

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, Unloving (*without natural affection*), Unforgiving (*trucebreakers*), and Slanderers (*false accusers*)

Now let's talk about Incontinence (without self-control) – *When a society casts off restraint*

- In a medical sense it describes someone who has lost all control of their bladder or bowels
- As a result, they experience involuntary accidents
- A lack of all self-control

The word refers to one who lacks moderation or one who lacks self-control in any area or every area of life, resulting in indulgent behaviors

Referring to a person or society who has lost all power over self and therefore has no sense of self-control or the inability to exercise control, self-restraint, no willpower, or the inability to say no

There are many issues with the over-indulgence today – it is a pandemic issue – especially true in the U.S.

Galatians 5:19 (KJV 1900)

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness

Lasciviousness – Original language usually used to describe the excessive consumption of food or wild, undisciplined living that is especially marked by unbridled sex

- **2 Peter 2:6** – it is listed as the principal sin in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah
- Remember Jesus said the end time society would be as in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah
- In God’s mind, it is just as perverted to overindulge in food as it is to engage in sinful sexual activities
- Flesh that is not conquered by the Spirit of God has one aim in its fallen state
- Total domination and destruction

Romans 6:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading to death*, or of obedience *leading to righteousness*?

- The flesh is a great servant but a terrible master
- It will produce a twisted, barren mess in every area of life

If permitted to run its full course, the flesh will consume the territory of life once beautiful, and turn it into a perpetual badlands

“*Incontinent*” refers to those who have lost self-control and could depict

- A person who has no ability to stop eating
- A person who has no ability to stop spending
- A person who has no ability to restrain emotions
- A person who has no ability to stop addictive behaviors

Proverbs 29:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ Where *there is* no revelation, the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law.

A person who has no vision for what life should be or could be will throw off self- control or self-restraint

No Ability to Stop Eating

According to W.H.O worldwide obesity has nearly tripled since 1975

- More than 1.9B adults 18 years and older in the world are overweight
- 650M of that number are obese (2016)
- 41M children under the age of 5 were overweight or obese
- 39% of adults, 18 years and over were overweight, 13% were obese (2017)

Experts agree as alarming as these numbers are they believe that the numbers are now much higher

A recent CDC report shows 42.4% of adults 20 years and older in America were overweight (2018)

- *This can lead to High Blood Pressure, High LDL, cholesterol, low HDL cholesterol, or high triglyceride levels, Coronary heart disease, Stroke, Type 2 diabetes, Gallbladder disease, and Osteoarthritis – a breakdown of cartilage and bone within joints*

Being overweight can also lead to, sleep apnea and breathing problems, clinical depression or anxiety, body pain and difficulty with physical functioning, and low quality of life

Even though a small percentage of cases of obesity can be caused by certain health conditions, in most cases being overweight can be controlled with lifestyle changes

Here are the main reasons for obesity

Unhealthy Foods

Many of us eat too many processed foods, too many carbohydrates, and too much sugar, while not eating enough whole foods

- Yo-yo dieting – it has not proven to have lasting results and many times makes the problem worse
- Fast foods – 40% of Americans eat fast foods during any given 24 hr. period
- 90% of adults don't eat enough fruit and vegetables

Weight loss and fitness is a big business, but stats prove that very few people stick with a healthy lifestyle

- There are nearly 40,000 gyms and approximately 37,000 health clubs in the U.S. – generating \$28B annually
- 82% of gym members go to the gym less than one time per week
- 22% stop going altogether after about six months
- 31% say they never would have paid knowing how little they would use it

Widespread Overeating

The average man should eat around 2,200 calories and the average woman should eat around 1,600

- Americans today are consuming nearly 4,000 calories per day

America, and other parts of the world, are eating themselves into health problems

- Portions have changed drastically
- Restaurants use larger dinner plates or sell larger muffins or provide endless complimentary bread
- Pizzerias sell larger pizzas
- Fast food companies sell larger burgers, larger portions of fries and larger drinks
- “All you can eat” buffets and salad bars where you can consume all you want at cheaper prices

Larger portions have become typical in many restaurants, especially large chains because of fierce competition

Decreased Physical Activity

Does your neighborhood even have sidewalks?

