

9 Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. 10 Love each other with genuine affection and take delight in honoring each other. 11 Never be lazy but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. 12 Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble and keep on praying. 13 When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. 15 Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!

17 Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. 18 Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

19 Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the LORD.

20 Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads."

21 Don't let evil conquer you but conquer evil by doing good.

These are great words any time. But maybe in these times – these are the words that we especially need to hear.

- It seems that everywhere we turn, we hear differing opinions, conflicting news reports, and even conspiracy theories (even from pastors).

Just yesterday I was sent a video of some pastor trying to explain how the COVID-19 virus is a set-up by the anti-Christ and the coming apocalypse.

He has some really way out thoughts:

- Like how the very word CORONA adds up to the number 666. (So, if you are a Corona beer drinker, you might be worshipping Satan).

- He also went on to explain how the word COVID stands for “Certificate of Vaccination I.D. 19 (which stands for A.I. which means artificial intelligence).
- There are theories about this – and how Bill Gates is working on a new, invisible “quantum dot tattoo” implant that will track who has been tested for COVID-19 and who has been vaccinated against it.
- And they say that all of this is ushering in the coming rapture and tribulation.

My purpose this morning is not to agree or disagree with these theories. This morning God has called me to tell you NOT TO BE OVERCOME.

I). In **Matthew 6:34**, Jesus tells us, “Don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”

A). In times like these it’s extremely easy to be overcome by worry and anxiety.

- Those things not only hurt us physically and emotionally but also spiritually.
- They allow Satan to bring doubts and fears into the lives of believers and to hamper our faith and take away our hope.

B). But the Bible tells us not to be overconcerned.

• Jesus asks a great question earlier in **Matthew 6**, “Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?” and, of course, the answer is NO.

• So, how do we keep ourselves from worrying? How do we keep ourselves from being overcome?

II). Again, don’t be overconcerned!

A). The Bible teaches us that the best way to overcome being overcome is to pray.

• **Philippians 4:6**, “Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all He has done.”

- In this time of separation, suffering, increasing numbers in sicknesses and in deaths (thankfully even more in recoveries) it can be too much!

- Folks, we can't go around trying to carry the burdens of the world on our shoulders.

- To be honest – we really can't handle most of our own burdens much of the time.

B). And that's why 1 Peter tells us to give all our cares and worries to God – not only can He handle them – He will handle them, because He cares for us!

III). At the same time, we must be careful not to be careless!

A). There are some things we must be careful to do!

- We must be careful not only for ourselves, but for others.

- And so, we will wear our masks, and use our hand sanitizer – not even for ourselves, but out of concern, consideration, and love for others.

- We will be careful and diligent about when we will open our sanctuary back up for inside worship – and whatever regulations we must have in place to do so.

B). The Holy Spirit, thru Paul gives us some wise instruction about this, in [1 Corinthians 10:23-24](#)

- You say, "I am allowed to do anything" — but not everything is good for you. You say, "I am allowed to do anything"—but not everything is beneficial. Don't be concerned for your own good but for the good of others.

- We need to be careful not to be careless – our carelessness may cause someone else suffering, sickness, or pain.

IV). Finally, don't be overconfident.

A). I appreciate the encouragement of our government leaders.

- It's good to be reminded that we are not going to let this time get the best of us.

- I appreciate the phrases and hash-tags like Kentucky Strong & We've got this.

- I appreciate reminders that "we'll get through this together." – and we will.

B). But, especially as Christians, let's be sure to remember just who the "we" are.

- **Philippians 4:13** gives us all the encouragement we need (this is the NLT) –

- "For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength."

C). Even Jesus Himself – when He was on this earth – depended on God the Father to see Him through each day. We can do no less.

- We are not overcome because we know that we are not alone.

- We are not overcome because we know that we are not acting in our own strength.

- We are not overcome because we know that our dependence – our trust – our hope is in God.

And because of this – we are not overcome!

Love one another.

- Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good.

- Work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.

- Rejoice in your confident hope.

- Be patient in trouble and keep on praying.

- Don't let evil conquer you – don't be overcome - but conquer evil by doing good.