

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 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, 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)

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

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

Now let's talk about Unloving, Unforgiving, and Slanderers

KJV – *without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers*

Unloving (without natural affection) – *the original language speaks of one who has a lack of devotion to family, a lack of commitment to one's family, the deterioration of family relationships, the loss of family affection, or the breakdown of the family*

- Individuals that would drift so far apart that they are at a point of irreconcilable differences
- Disjointed families who have lost the closeness they once had
- Problems that over time have become so difficult to fix that they just keep drifting apart
- A lack of wanting to stay together or work things out

The Holy Spirit is warning us, so we take precautions and respond with wisdom in building a strong family and protecting them from the spirit of the age

- We all are well aware of marriages and families that have been torn apart
- Children left broken hearted and shattered
- Families decimated financially

We must have eyes to see and ears to hear and respond to the warning the Holy Spirit is giving us

Perhaps your family has experienced such an attack

- Maybe you're still together yet have lost the closeness you once had
- Maybe you're doing all you can, but your spouse is moving in another direction
- Perhaps your family is strong, but you see your children and grandchildren suffering
- It is hard to want to help but not have the open door

We must accept our role as a person of prayer that will intercede on behalf of our children and grandchildren

- Stand in faith that God will move on their behalf and will eventually open a door

Any parent has the opportunity to change a downward trajectory in their home life

- Be willing to conduct an honest evaluation
- Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you
- Do whatever is necessary to preserve your family

The following information is based on 2019 U.S. statistics

Television

Statistics show that there are nearly three televisions per household

- Many families have a TV in the family room, kitchen, bedroom, and often in the kid's rooms

The day of a family sitting together to watch a TV program is almost gone

- Instead, we all gravitate to our own TV with our own program
- I'm not saying we need to be against TV
- I'm not saying having several are necessarily a sin

Ask yourself, *“Do the multiple TV sets contribute to the family spending time together, or contribute to pulling them apart?”*

Computers

More than one-third of American households have three or more computers in their home

- Do each of your children need one, or could they share?
- I'm not saying it is a crime to own more than one computer

Ask yourself, *“Are all of the computers contributing to my family spending time together, or do they contribute to pulling them apart?”*

Digital Gadgets

Statistics show that the majority of Americans spend an average of 12 hours a day in front of some type of screen

- The average person consumes five times more information every day than they did 50 years ago
- How many members of your family have digital gadgets that distract them from having interaction with each other?

Again, I'm not saying we need to be against digital gadgets

Ask yourself, *“Are all of those digital gadgets contributing to my family spending time together, or do they contribute to pulling them apart?”*

Multiple Cars

More than 35% of American households have three or more automobiles

- Yes, it is true life has become so busy that it is hard to manage with one car per household
- Mom goes one direction, dad goes the other, and when the kids are old enough, they get their own vehicle
- Do the kids all need their own vehicle, so mom and dad don't have to drive them or their too embarrassed to drive the minivan?
- There is nothing wrong with owning multiple cars if you can afford them

Ask yourself, *“Are those multiple cars contributing to my family's spending time together or pulling them apart?”*

Mobile Phones

Statistics show that more than one-third of Americans have three or more smart phones in their homes

- This leads to family members being consumed with calls, texts, and Social Media

Family members often don't talk to each other when they sit down to a meal, if they eat together at all

- They are too busy reading, sending texts, or surfing the internet
- How many mobile phones are in your family?
- Again, if you can afford multiple phones, then have them

Ask yourself, *“Are mobile phones contributing to my family spending time together or pulling us apart?”*

Internet

Statistics show that more than 90% of Americans regularly access the Internet

- Nine out of ten homes have access to the Internet
- The average usage of the internet is seven hours per day, per person
- Life has become so intertwined with the internet that we cannot easily live without it
- How many hours does your family spend on the Internet?
- I'm not against the internet

Ask yourself, *“Are the hours my family members are spending of the internet contributing to us spending time together or pulling us apart?”*

Social Media

How many people are addicted to Social Media?

