

How To Overcome Our Enemy, Part 3: Be Light



Rock Hill Baptist Church
605 Rock Hill Road
Lexington, Tennessee 38351

Pastor David Buffaloe
731-845-6104
online at bibleteacher.org

FOCAL Read Responsively 1 Thessalonians 5:5-10 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. {6} Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. {7} **For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.** {8} **But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.** {9} For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, {10} **Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.**

Last week our music minister led us in a song - I forget which song it was - and stopped us in the middle of it. He asked the question "is this *really* true for us all?" That's a valid question. There are a lot of songs that we sing that - if we would be honest - we are less than sincere. For instance:

**"All To Jesus, I surrender,
All to Him I freely give.
I will ever love and trust Him;
In His Presence daily live."**

Is that true for you and for me? Do we really surrender *all to Jesus*, or do we hang on to some of it? What about that old song:

**"Jesus is all the world to me, my life, my joy, my all;
He is my strength from day to day, without Him I
would fall."**

Is that true? Is Jesus *truly* all the world to me? Is He "**my ALL**"? He should be. In fact, the key to a victorious Christian life is in how much of our lives we surrender to Jesus. If Jesus is **all the world to me** then He won't be last place in my life, but He'll always be first.

We can't eat the cake and give Jesus the crumbs if we expect to overcome our enemy.

On the day that you were baptized, dear Christian, you did not win the war. You have salvation by faith in Christ, and that is good. But you also have an enemy who wants your destruction, a fallen angel called "Satan". This enemy will never show us the white flag, will never surrender, will never declare a truce. He and his ministers are committed to our defeat. They will lie, and steal, cheat, and do anything they can to win this war. Are we as committed to serving Jesus as the lost is to serving the devil? Dear friends, he who is more committed will always win the day!

One day Jesus had three men come to Him. These men had been watching from afar, and had perhaps been at one of Jesus' miraculous healing services or else at one of His fantastic seaside sermons. The first man said to Jesus, "**Lord, I'll follow You where ever You go**" (Luke 9:57). That's admirable, but is it *really* true? Will you **truly surrender all**? Jesus, perceiving that man's heart, simply replied: "**Foxes and birds have places they call home - but I don't have a place to lay down and rest**" (Luke 9:58). It's one thing to follow Jesus if it's into a place of prosperity. If Jesus was heading to an

earthly mansion while sitting in a Porsche® He would have many followers, but will you follow Him even if it leads you into poverty? There were many who flocked to Jesus following the miraculous feeding of the five thousand (John 6:26). Jesus told them "**you are following Me, not because of the miracles, but because I filled your bellies**". There are many today who, like this man, follow after Jesus because the television evangelist promises them prosperity. True followers of Christ *must* follow where He leads, whether in prosperity or in want.

Jesus told the second man "**Follow Me**", only to hear the reply: "**Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father**" (Luke 9:59). There's nothing wrong with burying one's parents - but Jesus must *never* be next. We do not suspend our activities for Christ when burying a loved one, or when going to market. Each time a Christian or a local Church backs away from its mission Satan steps into the void. Hear Him Who said "**let the dead bury the dead, but you, go and preach the Gospel**" (Luke 9:60). We do not have time to be frivolous. Do the Master's work!

Yet another said to Jesus: "**Lord, I'll follow you, but let me go home and tell my family goodbye first**" (Luke 9:62). Jesus is never *next*. Our **God is a jealous God** (Exodus 20:5; 34:14; Joshua 24:19; Nahum 1:2). If He has saved you by the shedding of Blood, if you have been **purchased with the Blood of God from this evil world** (Acts 20:28), if you have **called upon the Name of the Lord and have been saved** (Romans 10:13), then you are called to strive to follow Him as children of

light. Your first call is Jesus. Your last call is Jesus. Your all in all is Jesus.

1. KNOW Who You Are

FOCAL 1 Thessalonians 5:5 **Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. ...**

A little boy of about 4 or 5 years old came to his daddy. "Daddy, when I grow up I think I want to be a doctor". His daddy beamed at him. "Son, that's great - I'm so proud of you". The little boy went on to say "But maybe I want to be a dinosaur".

Are you all children of light? Do you know who you are? Are you saved by faith in Christ?

The most important step you can ever take in defeating the enemy is *knowing who you are* - then acting on that knowledge.

The devil has destroyed more local Churches because they were filled with double minded, nominal believers. The Bible tells us:

James 1:8 A **double minded man is unstable in all his ways.**

That is very true. Be *certain* you are born of God, then move forward on that certainty. No battle is ever won by the faint hearted or the uncertain. You were designed by

God to win against the foe. Stand up and do what were called to do!

