

# You can be an Overcomer! 01

“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” John 1:12

## IT IS CLOSING TIME ON PLANET EARTH

Our world is morally bankrupt. An immense crisis is stealing upon us, for God will not bear much longer with this corruption.

We live in a world in rebellion against God, a world that refuses to obey His laws. We have reached the limit, surpassing the evils existing in the days of Noah when God brought a Flood upon the earth to destroy it.

On every continent it is the same. Society is falling apart, homes are shattered. The lives of millions are being ruined. Violence, crime, and every type of wickedness fill the earth.

While the world cries for more excitement and indulgence, and the churches preach forgiveness for those who continue in sin, God’s Word demands submission to the Creator’s authority and obedience to His Moral Ten Commandment Law.

While Probation lasts there remains a little time for repentance. Today we want to begin a series of studies that can show you how to find your way back to God; how to have peace with Him, how to live a clean, godly life. A new, deeper happiness can be yours: The peace of heart which comes from pleasing God. Obedience to God, by faith in Jesus Christ, is the promised blessing. It is the entrance to a happier life for it can provide you with the secret of self-control.

Reaching the Limit:

We are on the edge of an immense crisis. It is the biggest in the history of mankind. Thinking men everywhere recognize that the sins of men have nearly reached their limit. Something stupendous is about to happen.

Nothing in past history can equal the extent and magnitude of the worldwide plunge into violence and evil that exists today. Moral conditions have plunged downward since the mid-1960s. Our world is hurtling into a disaster zone from which it cannot escape.

Before 1960, no one in the civilized world could legally abort their children. Today, nearly every government on earth is encouraging the killing of unborn infants. Millions and millions of small children have been killed—far more than have died in all the wars the world has fought; yet the industry that carries on this mass destruction is one of the most protected.

Prior to 1950, other than cigarettes and liquor, relatively few addictive drugs were sold in the world. Today, a mania has seized the public to purchase whatever narcotics they can find or invent, to destroy their minds.

Before the 1930s, prostitution was illegal in nearly every nation. Today, it is legal or quasi-legal in most parts of the world.

Before 1975, outside of Nevada, there was no legalized gambling anywhere in America. Today there are large casinos all over the nation; and all but two states have an official lottery. State governments publish ads, encouraging citizens to gamble away their savings! This trend is in many other countries as well.

The evening news is filled with horror stories, each one worse than the one before it: bullets and body bags, sex and scandals, terror and tragedy, wars and rumors of wars; one horrible atrocity after another.

Today’s headlines are far different than those in the 1950s. Instead of funny events at county fairs, we read about terrorist networks, genocide of hundreds of thousands, and bombing of large buildings, suicide bombers regularly killing people. The whole world seems to be going crazy. We stand aghast and wonder what will happen next.

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We search for the cause; yet it is obvious to those willing to consider it: Men and women have forgotten God. They no longer acknowledge Him as supreme in their lives. Many do not even believe there is a God. They have swallowed the lie of evolution.

Even many Christians who love God are taught that they do not need to keep the Ten Commandments! Little wonder that the moral fabric of society is unraveling. Men are told that the only laws they need to obey are man's laws! God, they are told, doesn't have any laws anymore!

The basic problem is that the greater part of mankind today is in rebellion against their Creator. Men refuse to submit to His authority. We may try to excuse it any way we want; but this is the reason mankind is hurtling toward moral extinction.

Our planet has a disease. That disease is sin. In order to solve the problem, we must first identify sin. What is sin? The Bible says sin is the breaking of God's law. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."—John 3:4.

Men refuse to obey God's moral Ten Commandment law. It is as simple as that, and we all know it. They lie, they steal, they cheat, they kill, they covet. They reject God's authority and take His name in vain. They violate His holy Sabbath.

If we kept the Ten Commandments, all the other evils plaguing our civilization would be solved. Yet, oddly enough, although we are expected to keep the laws of man, we are solemnly told by educated men that it is impossible to keep God's laws and anyone who tries to do it is a "legalist"!

Men today are so deeply involved in drugs, pornography, gambling, drinking, and wild entertainment that they cannot think straight. Man is not changing. His obsession with sin has become a mania. Even those who do not commit gross evil love to sit in front of various screens to watch it! The end is just ahead.

God allows developments to work toward a climax. He has often done this in the past. He did it in Noah's day, when He sent a flood of waters and buried the wicked. He did it in the days of Abraham when He destroyed the wicked cities of the plain which gave themselves up to evil. When men reach the point that they only live to do wickedness, then God steps in.

Christ predicted that, when conditions in the entire world become as evil as they were in the times of Noah and Sodom, the end would come!

"As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man . . . and the Flood came, and destroyed them all. "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot . . . It rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."—Luke 17:26-27, 28-30.

This is what it was like in the days of Noah:

"God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually . . . And the earth was filled with violence."—Genesis 6:5, 11.

That is exactly what is happening now! In the time of Noah, those conditions existed world-wide. Today, over 4,000 years later, even greater sins exist today, and on a worldwide scale!

Our mad preoccupation with evil was predicted in the Bible. It marks us as having arrived at the end of time. "In the last days perilous times shall come."—2 Timothy 3:1.

Never before has there been so much evil. "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse."—2 Timothy 3:13.

The Harvest Time:

In the judgment, the harvest of the world, Christ will return the second time and take His faithful ones to heaven. Here is how Jesus described it in a parable-story:

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“The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one. The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels . . . Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into My barn.”—Matthew 13:38-39, 30.

We are stunned as we consider the fact that a terrible climax, the final crisis, is about to burst upon us. Yet, according to Bible prophecy, God is permitting it to happen. Something immense is about to take place.

God is about to deal with an entire planet that has run amok in evil. The world is warring against the law of God, the Ten Commandments. The horrible effects of that warfare are seen everywhere about us!

We are on a collision course with disaster because morality is at the depths. Marriage, as an institution, is about gone; sexual perversion has been given a free rein, millions live only for the next upper, and bribery and corruption run riot.

In the beginning, sin arose when Satan disputed God’s right to rule the universe. Satan told the angels that God’s law was unjust and should be abolished. But, when Satan was kicked out of heaven, he came to earth; and, in the Garden of Eden, he used the same approach. God had told Adam and Eve what they could do and should not do. He was their Creator and they had a responsibility to obey Him. The only way anyone can be happy is when they obey God.

But then Satan arrived. Disguised as a snake, he told our first parents they did not have to obey what God said. “You do not have to obey; you shall not die. You will enter upon a new, higher experience by disobeying,” was his message.

“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

“And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which [is] in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

“And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”—Genesis 3:1-5.

All down through human history, Satan has repeated the same lie: “You don’t have to obey God.” Throughout Bible times, and in the centuries since then, he has lured people into disobeying God’s moral law of Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:3-17).

“Every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6). That is our core problem to-day. As it was in the days of Noah, so it is today:

“The wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually . . . And the earth was filled with violence.”—Genesis 6:5, 11.

We are back in the days of Noah! As it was back then, when the crisis in lawlessness reaches a certain point, God will step in.

Men do not realize what they are doing when they refuse to let God give them empowering grace to keep His Ten Commandments. That moral law is the foundation of God’s government. It establishes His right to rule His creatures. If we reject His law, we reject Him! Think about that a moment.

God wrote down His moral code in enduring stone on Mount Sinai. (It is given in Exodus 20:3-17.) How much more permanent can something be than to be engraved on stone and written there by Gods own finger! God gave the Ten Commandments to those who were His people at that time, to be given to the world.

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The situation has not changed. Today God wants you and me to obey that law and encourage others to obey it. Look about you today. God's moral rules are rejected by nearly the entire world. Even many Christians reject it; they say they do not have to keep God's law; for they have been saved from it!

Think it Over!

Did Christ die on Calvary so we can steal and kill and take God's name in vain? No, no. It cannot be. The truth is that God saves us from sin, not from His law!

How does He save us from sin? It is through Christ's death on the cross and His mediation on our behalf in heaven that God saves us from sin. As we repent and plead with Christ for help, He forgives our past and strengthens us by His empowering grace, right now, to resist temptation and obey His Father's law.

The Bible says sin "is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). What can be clearer than that? The problem is sin, not God's law!

Why did Jesus come to our world? The angel told the reason to Mary before Christ's birth: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins."—Matthew 1:21.

Jesus did not die on the cross to save us from God's law; Jesus died to save us from sin—from transgression of that law!

If I intentionally drive through a stop sign, hit another car and kill someone, how do we solve the problem? Theoretically, we can do it in one of three ways:

First, we can get rid of the law. We can do away with the rule which forbids driving through stop signs. That would mean I am henceforth free to run more stop signs and hit more cars! "I am free from the law."

Second, I can suffer the penalty myself. I can go to court, perhaps go to jail. This is done to punish me for breaking the law and convince me not to disobey it any more. The law stands and the sin is punished.

Third, someone else can pay the penalty for me. But, although he may pay the penalty for my past transgression, he is not thereby abolishing the law! I am still required to obey it.

Under this third plan, which is God's way of solving the sin problem in my life, the One who paid the penalty for my sin, Jesus Christ, also empowers me to obey the moral law as, by faith in His righteous merits, I daily walk with Him.

Christ did not die to take away the law, but to help me obey it. He lived a life of perfect obedience to God's Law. He died in my place on Calvary; and He lives today in heaven to strengthen me, by His enabling grace, to obey His moral law. Sin is the problem, not the law! Sin is rebellion against God; the law is the foundation of God's government. There is a great difference between the two!

Which do you want to get rid of? If you want to get rid of sin, you are on God's side of the question. If you want to get rid of His law, you are on the devil's side.

God's plan is for His earthly children to live clean, moral lives, in obedience to the Ten Commandments. Christ did not die so they could keep sinning in defiance of the law. He did not go through the agonies of Calvary so we could continue as lawbreakers.

However, it is very important that we understand that, by ourselves, none of us can keep God's holy law. None of us, not one, can, by our own will or strength alone, put away sin or resist Satan's temptations. Christ died on Calvary not only to forgive our past sins but to enable us by His grace to render obedience as, by faith, we cling to His hand and, as little children, walk along life's pathway with Him!

"Trust and obey, for there's no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey."  
That old song is still true.

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We are to take hold of His empowering strength, trust in His enabling merits, and be strengthened to live clean, godly lives. By His grace, we are to control ourselves. We are to be “Christians.” And to be Christians is to be Christlike.

God’s part is infinitely great, but He will not do His part without our part. Our part is to choose Him, to put our will into action, to resist temptation, and do what is right. Trusting Him for help as we attempt to do this, Christ supplies the strength to carry it through to success. He enables us to live clean, pure, honest lives, and spend our time helping and blessing others. Thank God, there is a way we can live like Jesus! We can be like the One we so much love and all the praise goes to Him for it, because, at each step, He provides the enabling strength.

Forget this idea of “sin and be saved.” Let’s live for something better than that! Through the enabling grace of Christ, “sin shall not have dominion over you” (Romans 6:14).

We need to learn from the Bible what is in the future for our world. But first, because it is so important, here is a brief Bible study. It clearly shows that, trusting in Jesus, each one of us can live a “Christian” life:

Obedience by Faith--How God Enables You to Obey Him:

### 1 - GOD HAS A GOVERNMENT

Psalms 103:19—“The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all.”

### 2 - THERE CAN BE NO GOVERNMENT WITHOUT LAW

Romans 7:12—“The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.”

Romans 7:14—“For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.”

Proverbs 28:9—“He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.”

### 3 - GOD’S LAW WAS FOR MEN IN BIBLE TIMES

Romans 3:31—“Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.”

James 2:10-12—“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.”

### 4 - GOD’S LAW IS FOR THE REMNANT IN THE LAST DAYS

Revelation 12:17—“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Revelation 14:12—“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (also verses 13-15).

### 5 - THERE IS GENERAL REBELLION AGAINST GOD’S LAW

Romans 8:7—“The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”

Psalms 119:126—“It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law.”

### 6 - THERE ARE PROMISES FOR THE OBEDIENT

Psalms 119:165—“Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them.”

Isaiah 48:18—“O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.”

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### 7 - THE SACRIFICIAL LAWS WERE ABOLISHED AT THE CROSS

Colossians 2:14—“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross” (Hebrews 10:1-16).

Colossians 2:17—“Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”

God uses the law to do for the sinner just what needs to be done. The sinner must realize that he is a sinner. The heavy hand of the law must be laid upon him, and he must be arrested in his course. Notice the following carefully:

1. It gives a knowledge of sin. Romans 3:20—“By the law is the knowledge of sin” (Romans 7:7).
2. It brings guilt and condemnation. Romans 3:19—“Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”
3. It acts as a spiritual mirror. James 1:23-25—“If any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed” (James 2:9-12).

Without the law, the sinner is like a man who is afflicted with a deadly disease that he doesn't know he has. Paul said, “I had not known sin, but by the law” (Romans 7:7).

### 9 - WHAT IS THE LAW UNABLE TO DO FOR THE SINNER?

The law cannot forgive. The Law does not possess the power to forgive those who transgress its precepts. Only the Lawgiver can do that. Jesus died to redeem us from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13). The law cannot keep the sinner from sinning because “the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Romans 8:7).

The law only shows the sinner where he needs to change; but the law, itself, cannot change him. And so let us get three facts about the law very clear.

1. It cannot forgive or justify.

Romans 3:20—“By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight.”

2. It cannot keep from sin or sanctify.

Galatians 3:21—“Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.”

3. It cannot cleanse or keep the heart clean

Romans 8:3, 7-8— “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: . . . 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”

The law is limited in its ability to do all that needs to be done for the sinner. A wound cannot be sewed up with only a needle. The thread of the gospel must do that.

### 10 - WHAT DOES THE GRACE OF CHRIST DO FOR THE SINNER?

When the law of God and the Spirit of God have made the sinner conscious of his sin, he will then feel his need of Christ and go to the Saviour for pardon. The publican found it so (Luke 18:13-14). The woman taken in

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adultery felt condemned and ashamed. She needed sympathy and forgiveness, and Christ was ready to grant these to her. Then He said, "Sin no more."

If we confess and put away sin, He will forgive (1 John 1:9). This is grace, or unmerited favor. This gracious love of Christ awakens love in the heart of the sinner, and he then desires to serve and obey God. Here are four elements of the saving grace of Christ:

1. It forgives and justifies. Acts 13:38-39—"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses"

Luke 18:13-14—"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

2. It saves from sin, or sanctifies. Matthew 1:21—"She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins."

1 Corinthians 1:30—"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

3. It inspires faith. Ephesians 2:8-10—"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

4. It brings God's power. Romans 1:16—"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

Forgiveness of sin and power over sin come through the exercise of simple faith in God's promises and a full surrender of the heart to Him.

### 11 - HOW DOES A SINNER SAVED BY GRACE RELATE TO THE LAW?

1. The law becomes the standard of his life. 1 John 5:3—"This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments."

2. He permits Christ to fulfill in him the righteousness of the law. Romans 8:3-4—"God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

3. Christ writes the law in his heart. Hebrews 8:10—"This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people" (Psalm 119:11).

### Christ's Everlasting Love:

It was evening. On an excursion boat off the Atlantic coast, a couple, married only a few hours before, were watching the endless waves of the moonlit ocean.

Suddenly there was an explosion, and the boat was soon in flames. Then there followed a second explosion. Both husband and wife were injured, but were taken to different hospitals. When the husband recovered, he went to the other hospital to see about his wife, but she had gone without leaving any address.

He then began a search that continued for twenty years, until an expert in finding lost people took over. Thinking that perhaps she had gone back to her former employment in the garment industry, he began a search in that direction. At last the investigator paused behind one of the machine operators, and in a slow and quiet voice uttered a name. Instantly her hands dropped from their work.

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In a few moments they were back again, but were working nervously, unsteadily. So the same low voice spoke again, "Your husband wants you." In a voice tense with emotion the woman said, "I am not married! The name you have spoken is not mine!"

"But your husband has searched twenty years for you. He wants you!" the low voice continued. The hands again stopped their work, and the woman quickly turned her face to the speaker and exclaimed, "Do you think a man would marry me with a face like this?"

Her face revealed a mass of terrible scars, seared into her features by a frightful burn. The investigator was startled, but felt certain he had found the lost wife. But it took days of kind persuasion to get her to admit it and tell her story. The second explosion had injured her, and when she saw the mass of terrible scars, she felt sure her husband would no longer love her, so she left the hospital without a word.

But she agreed to have her photograph taken and shown to her husband, and if he still cared for her, she would come to him. When the husband saw the photograph, with great happiness he recognized her at once and urged a prompt meeting. When they met, it was a happy moment. Others present saw the sorrow and loneliness lift from the burned countenance, and saw it shine with a glow of happiness because her husband loved her still!

Likewise the love of God manifested through Christ draws the backslider back to the Father, for we read the divine promise, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jeremiah 31:3.

Jesus yearns with compassionate love for the wanderers to come back to Him, walk once more with Him, and at last dwell with Him in His everlasting home, the Holy City, so wondrously fair and surpassingly adorned as to be called "the bride, the Lamb's wife."

Were you taught to believe in and follow Jesus but have wandered away from Him? Or have you never before learned about Jesus and how much He loves you and wants you to choose to be His child? How much God will do for you if you will only ask for it! He even tells you just how to ask, and what to say: "Behold, we come unto Thee; for Thou art the Lord our God."

So each of us may use God's given way of returning to Him and say, "Behold, I come unto Thee; for Thou art the Lord my God." His everlasting love will make it easy for you to say and mean these words from your heart, and then from His great heart of love will flow the forgiveness, and cleansing, and peace, and power that will make you glad and rejoice in Him.

By His tender Spirit Jesus draws near to you. What assuring words He has given you: "Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37.

Jesus has loved you with His everlasting love, His boundless, compassionate love; and He entreats you, "Come unto Me and ... rest." Say to Him words like these:

"Dear Savior, I will come, I do come to Thee as Thy dear follower, accepting Thee with all my heart as my own dear Savior. And I will trust Thee to keep me happy and steadfast in Thy love and service, till at last I am with Thee in Thy glorious kingdom for ever!"

Then every day, the very first thing, say a little prayer like this: "Take me, O Lord, as wholly Yours. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Stay with me, and help me to serve Thee all day."

Then all day rest in Jesus by an abiding, peaceful trust. Let your mind think about His everlasting love for you, and His wonderful promises for you.

"Never a trial that He is not there,  
Never a burden that He does not bear,  
Never a sorrow that He does not share,  
Moment by moment I'm under His care."