Latest statistics show that the average social-media user spends two and a half hours a day on various social media platforms

- What affect do you think this has on family relationships and real-life friendships?
- What would be the response of your family to a forced fast of social media?
- Try it and see what happens to your family
- Again, I am not against social media

Ask yourself, *“Are the hours my family spends on social media contributing to our spending time together, or pulling us apart?”*

Extracurricular Activities

Statistics reveal that six out of ten children among average American households are involved in hours of extracurricular activities

- This could include, sports, music, art, and so on

Although these activities are deemed important, what is required to get children to and from these events puts a financial stress and scheduling challenges on many families

- This often leads to a disconnect between spouses
- They don't see each other because they are so busy driving kids all over

Often these activities pull the family apart and frequently add nothing to their adult lives later on

Ask yourself, “*Are the hours my family spends on extra-curricular activities contributing to our spending time together or are they a distraction that is contributing to pulling us apart?*”

Sociologists have determined that all of these things contribute to:

Deteriorating marriages and spouses drifting apart as a result of such a fast-paced lifestyle

- *They don't take time to connect in a meaningful way*

Children who feel neglected or unwanted

Disorders in children who are rushed from place to place, or spend too much time watching television, computers, digital devices, etc.

Chemical Addiction

More than 50% of the population annually missus's prescription drugs

- Rising abuse of prescription opioids
- This leads to heroin use and fuels the number of drug related deaths
- This problem is getting steadily worse reflects in increased treatment admissions, emergency room visits and overdose deaths

Revelation 9:21 (NKJV)

²¹ And they did not repent of their murders or their *sorceries* or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

- Sorceries – Magic potion, employment of drugs for any purpose, sorcery, magic, enchantment
- Drugs are BIG BUSSINESS

It is creating a society addicted to drug use to bring the peace and rest only Jesus can provide

Ask any professional family counselor or experienced schoolteacher about the state of families and children

- *The majority will tell you the family today is under attack and in serious trouble*
- *All of the social studies show that here is a downward trend for the traditional family over the past decades*

Make the decision to redeem the time

Ephesians 5:15–16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,
¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

- Redeem – *find what you need, purchase it, and get out of the marketplace quickly*
- Do what you need to do and make an exit
- Time – *someone who is willing to make full use of their time*

Paul was saying that if we implement diligence and commitment, we can redeem the time – or buy back time that has been lost

Unforgiving (Trucebreakers) *The undoing of a covenant or one who breaks a covenant*

Because Paul uses this immediately after talking about the breakdown of family, it is clear that he pictured the ultimate breakdown of covenant – Divorce

- He is stating that divorce will become rampant in the last days
- I am aware that some situations become complicated and there is no other choice
- However, we see divorce spreading like never before
- It is becoming commonplace
- This is exactly what Paul is describing
- Married couples who feel that they have become incompatible
- They have reached the point of irreconcilable differences

The introduction of the “*no-fault*” divorce in the 1970s has contributed to this rise in rampant divorce

- This made it easier than in the past
- This has caused an irreverent view on marriage in general
- Many view marriages as a vehicle of self-gratification
- They are “*lovers of their own selves*”

There is a new psychological view on marriage defined as...

- One’s primary obligation is not to one’s family but to one’s self
- It’s not about meeting the needs of spouse and family
- It is about giving self, complete happiness

“The dissolution of marriage offered the chance to make oneself over from the inside out, to refurbish and express the inner self, and to acquire certain valuable psychological assets and competencies, such as initiative, assertiveness, and a stronger and better self-image.”

– Barbara Defoe Whitehead, *The Divorce Culture*

Divorce has become a booming industry

- There are currently approximately 1.1 million divorces every year in the U.S.
- Some countries are even higher
- Divorce industry revenue is soon to exceed 11.3 B annually
- More than 40B spent annually on child-support and alimony
- More than 60,000 professionals working in the *industry*
- Administering dissolutions, facilitating negotiations, enforcing payments, etc.

