

## 1 John 5:4 (NKJV)

<sup>4</sup>For 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 in the midst of perilous times!

## 2 Timothy 3:1 (NKJV)

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

- Know – to know something definitely, 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 days 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)

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

<sup>12</sup>Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. <sup>13</sup>But 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

We've talked about Lovers of Themselves, and Lovers of Money, Boastful, Proud, Blasphemous, and Disobedient to Parents

Now let's look at Unthankful, Unholy

*Unthankful: In our text the original language depicts a person who once had a thankful attitude, full of grace and gratitude, but now has thoughts of Unthankfulness, ingratitude, and unappreciative. This is a person who is not thankful for the blessings he has received or people who have treated them kindly – ungrateful*

- In fact, they have become so ungrateful that they now feel they are *entitled* to everything

Think about it, why would a person be thankful for anything if everything is owed them, and they feel entitled to everything that has been given them

- This is a person that we may call a narcissist

Physiotherapist, Sandy Hotchkiss authored what she calls, the Seven Deadly Sins of Narcissism

*Shamelessness: Shame speaks of “the misery of a pervasive personal flaw.” In narcissists, shame is so intolerable that the means have been developed not to experience it at all. They may come across as indifferent and amoral until a minor incident or social slight unmasks what they really are — extremely shame-sensitive without the ability to process shame in healthy ways.*

*Magical Thinking: Narcissists often create an alternate, romanticized reality they can manipulate and control in which they play an idealized role, using distortion and illusion known as magical thinking. A more hurtful way they can distort reality is to employ projection — a process by which they transfer to someone else whatever evokes shameful feelings in themselves.*

*Arrogance: For a narcissist “...if someone else’s stock goes up, theirs automatically goes down. Conversely, if they are feeling deflated, they can reinflate themselves by diminishing, debasing, or degrading someone else. This is the reason narcissists are often judgmental, perfectionistic, and power-hungry.”*

*Envy: A narcissist may try to use contempt, often unconsciously, to minimize a person’s achievements, often presenting a laundry list of that person’s flaws so the narcissist is restored to a superior position.*

*Entitlement: Narcissists hold unreasonable expectations of particularly favorable treatment and automatic compliance from others because they believe they are uniquely special. Defiance against their will or what they want is to them an injury that deserves a display of rage or self-righteous aggression.*

*Exploitation: For a narcissist, “exploitation can take many forms but always involves the using of others without regard for their feelings or interests. Often the other person is in a subservient position, where resistance would be difficult or even impossible. Sometimes the subservience is not so much real as assumed.... It may or may not involve deceit but quite often includes distortions of reality.”*

Bad Boundaries: *Narcissists do not recognize that they have boundaries “...and that others are separate and are not extensions of themselves. Others either exist to meet their needs or may as well not exist at all. Those who offer the possibility of some sort of gratification will be treated as if they are part of the narcissist and will be expected, automatically, to live up to that person’s expectations. In the mind of a narcissist, there is no boundary between Self and other.”*

People who believe they are *entitled* may feel the need for others to give them positive reinforcement and reaffirmation of their self-worth, whether or not they merit it

- They do not respond well to criticism, even when it is constructive
- They feel it is their “*right*” to question and challenge authority figures and institutions, as well as the legitimacy of the people who run those institutions

Not only can this mindset erode a country’s economic system, but it also hinders men and women from reaping the benefit of God’s higher system of effort and reward

I am not talking about helping those who need assistance and cannot help themselves

- Scripture commands us to help the poor
- Here in our nation and around the world

Many today are seeking their own rights and their own ways, and it is leaving them dissatisfied, empty and disillusioned

### Luke 6:35 (NKJV)

<sup>35</sup> But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.