If you are a Christian you are a walking miracle. The Bible says that you are **born again, not of corruptible human seed. You are born *spiritually* through the intervention of God's Word and God's Spirit.**

God promised our forefather **Abraham** that **he would be a "great nation" (Genesis 12:2) as well as "a father of many nations" (Genesis 17:4)**. Out of Abraham God would bring two miracles. The first miracle God would do is give Abraham - a man well past his childbearing years - a son. Year after year passed following God's promise. At one point Abraham, beginning to doubt God, went into Hagar - his wife's servant - and conceived a child by her. The child that was born - **Ishmael** - would be a child **born of the will of the flesh**. Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar worked together to bring forth Ishmael - but Ishmael would not be the child of promise. God rejected Ishmael as the promised child. Instead the Lord waited long past Abraham and Sarah's child bearing years to give her the child **Isaac**. Isaac was a miracle. Abraham and Sarah were *dead, physically unable to produce Isaac*. Isaac would be the child of promise from which would come the **"great nation" Israel**. But God also made a promise that, out of Abraham would come **"many nations"**. You are here today, dear Christian, because God kept His promise to Abraham. Isaac's birth was miraculous, but so is yours. The Bible tells us:

Galatians 4:4-7 But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, {5} To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. {6} And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. {7} Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

What a wonderful miracle! Jesus Christ, God the Eternal Son, was miraculously born of a virgin from the nation of Israel. **Christ came in fulfillment of prophecy.** He was the promised Redeemer, His Blood to be shed for you and for me. Born of the flesh of an Israelite virgin, Jesus willingly went to the Cross of Calvary to make payment for the sins of the whole world.

You are a miracle, dear Christian, a walking miracle! Your birth was not like Ishmael's, but your birth is much like Isaac's.

You are:

John 1:13 ... born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

On the day that you called on Jesus the Lord did a supernatural work in you. You are **born of God**, you are

1 Corinthians 6:11 ... washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and

by the Spirit of our God.

You are **children of light, not of darkness.** A Christian is radically changed *inside* so that he can produce for God on the *outside*. Are you a Christian? If so, then you are called to **be consistent.** You are called to **be light, not darkness.** Which are you?

As Joshua, that wonderful warrior of God, prepared to retire from leading Israel at the *age of 110 years old* he stood before Israel, saying:

Joshua 24:14-15 Now therefore **fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.** {15} **And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**

Joshua told the people "**make a choice. Choose who you will serve. If you're going to choose to serve the devil, then serve him; and if you're going to serve God then serve Him. Whatever you choose me and my house will serve the Lord.**"

Joshua was following in the footsteps of his mentor and predecessor Moses who, on coming down from Mount Sinai, cried out upon seeing Israel worshipping the

Golden Calf:

Exodus 32:26 ... Who is on the LORD's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.

If you're saved, say so. If you're not, say so. But do not sit on the fence. As the Psalmist said:

Psalms 107:2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;

Make a choice, and then live in that choice. Old **Elijah**, outnumbered by the prophets of the false God Baal 450 to 1, put a choice before the children of Israel. He said:

1 Kings 18:21 ... How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

Make a choice - then live with it. God cannot defeat the enemy with Christians who will not commit their all to Him. The Lord calls out in **Godly jealousy** for all His people to choose to serve Him.

Light cannot be dark, and dark cannot be light. It is either one of the other. Choose!

2. BE Who You Are

FOCAL 1 Thessalonians 5:5-6 Ye are all the children

of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. {6} Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

ILLUSTRATE We all expect light to BE LIGHT. When the power goes off at your home (which occasionally happens) we all go looking for flashlights. Have you ever walked into a darkened room during a power outage and just automatically reached for the light switch? Why is that? It's because we've become accustomed to light BEING light. My common sense tells me the power is off, but I reach for the switch anyway.

In our text we are told to **watch and be sober**. Let's look at these words.

BE WATCHFUL Watch for what? **Watch for Jesus.** Light watches for Light.

Jesus frequently told us:

Matthew 24:42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

Matthew 25:13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Jesus could come at any moment. He is coming back for His people. **Watch, and be ready.** If we believed that Jesus was coming at any moment then we would spend every minute of every day watching for Him. Jesus told us:

Mark 13:31-37 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. {32} But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. {33} Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. {34} For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. {35} Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: {36} Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. {37} And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

Be ready. If Jesus came back tonight how many Christians would be caught unaware? If Jesus came to take our soul to Heaven in physical death would we be prepared? Watch. **Watch for Jesus.**

WATCH FOR EVIL Watch also for evil people who seek to destroy the light of the Church.

There are agents of Satan in every local Church in every land that seek to overthrow the work of Christ. The Apostle warned the pastors of Ephesus:

Acts 20:28-31 **Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. {29}**

For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. {30} Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. {31} Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

What else should we **watch for**? We watch for Jesus, we watch for Satan's agents - but we also *watch for Satan himself*. We are told:

1 Corinthians 16:13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

Watch and stand fast in the faith. Satan is incessant in His warfare, so keep your watch, keep on being light. I am told that there are some stars we see in the sky whose light is several hundred light years away. How can we see these far away lights? Because the stars have faithfully *kept on shining for the Lord*. Keep on shining for Jesus.

The night sky has stars in it that are persistent in shining. Though space itself is a dark vacuum the light of these stars - millions of years away - still reaches us because *the light is as persistent as the dark*.

Light must be consistent and persistent to be of any value. **We must not let down our guard.** Watch, and be **sober**. Be serious about your Christian faith. You are

saved by faith, and not by works, but once saved *you should work*. You should submit yourselves to God and do what He requires. The Bible tells us:

James 4:7-8 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. {8} Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

How do you defeat the devil? BE Light! Resist darkness, and embrace the Light of God.

3. Take POSITIVE ACTION Against Evil

FOCAL 1 Thessalonians 5:8 ... But let us, who are of the day, **be sober¹, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.** {9} For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ ...

In every war *positive action* must be taken if the battles are to be won. The Christian, Children of Light, are called to positive action.

We are called to **be sober**. This word means to **be discreet or to be diligent**. Stay on your guard. Jesus told His disciples:

Matthew 10:16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents,

1 G3525, **νήφω**, *nēphō*, *nay'-fo*, Of uncertain affinity; to *abstain* from wine (*keep sober*), that is, (figuratively) *be discreet*: - be sober, watch.

and harmless as doves.

The unsaved are like wolves. Use common sense in the battle. Look for windows of opportunity to attack the enemy by spreading the Gospel. When I was in the Air Force my commanders always told me: "**Don't bring me a problem, bring me a solution**". Dale Carnegie once said:

"Any fool can criticize, condemn, and complain - and most do."

Rather than find fault take *positive action*. What can you do? The text tells us to "**put on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation**". The Christian is to "**put on**" that which God has given him. The Lord has given you **faith and love**, and you are to **put on** these things. You **put on** the helmet of **salvation** - a sure knowledge that you are saved. **Put on** the equipment God has given you.

Do you read your Bibles? Do you pray? Are you faithful in Church attendance? God uses prayer, the Bible, and Church activities to speak to your heart. Pastor **C.H. Spurgeon** rightly said:

"The head must be taken care of. There are a great many Christian people who never have any trouble with their heads at all. ... Now, give me above all else a good warm heart; but oh, to have that heart coupled with a head that is well taken care of. Do you know that a hot head and a hot heart together do a great deal of mischief, but with a hot heart and a cold

brain you may do a world of service to the Master. Have right doctrine in the head, and then set the soul on fire, and you will soon win the world."

If every Christian would **put on** that which the Scripture tells us we are equipped with:

Romans 13:12-13 ... cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. {13} Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

Ephesians 4:23-24 .. be renewed in the spirit of your mind; {24} And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Colossians 3:9-10 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; {10} And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Colossians 3:12-13 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; {13} Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

Put on the equipment that God has given you. In short, **put on Christ**. Be like Jesus in every thing. Be loving, be kind, always seeking the will of God.

Be the Light that God has made you to be. **Adrian Rogers**, as he lay dying in the hospital told **Steve Gaines**: "**I am at perfect peace**". Even when placed on a ventilator he would smile and give a "thumbs up" signal. Adrian knew who he was, and Who his Master is.

Do you?

May God touch your hearts with His Word.

FOCAL Read Responsively 1 Thessalonians 5:5-10 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. {6} Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. {7} **For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.** {8} **But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.** {9} For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, {10} **Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.**

1. KNOW Who You Are

James 1:8; Genesis 12:2; Genesis 17:4; Galatians 4:4-7; John 1:13; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Joshua 24:14-15; Exodus 32:26; Psalms 107:2; 1 Kings 18:21

2. BE Who You Are

Matthew 24:42; Matthew 25:13; Mark 13:31-37; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Corinthians 16:13; James 4:7-8

3. Take POSITIVE ACTION Against Evil

Matthew 10:16; Romans 13:12-13; Ephesians 4:23-24; Colossians 3:9-10; Colossians 3:12-13

Pastor C.H. Spurgeon: "The head must be taken care of. There are a great many Christian people who never have any trouble with their heads at all. ... Now, give me above all else a good warm heart; but oh, to have that heart coupled with a head that is well taken care of. Do you know that a hot head and a hot heart together do a great deal of mischief, but with a hot heart and a cold brain you may do a world of service to the Master. Have right doctrine in the head, and then set the soul on fire, and you will soon win the world."