

SERMON: OVERCOMING EVIL WITH LOVE
9-21-25

OPENER:

We are in a corporate fast right now. Why? It is important that the posture of our hearts is in the right place. This is a very strategic time for the church. It is a trying time. It is a time of testing.

Why did this shot ring out all across the world? It has stirred up all kinds of emotions and actions.... hatred, fear, division, discouragement, but also zeal, courage and unity.

This wasn't just a single assassination against an anointed and courageous young man and his family. This wasn't just a single act of violence but an attack against Christians everywhere and sharing our belief in Jesus Christ.

Whether we like it or not, there was spiritual arsenal that was strategically aimed at the church.

1. THIS IS A SPIRITUAL BATTLE

Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Again I say, we are in a spiritual battle and God has victory for us in this battle. But we have a choice. We can respond out of our spirit or we can respond in our flesh.

**TO WIN SPIRITUAL BATTLES YOU HAVE TO USE
SPIRITUAL TOOLS.**

2. WE FIGHT WITH SPIRITUAL WEAPONS

This morning I want to look at a powerful weapon that we have to hold onto in these times. There is nothing that can defeat this. It holds great power. It is spiritual and eternal. Nothing can conquer it or defeat it. It is the strongest spiritual weapon you have.

1 Corinthians 13 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. 4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. 13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Faith - Hope and Love. These three things will continue and remain. They will never end. Even when we go to heaven, there will be faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is LOVE.

I think through this incident that has occurred, God is testing His children. He is looking to see how we are going to respond. Are we going to respond out of love?

LET'S LOOK AT THE WEAPON OF LOVE:

1. LOVE TRIUMPHS OVER FEAR

1 John 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. To overcome fear we must know the perfect love of the Lord.

(listen to Pastor Jared's sermon about overcoming fear)

ILLUSTRATION:

We can have a partial revelation of God's love. We can know that God loves us, but that revelation can have holes and gaps, because of our personal experience with the love of the world. Those who have said they loved us and put our trust in them, but out of the weakness of their flesh they failed in proving their love. So we view God through the lens of our own experiences.

In the original Greek, the word for "perfect" (teleioō) means "complete" or "mature".

The revelation and knowledge of God's love being completed and matured in us builds confidence and trust. It replaces insecurity and the fear of being hurt or abandoned or rejected with a sense of security and belonging.

2. WE ABIDE IN LOVE

1 John 4:15-16 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

**WE LIVE IN GOD'S LOVE.
WE SHOULD WALK IN GOD'S LOVE.
REMAIN IN GOD'S LOVE.**

**OUR ACTIONS SHOULD BE MOTIVATED BY LOVE.
OUR CHOICES SHOULD BE MADE OUT OF LOVE.
OUR WORDS SHOULD BE SPOKEN IN LOVE.**

> Because of abuse we may have suffered, we can be fearful of being hurt or taken advantage of, and we can become insecure. And we can try to control everything and manipulate everyone in our life.

**WE NEED TO ABIDE IN GOD'S LOVE.
WE SHOULD BE CONSCIOUS OF GOD'S LOVE.
IT NEEDS TO BE MORE THAN JUST A BIBLICAL FACT FOR US, WE NEED
TO EXPERIENCE GOD'S LOVE DAILY.**

ILLUSTRATION:

I keep a journal of the things God has done in my life.

I will pull out my journals and read over what God has done. When I do it reminds me of how faithful God has been to me.

Romans 8:31-39 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written:

"For Your sake we are killed all day long;

We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

> As long as you refuse to let anything separate you from God's love, you will have the victory. The perfect love of God gives you courage.

> When love is the primary motivation, you don't act out from a place of anxiety.

>The love of God overcomes the fear of loss, failure, or unworthiness. The fear of lack, the fear of your safety, or the fear of lack.

Isaiah 41:10 Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

> To know perfect love is to know the character of God. And not just know the character of God, but to count on His character. To trust that He has your back. To know He will come to your aid. To know that He will fight for you, defend you, protect you, shield you, preserve you.

3. LOVE TRIUMPHS OVER OUR ENEMIES

John 13:34-35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

The way Christians treat each other is a visible testament to our faith. This love acts as a living example of the Gospel, showing the transforming power of Christ's love.

In a world divided, the command to love unconditionally and show mercy was a countercultural idea for the early church and is countercultural for us today.

1 John 4:18-21 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 We love Him because He first loved us.20 If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

OUR LOVE FOR OTHERS IS A RESPONSE TO GOD’S LOVE FOR US.

Matthew 22:37-40 Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

4. LOVE IS NOT PREJUDICE

Philippians 2:1-4 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

1) To be prejudice means we consider ourselves better than someone else, which is pride.

Matthew 7:12 whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets

2) To be prejudice means we are directly disobeying Jesus' command to treat others as we would want to be treated

1 John 4:20-21 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

3) To be prejudice shows that we are not fully loving God, since we are unwilling to love people created in His image.

Love is not prejudice.

It does not look down on others because of their political beliefs, their color, their culture, their sexual preference, their status in life, their sin.

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Love values others. Love is not prideful. Pride considers yourself better than others.

Joel 2:28-29

And it shall come to pass afterward

That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh;

Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,

Your old men shall dream dreams,

Your young men shall see visions.

29 And also on My menservants and on My maidservants

I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

Vs. 4-8 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8 Love never fails.