- People don't walk as they used to
- Walking has become almost a thing of the past

We try to park as close to the entrance of the store so we can walk as little as possible and ride the cart they provide

In other parts of the world where people are required to walk everywhere there are far fewer overweight people

No Ability to Stop Spending

As a self-entitled society throws off all restraints, people will be hurled into excessive living, exorbitant spending, and mindless consumerism

- Anyone can fall into this trap and there is no judgment
- If you are never satisfied and always wanting more you must heed the Holy Spirit's warning
- He wants you to realize that the enemy is trying to drag you into a financial cesspool
- He wants to ruin you financially and put undue stress on your family and relationships
- If you are caught in this trap it is not a life sentence
- Through sustained wisdom and obedience to God, freedom is possible

The U.S. government public debt is nearly \$27T, the highest it's ever been

- \$69,999 for every person, young and old
- It now exceeds our GDP
- Our bills are greater than our income

It is estimated that our debt will reach \$30T before 2030

The average American has a credit card balance of \$4,293

- Polls show that most Americans are afraid they will max out their credit card when making a large purchase
- A large purchase was considered \$100, which shows how high the debt already is
- The average household income is \$61,372 yet the majority of Americans are living paycheck to paycheck

Statistics show that more than half of all college students get their first credit card as a freshmen

- More than 80% owe more than \$3,000 by their senior year
- More people between the age of 20-24 declare bankruptcy than graduate from college
- Much of it is due to the wrong use of credit cards
- If you use a credit card pay it off
- Paying the minimum payment will get you into trouble

Outstanding student-loan debt has tripled in the last decade and now exceeds \$1.5T

- Education is now the second largest expense an individual will make in their lifetime
- Second only to purchasing a home
- It is projected that more than 40% of borrowers will likely default on their student loans by 2023
- Of those who file chapter 7 bankruptcy, 32% carry student loan debt

More than 3M senior citizens in the U. S. are still paying off their student loans

- Americans 60 and older owe more than \$86B in unpaid student loans
- They are trying to pay off using Social Security benefits

Americans are making more and having less

The average house is double that of the 1950's with exuberant mortgages, 3200 Sq Ft and still "*too small*"

- 84.6 of new cars are financed
- Many finance TV's, furniture, clothes, etc.

No Ability to Restrain Emotions

A society that possesses a sense of entitlement believes they have an inherent right to express their emotions however they wish

- They don't care how it sounds, who it hurts, or how destructive it is to them or others

Polls show 70% of Americans believe uncivil behavior has reached epic proportions

- 43% say they expect an experience within the next 24 hrs.
- 50% say they are done with political conversations because of incivility and bullying
- Another report showed that Americans claim to encounter uncivil behavior 2.4 times per day
- 50% report that their children have experience bullying in school
- 69% have stopped buying from a company because someone was uncivil to them
- 69% report cyber-bullying
- 72% worry about their children being cyber-bullied

Recent studies show that people believe that unrestrained emotional behavior has had an impact on Politics, Journalism, the Workplace and in our Families

- People are chronically distracted, less productive, and less creative because of the rise of rudeness in society
- It has sparked feelings of anger, fear, sadness, and even lead to depression
- It is out of control on a pandemic scale

Road Rage is reportedly out of control

- 51% of respondents to polls admit they tailgate on purpose
- 47% admitted they yell at other drivers
- 45% admit that honk in anger
- 33% admit they make obscene gestures
- 4% admit to getting out of their cars in confrontation
- 3% are guilty of ramming another car on purpose
- 6% admit they threw objects
- 6% got into a physical altercation
- 5% deliberately side swiped another vehicle
- 5% forced another driver off the road

The AAA found that more than 12,500 injuries out of 10,000 car accidents were linked to driver violence since 2007

Proverbs 25:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ Whoever *has* no rule over his own spirit *Is like* a city broken down, without walls.

