

Becoming an Overcomer in Today's World

Certainty in an Uncertain World

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I. Introductory Remarks.

In this series of messages we are looking at what it means to be an overcomer in today's world and what we have to do become the kind of overcomers that God has called us to. Our calling as Christians is to deal positively with the world in which we live.

Jesus prayed that we would maintain our victory and our joy in the midst of all that the world tries to throw at us.

John 17:9-11 "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. ¹⁰"And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. ¹¹"Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.

John 17:13 "But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

John 17:15-18 "I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶"They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸"As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

In this particular message I want to talk about how we as Christians can maintain our hope and certainty in a world where our sense of certainty in what this world has to offer is decaying rapidly.

Today's world is fast becoming a very frustrating place to live and maintain any sense of security and comfort. But in Jesus we have hope, a hope that does not fade away.

- **My goal in this series of messages is two fold:**

1. To give us hope and certainty in an uncertain world.

2. To create in us an empathy and an understanding of this generation so that we can effectively offer them the hope that they need in this crazy world.

Some of us grew up with a paradigm that looked at the world with hope, anticipation, potential, growth, etc. We saw opportunities that were there if we wanted them. Youth growing up in today's world do not see these same opportunities. They are trying to adjust and adapt to a world that they perceive as being busted, which is why they are being called baby busters.

Some of us here today are from the "Baby Boomer" generation, but there is now a whole new generation coming on the scene know as the "Baby Busters."

"Baby Busters" are children born between 1965 and 1980, when the U.S. birthrate took a dive, thanks to the pill, legalized abortion, and shifts away from the traditional family. As a result, total births in the U.S. dropped from 72.5 million during the post war 'baby boom' years to 48-56 million in the 'baby bust' years. In 1975 the birthrate sank to 14.6 newborns per 1,000 American, the lowest in recent U.S. history.¹

The generational titles describe how the climate and attitudes have changed in recent years:

Baby Boomers: "Boom" – growth and potential, positive, exciting – sense of certainty.

Baby Busters: "Bust" – depicts the desperate and dismal end; failure. They feel like they have been handed a busted world – sense of uncertainty.

Their attitudes and feelings should be a reality check to the rest of us as to how the conditions of the world in which we live have been rapidly deteriorating over the last few decades.

II. General Characteristics of the Buster Generation.

1. They are a Hope-Less Generation.

¹ Time Magazine, February 23, 1987

A. There is No Hope for Economic Fulfillment.

- Five million mothers in their 20's are on welfare.
- 57% of busters say they will never have their own home.
- 54% of busters say they will never have financial security.
- 65% of busters believe they will never live as comfortably as their parents.
- They recognize the staggering implications of a trillion dollar national debt.
- They realized that they will have to foot the bill of Social Security and Medicare for a retired baby boomer generation.

B. There is No Hope for Vocational Fulfillment.

- Busters are stepping out of college into a recession.
- In 1991, 19.8% of people in their 20's were without work.
- Since 1989, corporate recruiting on college campuses is down 47%

C. There is no Hope for Relational Fulfillment.

- Busters have not learned healthy relational skills in light of the divorce and abuse in their homes.
- In 1990, 53% of the 20-29 year olds had not married.
- It's estimated that 60% of the buster marriages will end in divorce.

D. There is no Hope for Spiritual Fulfillment.

- They are deeply interested in spiritual matters but feel like the church has given up on them.

2. They Are A Pain-Filled Generation.

A. They've Experienced Pain Personally.

- Most aborted generation in history – one in every three fetuses during the buster years was aborted.
- The first “latch-key” kids.
- 40% of busters come from broken homes.
- 60% of busters will divorce.
- Child abuse rate tripled from 1976 to 1986.

- Teen suicide rate from ages 15-19 tripled from 1965 to 1985.

B. They've been Exposed To Other People's Pain Through The Media.

- Television has brought them every form of violence and pain.
- By age 20, the average buster has spent 20,000 hours in front of the T.V.

C. They are a Have-Not Generation.

- From the 1960's to the 1990's the proportion of household heads age 18-24 owning their own homes fell by one third.
- In 1990, three out of four young ménage 18-24 were still living at home.

This generation expresses the uncertainty of the world in which we all live in today. As Christians, do we have hope? Is there a certainty that God wants us to walk in? I believe there is.

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

III. Without Christ We Are Subject To The Elements Of The World.

Galatians 4:3-5 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. ⁴But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Ephesians 2:12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Because Christ has adopted us into His family through the new birth we are no longer subject to the elements of the world. All of the characteristics of the Baby Buster generation are elements of the world that we as Christians do not have to be subject to. God wants to give us a sense of certainty during these times. We are part of a kingdom that cannot be moved, even though the world is experiencing a shaking.

Hebrews 12:27-28 *Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. ²⁸Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*

Even though many of these things that were mentioned may have influenced our lives in one degree or another, when we are born into the kingdom of God, God wants to erase those effects from our lives and give us hope to live abundantly as overcomers in His kingdom as sons and daughters.

IV. Kingdom Principles for Living in Certainty.

1. Hold Fast to Your Confession of Hope.

Through the Word of God we are given many promises of God's provision for our lives. We must center our lives around what God's Word says to us not what the conditions of the world are saying. The Word of God is the truth that we must align our confession and faith with.

2 Peter 1:3-4 *...as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

Hebrews 10:23 *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.*

James 2:5 *Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?*

1 John 5:4 *For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world; our faith.*

We must set the thermostat of our faith in the position that God has promised and hold it there till the temperature or the fulfillment of the promises rise to that point.

2. Don't Let Possessions Become Your Center of Focus.

We must not allow ourselves to get sucked into measuring our success and possessions according to worldly standards. God's standards are altogether different. In the world, possessions are the center of most people's focus. We cannot afford to be conformed to the world in this area otherwise our focus gets turned to what we don't have rather than what God wants to pour into our lives through His promises.

1 Timothy 6:7 *For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.*

Hebrews 11:13 *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

3. Live For God's Will and Purpose.

James 4:13-15 *Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit";¹⁴ whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.¹⁵ Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."*

1 John 2:17 *And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*

4. Remain Loyal and Faithful To God No Matter What.

2 Peter 1:10-11 *Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;¹¹ for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

Revelation 3:10 *"Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.*

5. Keep Your Focus on Eternity.

1 Peter 1:3-5 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

V. Concluding Remarks.

If we are going to be a part of a kingdom that cannot be shaken, then we must endeavor to put these kingdom principles into practice in our lives. They will insure us of a life of certainty in the midst of a world that is drowning in uncertainty.

John 17:15-18 *"I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶"They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸"As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.*