Since the 1970s, nearly 1 million children per year have watched their parents’ divorce

- Studies show that these kid’s personal confidence in love, commitment and marriage is often shattered
- 89% are more likely to divorce themselves
- Statistics show that Christians are just as likely to divorce as non-Christian
- 23% of Christians get divorced two times or more

If you have fallen victim to divorce, God’s grace is present and available to restore you

He loves you and cares deeply about you!

Slanderers (false accusers) *this word depicts a court system that is overrun with accusing and slanderous lawsuits*

- This word is often used to describe the devil himself
- Paul is describing a time that will seem like the devil himself has been released full force in the courtrooms
- An age when people would accuse and slander one-another
- Finding it easier to sue in a court of law rather than settling their disagreements and difficulties
- A reoccurring pattern that will increase more and more
- At some point the legal system will become overloaded

More than 100 million lawsuits are filed annually in the U.S.

- This is only civil lawsuits
- \$429 B spent in 2016 on costs and compensations
- Equivalent to 2.3 % of our gross national product

The possibility of being sued in America has made it one of the scariest places in the world to do business

- We now have the costliest legal system in the world
- It is out of control
- Defensive medicine now costs the U.S. \$650 B per year

Approximately 26% of every dollar spent on health care goes into protection against lawsuits

- Medical malpractice in U.S. \$55.6 B per year
- \$45.6 B of that spent by physicians seeking to stay clear of lawsuits

The age of decency is dead. This is the age of slander and accusation

1 Corinthians 6:1–2 (NKJV)

¹ Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? ² Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

- Children sue parents – Parents sue children
- Parents sue schools – Patients sue doctors
- Minority groups sue for reparations
- Shoppers sue business owners
- We are living in a day were Christians sue other believers

We seem to always turn to the court room as our first course of action

- It is true that at times there is no choice
- This should never be a Christian's first choice
- Satan is called the "*Accuser*" of the brethren
 - **Revelation 12:10** – same word used in our text

There are times when it is better to be wronged than to wrong Jesus' reputation or our witness for Christ

Forgiveness is the chief characteristic of the Christian message and the Christian life

1 Corinthians 6:7–8 (NKJV)

⁷ Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather *let yourselves* be cheated? ⁸ No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and *you do* these things *to your* brethren!

What is the State of My Family Right Now?

- Is my family strong or are we starting to pull apart?
- Have you strayed from the truth or all you all heading in the same spiritual direction?
- Are our schedules working together or causing conflict and separation?
- Do we regularly eat meals together?
- Do we generally enjoy spending time together, even if its watching a movie together?
- Do we talk to each other when we're together, or are we constantly interrupted by text messages and social media alerts?

Have I taken time to ask God to help us evaluate our situation and develop a strategy to keep my family strong and undistracted by the world?

- What changes could we make to our daily schedule or choices?
- What other steps could you take to “*redeem the time*” already lost?
- What principles do I already know that I can start to reapply in our family?

What is the state of Your Marriage Right Now?

- Am I employing the full power of the Holy Spirit to help me get free of offenses and hurts?
- Have I allowed Him to talk to me about how I may have contributed to the problem?
- Have I acknowledged what I did and humbly repented for it before God and my spouse?

Is there anything God has asked me to do relating to my spouse, or former spouse that I have not been willing to do?

- Have I honestly done all I can to make my marriage strong?
- Have I asked God for wisdom on where to find help?

What is Your Attitude About Commitments and Covenants?

- Does my life show that I have fallen into a lifestyle of covenant breaking?
- Or am I truly committed to keep my word and stay in covenant with those God has placed in my life?
- Would others say I am a person of covenant?
- Am I faithful to the commitment I made earlier to my local church?
- Am I faithful to my church in good and bad times?
- Or am I among those who are uprooted and moved elsewhere when times get tough?
- What is my attitude about suing another Christian?
- Would I want my children to be like me in this area of life?

Romans 8:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.

- What am I doing to demonstrate victory over my circumstances?
- Have I surrendered control over to the Holy Spirit so he can show me how to deliver myself and my family from every attack?
- Am I willing to exercise authority in Christ against the enemy?