Proverbs 29:11 (NLT)

¹¹ Fools vent their anger, but the wise quietly hold it back.

Proverbs 17:27 (NLT)

²⁷ A truly wise person uses few words; a person with understanding is even-tempered.

Galatians 5:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

No Ability to Stop Addictive Behaviors

The facts show that addiction is raging out of control, impacting millions of lives, killing thousands, destroying marriages, friendships, and careers

This includes alcohol, drugs, food, gambling, pornography, sex, the internet, social media, video games, shopping, risk-taking behavior

Galatians 5:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies

- Sorcery – “*pharmakeia*” – Where we get the word Pharmacy
- A word used for medicines, or drugs that inhibit or change a person’s personality or behavior
- We would call these mind-altering drugs

Pagan worshippers in the first century were often given hallucinogenic drugs by their priests rather than confront and deal with their real-life problems and solutions

- Once these drugs wore off, the problem persisted
- It is no different today, the flesh cannot fix itself – **See Romans 7, Galatians 5:22-26**
- Only the Spirit can do that – **Romans 8**
- Taking drugs or alcohol to make yourself feel better will not fix our problems
- In God’s eyes the use of drugs is equivalent to witchcraft or sorcery – **Revelation 9:21**

Alcohol abuse is a worldwide problem

- It is the cause of 5.3% of all deaths – 1 in 20
- Nearly 300M have an alcohol-use disorder
- 15M in the U.S. alone – about 6% of the population
- Alcohol consumption typically begins between the ages of 12-17

The Impact of Drugs

- 50% of the American population misuses drugs
- Almost 21M have an addiction to at least one drug
- Overdose deaths have more than tripled since 1990
- About 20% of Americans who deal with depression or an anxiety disorder have a substance-abuse problem
- 20-30% of people who take prescription opioids misuse them
- 10% become addicted to them
- 2.1M American have an opioid-use disorder

The epidemic of drug abuse is both in prescription and illegal drug use

- Heroin is becoming a more and more commonly used in the mainstream of society
- 25% who try it become addicted
- Marijuana is becoming increasingly legal
- However, it is widely used as a recreational drug and may be addictive and cause serious health problems
- Approx. 5M Americans are regular cocaine users
- Those between the ages of 18 and 25 use more than any other group

All of the things we have mentioned are having a huge negative effect on the family

Here are some action steps to help us stay clear of a society that has lost all self-control

Confront yourself about your condition

- Am I living with self-control and self-restraint?
- Do I have the ability to say no to myself?
- Have I fallen into a pattern reflective of the out-of-control end-time society?
- There is no condemnation with God

Confront yourself about the way you are eating

- Am I overweight or obese?
- If so confess it to God, and ask Him for wisdom and power to change
- If you can't do it alone do you have someone you trust to help?
- Can I eat the kind of food as well as the size portion to the Glory of God?

Do I have a sedentary lifestyle?

- How often do you physically move?
- Do I sit all day long?
- Do I work many hours in front of a computer?
- How often do I get out of the house and walk?
- Am I willing to do what is necessary to make a change in this area for the sake of my health?

Confront yourself about how you spend money

- Have you fallen into a covetous lifestyle?
- How do I fare when I analyze my income versus my expenditures?
- Am I willing to do what is needed to self-correct and bring my affairs in order?

Hebrews 12:11 (NLT)

¹¹ No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.

Confront yourself about your emotions

God gave us emotions to feel passionate, alive, and joyful, or alert us when something is wrong

- But emotions don't need to be controlling you
- Am I in charge of my emotions?
- Do I say things when I'm frustrated or upset that I wouldn't want someone to say to me?
- Do I exercise respect towards others?
- Do I say whatever I wish because I feel I have the right?

Confront yourself about addictive behaviors

- Are there any acts or behaviors, or attitudes that have gotten a hold of me and are robbing me of the good life?
- Are there any areas of life where I am living in bondage?

Do I have vision for God's plan for my life in all of these areas?