

Overcoming the Enemy

I. Security, Requires Constant Vigilance

1 Peter 5:8

Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

A. A Primary Task

Proverbs 4:23

Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

1. Our thoughts

Proverbs 23:7

For as he thinks within himself, so he is.

2. Our desires

James 1:14-15

but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. [15] Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

3. Our beliefs

Luke 8:49-50

someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," he said. "Don't bother the teacher any more." [50] Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed."

B. Highly Optional Environment ---leads to mediocrity

1 Tim. 6:9, 11

People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction . . . But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

C. The Choice . . . pursue a Kingdom initiative

Matthew 6:33-34

Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don't worry about missing out. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met. [34] "Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes. (The Message)

D. A Pattern . . .

Matthew 5:6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

1. Hunger & Thirst:

a. Dominant impulses

b. Recurring needs

c. Destructive deficiencies

2. "for righteousness" --- A dominant, recurring desire for righteousness --- "right standing with God"

Hebrews 11:16

Instead, they were longing for a better country--a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

Psalms 119:131

I open my mouth and pant, longing for your commands.

Psalms 119:20

My soul is consumed with longing for your laws at all times.

Psalms 119:81

My soul faints with longing for your salvation, but I have put my hope in your word.

E. God and the desires of your heart

Psalms 20:4

May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed.

1. What are you longing for?

2 Tim. 4:8

Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day--and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

II. For Our Benefit . . . their stories written for our benefit

A. Saul, King of Israel

1 Samuel 16:13-16

So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power. Samuel then went to Ramah. [14] Now the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him. [15] Saul's attendants said to him, "See, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. [16] Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the harp. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes upon you, and you will feel better."

B. Samson, Judge of Israel

C. David, King of Israel

III. Misplaced Confidence

Prayer

I rejoice in God my protector. Almighty God is my shield and my strength. His grace and mercy sustain me. The Holy Spirit is my helper. Through the blood of Jesus I have been delivered out of the hand of the enemy. My life is secure in the hands of my creator. My hope is anchored in the faithfulness of my Lord and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.