-packed teaching that has full applicability for every part of one's life

Correction – to correct, to set straight, to erect, to set upright, or to put back on an even level

God's word has the power to lay hold of a person who has been knocked flat by life, and through correction, set that person upright on his feet again!

The word of God has the ability to make you strong, keep you strong, enlighten you and change your circumstances

Hebrews 12:11 AMP

¹¹ For the time being no discipline brings joy, but seems sad *and* painful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness [right standing with God and a lifestyle and attitude that seeks conformity to God's will and purpose].

Instruction – to train, to educate, or to give a child everything necessary for life so he or she can be sent out fully equipped to live successfully

- God’s word will work like a parent, giving us the wisdom to make course corrections in life
- It will keep us heading in the right direction to our final destination

Righteousness – those who live by a righteous standard that results in upright living

- The world we live in is more and more upside down and inside out
- God’s word has the ability to take an unsuccessful, knocked out individual and set them on their feet again

Complete (perfect) – complete, mature, and fully functioning

- Scripture has the ability to bring us into a place of greater maturity
- Equipping us to handle any challenge we encounter in life

Thoroughly equipped (furnished) – completely and thoroughly furnished or outfitted for a long journey

- The word would be used in describing a sailing boat that was made ready for a long-distance trip
- Completely supplied for the entire journey

2 Corinthians 4:7–10, 16-18 (NKJV)

⁷ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. ⁸ *We are* hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—¹⁰ always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day.

¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen *are* temporary, but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

- One thing is for sure: we were not born at this time in God's prophetic history by accident
 - Rather than fret because it seems the world has gone haywire we must embrace the anointing of God
 - He will empower us to live as conquerors and overcomers
 - He will lead us to reach out to others in need
 - Regardless of what we see or hear, Jesus is Lord, and His word and Kingdom will prevail
 - We are to live amongst a crooked and perverse generation and shine, holding forth the word of life
- **Philippians 2:15-16**

Ask yourself :

What person has the greatest spiritual influence in my life?

What exactly have I learned from that person?

How have I influenced and made a difference in the life of others both in the past and presently?

Am I staying on track with the things I learned earlier in life or have I started to drift?

Does the Bible have the prime authority in my life?

Am I living in obedience to the Word of God?

Do I have a consistent Bible reading and prayer life?

What long-term correction have the Scriptures produced in my life?

Am I allowing God to keep me on the right path in life?

2 Peter 1:3–4 (NKJV)

³ as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴ by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust.