

Choose Your Overcomer: Christ or the Flesh

by Hans R. Waldvogel

The sermon emphasizes the importance of letting Jesus Christ reign in our lives and seeking the Lord with all our hearts, in order to be transformed into the likeness of Christ and to be ready for the coming of the Lord.

Duration: 35:04

Scripture: Luke 18:7

Topics: "Overcoming"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being watchful and prepared for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. He uses a story about a man who was supposed to be watching for a lion but fell asleep, allowing the lion to enter a car and attack the others inside. The preacher relates this to the need for Christians to be vigilant and ready for the return of Jesus. He also discusses the concept of knowing Jesus Christ and experiencing Him in order to have eternal life. The sermon concludes with a call for believers to choose to serve and allow Jesus to reign within them.

Transcript

Do not move away from the hope of the gospel which was preached to every creature which is under him. When God spoke to us by his son, he didn't speak death, but he spoke life. Himself took part of flesh and blood, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who all their lifetime were subject to bondage because of the fear of death.

We're delivered from that fear of death when we receive the hope of the gospel. And the Bible says we should not be moved away from the hope of the gospel. I was making mention of an article in Time magazine the other day where churchmen of different churches and of great renown were expressing themselves about the conditions in the world and what place the church held and the preaching of the gospel.

They said very nice things, but all of them missed the main thing. We have turned to God from idols to wait for his son from heaven. Every Christian's job and responsibility is to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. But you cannot know Jesus Christ whom he has sent until you experience him, until you live him. Praise God until he takes over.

And the hope, we have been begotten again unto a living hope. And that hope is not realized until this body has been changed, transformed. I like that part of the Handel's Messiah where he says the trumpet shall sound, the trumpet shall sound and we shall be changed.

We shall be changed. Nobody has a right to want to go to heaven. That would be easy just to run off to heaven and go flippity flop with your golden wings.

That's not the hope. That isn't what we're here for. We don't know when we go to heaven.

We ought to be interested in heaven coming to us. That's what we're saved for. We're begotten again unto a living hope.

And it may be, it may be that my body will be laid in the grave. But if it is, it'll be so by the appointment of heaven and my flesh shall rest in the same hope that as soon as the trumpet sounds, I shall rise with my new body. Praise God.

But in the meantime, that is the goal of my life. And that is the goal that God Almighty sets for me. And that's what God Almighty is working for moment by moment to present me perfect, to make me ready for that glorious moment when in a moment or in the twinkling of an eye, I shall be changed.

And when is that moment going to be? I ought to expect it right now. I ought to be looking unto them that look for Him. Oh, to be looking for Him will fill my whole body with light.

That alone will do something for my body. That will save me from ulcers in my stomach, as Miss Shulton used to say. She suffered from ulcers.

It'll save you from a lot of trouble. Praise God. And it'll, it'll make you choose Jesus instead of the flesh.

How many people are sick and dead because as soon as the devil pokes them in the ribs, they go around looking for sympathy, telling everybody how it aches and all what faith they have and how they trust in the Lord. You don't. Praise the Lord.

Beloved, we have a living hope because we have a living Christ. Praise God. And He has conquered death.

Thank God. I've got nothing to do with death. Nothing to do with the works of death except to overcome Him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of my testimony.

Thank God. And not loving my life, which is crucified with Christ, even unto death. But what is our hope? If you be not moved away from the hope of the gospel.

Why, my hope is the coming of Jesus Christ to redeem His purchased possession. My body has been bought for that very purpose. That it might be translated, that it might be changed, that it might be made like unto His glorious body.

Praise the Lord. And the Bible tells us what my program is. It's to count everything but refuse for that one thing.

The prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus is the victory of Calvary in my body. Hallelujah. And how is that victory going to be enacted? How is it going to be that I'm going to be ready for the coming of

the Lord? It's when now, step by step, I let Him work out in me to will and to do.

Step by step, I make my choice. Step by step and day by day and hour by hour, I let Jesus Christ live out His own life within me. If He doesn't work in me, this great salvation, I will not be saved.

He's got to do it. That's what He came to do. That's why He said, this is the work of God that you believe on Him whom He has sent.

God has sent Him. He said, I'll come again and receive you unto Myself. That where I am, there you may be also.

Is He with you? Tell me, has He come to you? Oh, yes, He has. He's baptized you with the Holy Ghost. Sure, but whom do you choose? Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.

Oh, have you chosen Him to be your King, to reign within you? We read in the Bible of a very strange meeting. There was Judas Iscariot, and I think lots of people do him a lot of wrong. They think he was a scalawag.

He wasn't. He was a disciple. He was an apostle.

He sat down with the other disciples. He was a minister. He cast out demons.

He healed the sick. He was close to Jesus. He walked with Jesus Christ for three and a half years.

He was sent out preaching the gospel. But there came a time when Satan made a bid for Him. The devil wanted to get in.

And Jesus was there, and Jesus made a bid for Him. The Bible says in that 13th chapter of John, He loved them unto the end. And He had warned Judas.

He told him, Judas, you get into a dump. You allow that dump to reign in you? What do I do when I allow my dumps and my shadows and my anger and my pride and my flesh to get the best of me? Why? Crucify Jesus Christ. They say, Jesus, get away from me.

I don't want you. I want the devil. You know, Judas was not a bit worse than you and I. And that shows that you can preach the gospel and still not let Jesus Christ reign.

That's the mystery. Christ in you. That's the great mystery.

That's salvation. It's when I actually and positively in the hour of testing and trial say, Jesus, I want you. I don't want myself.

That's when I work out my own salvation with fear and trembling. When in the hour of testing, when the flesh wants to get the best of me, I say, no, I belong to Jesus. I'm crucified with Christ.

That's what makes the difference. But how many times, oh, the devil doesn't have to come around and bring you a lot of cookies and a lot of chocolate eclairs and a lot of sweet things. What an easy time the devil has to get in.

What an easy time. It took nothing more than the salt. Jesus Christ dipped the salt in vinegar.

And maybe there was a little bit too much salt on it and it just was enough to get through this man. It doesn't take very much. Oh, how little it takes for us to flare up and to get hoppy and to be sensitive.

And when we exercise flesh, and it doesn't take much of a crack to let the devil in. Isn't that strange? Beloved, it's a question of whether Jesus Christ really possesses my heart. We'll never know him.

I'll never possess Jesus unless I let him in my heart. Unless I open my heart. Unless I let him be me.

That's the great hope. He says we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. We're members of his body unto good works, which God hath preformed, ordained, that we should walk in them.

Why don't I choose Jesus? If I do, I have to good works. Filled, filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ. What is my tree filled with? What kind of fruit? What is it that people see in me? Do they see Jesus? Do they find love? Love.

The love of God. Oh, we're so satisfied to be Christians, to have the baptism, to come to good meetings. Well, Judas had all that.

But when it came to an issue, the devil had an easy time to slip in. And once the devil comes in, you're lost. But you know, it's so simple and so easy just to play, to play a little bit with the flesh.

I gotta have my little fling now. I gotta let this fellow know that I'm mad at him. I've got to have just the little fling.

Brother, that means crucifying Jesus Christ. Light has come into the world, and men love darkness rather than the light. Do I love light? What is light? Why, God is light.

God is light. And if I dwell in the light as he is in the light, every occasion of stumbling is taken away. There's love and joy and peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

We've known that a long, long time. Why is it that we still exercise flesh? Why is it that the devil has such an easy time to knock us off our pins and to overcome us? Why is it? My nephew spoke a while ago about God's great program. Beloved, we would have been there long ago if the saints of God had not exercised flesh.

I know more about that than anybody in the city of New York or maybe anybody in the whole world. And I've never mentioned it to anybody. I've never said anything to anybody.

But I can tell you honestly that the Lord would have come 50 years ago or 40 years ago if some of God's top-notch saints had not exercised flesh. And it was the nice kind of flesh, the spiritual kind of flesh. Beloved, we never get rid of this dirty flesh unless we let Jesus Christ be the one.

It's got to be Jesus, not my spiritual self. I must make my choice and I must do like the apostle Paul, determined not to know anything save Jesus Christ but Him crucified. He'll never be mine unless I receive Thee crucified, unless I'm dead with Him.

They're enemies of the cross of Christ. Oh, we want the crown. We want the glory.

We want the unction. We want the blessing. We want divine healing.

But we don't want death to sell. We don't. How many of us are top-notch saints until somebody touches us in a sensitive spot? And then where are we? Why isn't it? Why isn't it? Judas, Satan entered into him after his son.

Satan. Up to that time, he had a wonderful chance. Jesus was there.

Jesus wanted to enter him. What does it say? I stand at the door and knock. If any man open the door, I'll come in.

Why isn't he in? Why isn't Jesus on the throne? Why doesn't Jesus have complete charge of my mind, of my soul, of my attitudes, of my feelings? Our sister talked about a time when people could wipe their shoes on her and she didn't mind at all. Why isn't it like that today? It isn't like that because I choose the flesh. I choose myself.

I make provision for the flesh. And when I do that, I say deliberately, Jesus, get away from me. I can't have you right now.

Just now, I've got to have my fling. Just now, I've got to exercise flesh. And sometimes it's done in such a way that we fool ourselves, but God knows what whited sepulchers we are.

We put on a coat of whitewash. We put on a very spiritual exterior. Beloved, I tell you something.

There is no hope. There's positively no hope for me or for my flesh or for my heart. Absolutely none.

Except Jesus. But Jesus is the way. Jesus is the way.

Oh, hallelujah. And really, it's a shining way. Oh, it's a marvelous way.

Oh, this is the thing that charms me. That Jesus is mine. That God Almighty didn't send Moses to me.

Nor Elijah. Nor Daniel. Nor Job.

Nor Noah. But he sent his son to me. And his son begs an entrance into my heart.

His son begs to reign. He begs me. I think I've been seeking him.

Oh, I talk about how I sought him. No. He has sought me.

Beloved, he's seeking me this morning. Jesus Christ is here. Jesus in all his majesty and beauty and glory is here.

And if I'm wise at all, and the Bible says, this is wisdom. Even Christ our righteousness. And when I put on the Lord Jesus Christ, that's my life's job.

Talking about this year. What are you going to do this year? What are you going to do this year? Or let me ask you, what are you going to let Jesus Christ do for you this year? We ought to ask ourselves that question. What do you think the Lord is able to do with me this year? We have our plans.

And oh, how quickly we're satisfied. We're satisfied when God uses us and God blesses us. We've often seen that with people, even with ministers.

When they have a nice little congregation, then they sit down. I sit here and cut bacon. They don't think of growing anymore.

They don't think of reaching out anymore. Mrs. Brooks was telling me about the early days of their faith home. When Mrs. Robinson was led of God to start that faith home.

I'll tell you something which you don't need to quote, but Mrs. Robinson was then gifted with all the gifts of the Holy Ghost. That home was begun with all the apostolic gifts and more than Paul had had and anybody else had ever experienced. That's how God started that home because she had prayed through.

The Lord said to me one day, she prayed through. She loved through. She obeyed through.

She believed through. And there was a perfect job of God and God meant to bring others into that same experience. But when they began to prophesy and dance in the Holy Ghost and they had unspeakably marvelous meetings, they never dreamed of such a thing.

My, the marvelous way in which God manifested himself in those meetings and these people, the Brooks's and the Judd's and the Mitchell's and others, they came into such power. Mrs. Leggett told me how that they would walk downtown and they would purchase things and the Holy Ghost did everything. Walked in their feet and chewed the food in their mouths and everything was under the control of the Holy Ghost.

Now Mrs. Brooks said, now we were the prophets. My, the word of God was fire in their mouth. They never spoke any word themselves.

But they said, that the difference between us and Mrs. Robinson was this. She still went on seeking the Lord. We didn't.

We found out, she said, that we could prophesy and during the day live rather careless lives. But Mrs. Robinson was not like that. She still prayed all night.

She still fasted for days and weeks on end. She still sought the Lord. She was not through.

Oh, when you and I are through, then we might as well close shop and go to hell. Better for us. But oh, I want to scale the utmost height.

Oh, Jesus Christ, until you are my experience, until you are my life, until I'm not moved away from the hope of the gospel, I shall never be satisfied till I wait with thy likeness. And beloved, that hope is kept alive in my soul through praying without ceasing, without ceasing, waiting upon the Lord. Teach me thy way.

Lead me in thy truth and teach me for thou art the God of my salvation. On thee do I wait all the day. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. God, I must have your salvation. We want to be saved to have a comfortable life.

We want to seek the Lord so that when Jesus comes we may be ready. But you know that bright groom is seeking a beauty that we don't understand. We're to be like him.

What is God going to do for me this year? What is his plan? I'll tell you something. It's way beyond your own plan. Isaiah 55.

Let the wicked forsake his way, his way, his way. Who are the wicked? Why, we are the wicked. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let him return unto the Lord.

For my thoughts are higher than the heavens. Oh, to think the thoughts of God. That's God's plan.

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Could God do that? He could have done that long ago if we had given him a chance. But we take that sop and Satan enters.

Satan's waiting. Do you know that the Bible says that he goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour? Who is he after? Not the world. That world belongs to him.

He's after the saints. He's after the children of God. He's after you and me.

And if I don't watch and pray, I'm lost. When the railroad station in Nairobi, Africa, was built, there was a lot of trouble because of a man-eating lion. And this lion walked off every day with some natives until he had killed some 300 natives.

And now they were building the railroad station and they got a tin roof on top. And here, while they were working in this station, the lion was on top of the roof trying to scratch open that tin roof and get at them. They already had a telegraph wire and so they telegraphed to Mombasa or one of the nearest stations to please help them.

So they sent three hunters down in a railroad car, special car. The car was side tracks there at Nairobi and these three hunters were there to watch all night and to kill this lion. And so two of them slept and one watched.

That's the arrangement they had. And then they would rotate. Now the fellow had to sit at the entrance.

This car had a sliding door. The door was open and he sat there with his gun across his knees. Sat there on the stoop waiting for the lion to come along.

The lion came along and found him asleep. And he jumped right over him into the car where the others were sleeping and this fellow woke up and also ran after him and then the door went shut. And here was this man-eating lion with three fat Englishmen and all he had to do was to pick out the fattest.

And fortunately he picked out the one that was supposed to watch. Took him in his mouth through the window with him. Next day they found his watch chain.

Rule Britannia. God save the Queen. She needs it if she has watchmen like that.

Could you not watch? A roaring lion going about. But what is Jesus Christ going to do for me this year? He's got a plan. Do you know that? God has a plan.

They that are with him are called. Called. Called with a holy calling.

How little we know about this holy calling. I'm so glad that Edmund spoke of it. That's our call.

If you be not moved away from the hope of the gospel Jesus Christ is our hope. He's the hope of the whole world. But what when the virgins go to sleep and instead of keeping the door open and being watchful and looking for the Lord to come that's the reason he hasn't come.

When he comes he comes for the salvation of the whole world. That's what he died for. But before he can come he's got to have a bride.

He's got to have watchmen that let him in. And the church isn't thinking of it at all. They used to ask Dr. Cadman he was a minister of a Presbyterian church here in Brooklyn and someone asked him they had daily questions whether he believed the Lord was coming in this age.

He says heavens no don't think anything like that. That's thousands of years off yet. A preacher.

A Presbyterian minister. What can you expect of the flock? But beloved we have a hope and what is this hope? What is it? Have I accepted it? Oh beloved if I have accepted it Jesus Christ will not leave me in the dark. He will not.

He has gripped me Paul says. And one thing I do I count everything but refuse for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. My Lord how will I know him if I don't know him as the king in my heart.

If I don't let him reign. If I don't let Jesus Christ overcome in me what will be the result? Why then I will be overcome. And that man eating lion will walk off with me and maybe they'll find my watch James.

But they won't find me. Who is the overcomer in your life? Oh that's your choice I tell you Jesus Christ will make you more than conqueror. But why do we choose the flesh? Why does the flesh have such an easy time to run away with us? Why is it that we make such big statements and we talk about being filled with the Holy Ghost and when it comes down to brass tanks we live in the flesh.

But what is God going to do for us this year? You'd be surprised if you knew. You'd be surprised if you knew what God could do if you gave Him a chance. What could God do? He'd crucify your flesh.

That's where we bought. We like to hang on like a cat to a sausage. And if it isn't a sausage then at least like my brother and I when a minister, a missionary came for a visit in our home they get a sausage for supper.

We never got that you know. But we got the strings that were attached to the two ends you know. Mother would say, Hans what are you bawling about? Why Godfrey has a longer string than mine.

Yeah but you can't eat it. No but you can lick it. And so we want to lick a little bit just a little bit.

We just want to have a little fling a little taste of the flesh. Just let self have. It won't do much harm.

Listen it'll kill you. If you live in the flesh you shall die. Oh for people who want Jesus.

Who want the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh this wonderful plan of God. When the devil got into power in this world through Stalin and Hitler and Roosevelt they all had their five year plans.

Did you notice that? Five year plan. And then a three year plan. And then another five year plan.

Mussolini had it too. What was that? Why the devil knows that his time is short. And he's got to fit his program into these five years the Russians did it one way.

They gathered all the slave labor they could get hold of. They took the preachers. They took the elite.

They took whoever they could get hold of. Millions of men and women and forced them into slave labor to cut timber. That's the service of the devil.

He'll do that with you and with me. But to serve the living and the true God there's a five year plan. Do you know that? Do you know when these seven seals begin to be broken? It's a five year plan.

The Lord told me one time He told me about a certain year. He said now it's five and five and five and three. That is God's plan.

And you could pursue that. You could see God was doing that. But you know what's the matter on God's side? He does not have slave labor camps.

He has to depend upon volunteers. He's got to depend on lovers. If any man love me he'll do my will.

But oh we love ourselves too much and so we run away from him. Oh where are the lovers of Jesus that want to know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. They're going to reign with Him not five years and not three years but forever and forever.

Beloved this service of the living and the true God is a tremendous issue. He that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God who also hath given unto us the earnest of the spirit and what has that spirit come to do? He has come to destroy the works of the devil and he needs you and me. He needs men and women that will walk in the spirit that will say no to the flesh will not make provision for the flesh but will insist on living in the Holy Ghost.

If you live in the spirit let us also walk in the spirit and if you live in the spirit you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. That's the fight. What is the result going to be? It's going to be this resurrection body and you know this resurrection body does not belong to the millennium but it belongs to this age.

The salvation is ready to be revealed in the last time. That's what the apostles worked for and today two millenniums have rolled around and isn't it time for the Lord to come? Isn't it time for you and for me to wake up? When Daniel saw in the Bible that it was time for the captivity in Babylon to end he didn't say well let the Lord do it but he set his face unto the Lord his God to confess his sins and the sins of his people and to call on God and he never gave up until the angel came. And doesn't the Bible talk about the elect of God that cried to him day and night and that they shall be avenged speedily and doesn't Jesus Christ complain that when he comes again he won't find much faith upon this earth? Oh children of God I'm glad we're here this morning I'm glad Jesus is here I'm glad the Holy Ghost is here I'm glad his word is here if his word means anything beloved it's the word of the Father the creative word that created the world and today it's the word that redeems me and glory to God the word that proceedeth out of my mouth shall accomplish oh let it accomplish in you and in me until we're filled with the fruits of righteousness but beloved it's a serious matter it were better for that man if he had not been born and isn't it strange that when Jesus says one of you shall betray me everyone said Lord is it I? they had no idea who it might be you know the wheat and the weeds and the tares they grow together sometimes you can't tell the difference but Jesus Christ knew from the very beginning he knew what Judas would do isn't it strange that in this assembly after 32 years there are people that are just as carnal as they were at the beginning some have left us for that reason they think they're more spiritual than we are but oh the blindness the darkness of the human heart the deceitfulness of this heart of ours makes it just hopeless oh that's why Jesus Christ is my hope thank God oh let me take him how simple how very very simple is the word of God rejoice evermore why that opens heaven to you rejoice evermore that's the key that opens all the

treasury of Jehovah delight thyself also in the Lord glory to God pray without ceasing number two in everything get fast this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you live like that for one year and see what will happen

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