- Here Jesus connects Unthankfulness with being evil
- The way God sees it, it is a spiritual crime to not be thankful
- Even if it seems like we have little compared to someone else's blessings

Even if we've worked hard for what we have we should be thankful for the opportunities and jobs that God has given to us

- There are people all over the world who do not have shelter, warmth, or clean water
- When you remember that it will help you be thankful

The person in the bottom 5% of the American income distribution is still richer than 68% of the rest of the world

### Colossians 3:15 (NKJV)

<sup>15</sup> And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

### 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NKJV)

<sup>18</sup> in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Even if we are facing a present need at this moment, we have many reasons to be thankful

Unholy: *This word translated from the original language depicts a person who is irreverent and disrespectful. One who has lost all fear of God. Someone whose inward thoughts and outward actions have become ill-mannered, impure, unclean, lewd, indecent, crude, coarse, vulgar, offensive, and rude.*

- Someone whose words and actions are unholy, unsacred, impure, and unsanctioned by God
- A people who have developed a casual attitude towards words and actions
- It actually depicts a society with no checks and balances

As the fear of God becomes more extinct, society will throw off moral restraint and engorge itself in areas that are condemned in the sight of God

### **Romans 1:32 (NKJV)**

<sup>32</sup> who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

This verse describes a people who have knowledge of the Bible but have cast it off because they find it inconvenient or don't want to be controlled by it

- They wish to put it aside and do what they desire
- They will also encourage and promote unholy activities to others
- A global campaign to endorse sin and encourage the unrestrained acceptance to every immoral lifestyle
- They have no regard for the time-tested, authoritative voice of God's word – **Reprobate**

## The Process Leading to a Reprobate Mind

### Romans 1:21 (NKJV)

<sup>21</sup> because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile (*vain*) in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

- Knew – acquaintance or general knowledge, not personal knowledge
- Not the same knowledge as one who knows Jesus as Lord
- A society that possessed a general knowledge of a god-fearing attitude
- One in which most people would recognize or acknowledge God and His blessings upon them

Paul is describing a society that in large has arrived at the conclusion that the common knowledge of God is out of fashion with the times

As a result, they put God off to the sight and out of mind  
The societal trend is to stop giving Him the recognition that is due Him

- Vain – ruined and error filled
- Imaginations – mental activity, reasonings, deliberations, calculations, or thinking processes

These word being used together describe something like a “*chemical reaction*” that will always occur if the right elements are mixed together

- Eventually leading to ruin on multiple levels



## Proverbs 1:7 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge, *But* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

- When a society respects and acknowledges God, it results in enlightenment
- The opposite is true and carries its own cause-and-effect pattern
- When we drift away from the knowledge of God it results in an environment of intellectual nonsense
- We come to conclusions that don't make rational or spiritual sense

This deceptive process spreads throughout all of society – courts, education, families, entertainment, business, government, and religion

- Eventually tainting all the deliberations, calculations, and thinking processes of the general population

When the knowledge and fear of God is removed it creates a vacuum, causing intellectual and spiritual darkness to fill the void

- **I am not saying** that people who don't believe in God are not intelligent
- **I am saying** that when brilliant people drift far from the truth they start to cast off restraint, passing into the realm of foolishness and deception
- They see themselves as highly intelligent “*progressive*” thinkers

However, because they reject the truth of scripture and embrace their own conclusions their foolish heart is darkened

According to Paul's writing, inspired by the Holy Spirit, a society that moves away from God always moves towards deception

- Their believing and reasoning processes become defective
- They ultimately become manipulated by the lies of demonic forces at work

The society eventually becomes "*darkened*", eventually giving place to depravity, immorality, and a myriad of ungodly behaviors

Reprobate – a mind that has become so tarnished, tainted, hardened, and both spiritually and mentally compromised that it loses its ability to arrive at sensible, godly conclusions

- This is why it's important to guard what we expose our minds to
- When we give our mind over to this type of thinking it becomes "*unfit*" to discern what is morally right and wrong
- You can be intelligent yet morally debased
- The enemy is using the voices of influential people in entertainment and media to seduce us
- Our children and young adults are extremely susceptible

## **Remember Unthankfulness always leads to Unholiness**

Always remember that God is the source of all of your blessings

- It will cause you to live more uprightly and soberly
- A persons actions are deeply affected by what he believes
- If you believe that you are accountable to God and will be judged by Him you will live differently

Your conduct matters

**Hebrews 6:2 (NKJV)**

<sup>2</sup> of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

- Eternal Judgement is one of the basic doctrines of the Church
- It is a reality that everyone will face
- Believers will stand before the Judgement Seat of Christ
- Unbelievers will stand before the Great White Throne Judgement
  - **Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:11-15**
- Knowing these truths will greatly affect the way you live
- If we ignore them it will open the door for us to live an unholy life
- We are accountable for our deeds!

Many Christians believe that God loves them so much that He will ignore their sinful choices and never hold them accountable for their wrong actions and behavior

**Romans 6:1–2, 12-13 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup> What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup> Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

<sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. <sup>13</sup> And do not present your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God.

A casual approach to God is usually an irreverent approach that doesn't include the thought of accountability or eternity

- This is why some Christians do things that God wouldn't approve of without any sense of shame or conviction
- We can't just do what we wish, believing God will simply overlook it
- We cannot take Christ's sacrificial death in vain

Remember Unthankfulness will always lead to Unholiness!

## **How to avoid Unthankfulness and Unholiness**

*Do I feel treated unfairly because I am not able to quickly achieve the lifestyle it took my parents generation 30 or more years to achieve?*

- Do I believe that I have an inherent right to those things that others had to work hard for?
- Do I exhibit gratitude for what God and others have done for me?
- Do my children or grandchildren have a feeling of entitlement?
- Or do they understand they need to work hard to be rewarded and be thankful for what they have received in life?

***Do I require others to give me unending positive reinforcement and reaffirmation of my self-worth?***

- We all need encouragement from time to time, but...
- Do I expect others to pour encouragement into me all of the time as if no one else needs it but me?
- It is time to get your eyes off of yourself
- You are too self-focused

**Philippians 2:3, 4 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.*

<sup>4</sup> *Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*

- Carefully evaluate your life
- Am I too demanding that others constantly recognize me with nonstop, positive reinforcement?
- Look around you and see who you can encourage and reinforce

When you constantly deal with feeling unappreciated there is a strong chance you are not recognizing the needs or sacrifices of others

- When we think of others it frees us up from a great deal of inner struggles
- It will bring you joy to know that you have made a difference in the life of someone else
- Become a giver not just a taker

***Do I feel I have an inherent right to challenge authoritarian figures and institutions and the ethics of the people who run them? Especially if you feel you have not received benefits you believe you are entitled to receive?***

Peter and Jude both state that people at the end of the age would speak “evil” of dignitaries and authority

– 2 Peter 2:11-12; Jude 1:9-10

- In both cases they are referring to blasphemous, derogatory behavior
- Nasty, shameful, or disrespectful speech

If you are going to do well in life you must learn to cooperate and respect those who have been invested with authority in your life

- Learn to get along with others
- Church, school, workplace, family, etc.
- Employer, manager, mother, father, pastor, teacher, etc.

Ask yourself, am I perceived as respectful or disrespectful by what others hear coming out of my mouth?

***Do you think Jesus finds you to be a grateful, thankful, appreciative person?***

- Based on what He hears me say, pray, and think?
- Does He see me demonstrate gratitude?
- Does He see me being thankful for what I have in my life?
- Does He see me showing appreciation and thankfulness to others who have been a blessing to me?

***Do I have a serious attitude about sin and its consequences, or have I become to casual about godless behaviors that are not sanctioned by God?***

- Have I become casual about issues that God is not casual about?
- Unholy, impure, unclean, lewd, indecent, crude, coarse, vulgar, offensive, or rude behavior
- Have I lost all sense of shame over sinful thoughts and behavior in my life?
- Do I regularly violate God's moral code

When a person loses the fear of God he developed a casual attitude toward sin

***Do I ever seriously contemplate that eternity is in front of me and that I will give an account of my life to God?***

### **Matthew 25:19 (NKJV) Parable of the Talents**

<sup>19</sup> After a long time the lord of those servants came and **settled** accounts with them.

- Reckoned (KJV) – a bookkeeping term – to settle accounts
- Like a P & L statement
- An examination of the books
- A day is coming when each of us will give an accounting for our lives
- We will be evaluated to see what we did with the gifts and talents God gave us
- The fact we will be standing before Christ is proof we will be in heaven – He has done that
- Rewards will be based on examination