

04 | Overcoming Sin

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Well, welcome back everyone to part four of the series that we've been on, Being Right with God. I don't know about you, but man, God has been opening up my eyes as we've been going through this series together every single day. Today I feel like it just keeps getting better and better. Today, we're going to be talking about something called Overcoming Sin. Overcoming Sin. Don't close this thing because you heard the sin word. I know sometimes when we hear sin, we often want to run. Like, that's not a word I want to hear. We want to always hear grace. But when we hear sin, it's like it freaks us out. But today we're going to talk about how do we overcome sin, really opening up God's Word and allowing God's Word to teach us how to overcome sin. The first thing I want you to know is this, you can overcome sin. Did you know that? I don't know if you knew that, but you and I can overcome the sin in our lives. And I want to read this scripture. How do we overcome sin? First, John, chapter one verses seven through eight says this, "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus Christ, His son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sin, He is faithful and

just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." All unrighteousness. The first thing we ought to know is this, How do we overcome sin? We got to bring our sin to light. That's right. We've got to bring our sin to light. How do we do this? Often I think we ask, "okay, so how do we bring our sin to light?".

Can I just share a story? And I'm going to kind of intermingle my testimony with really how God set me free. But I remember when I was in high school, I had a really, really, really strong addiction to lust. I was addicted to pornography for a really long time in high school. I was exposed to it at a very young age. When I was exposed, I just really got into this pattern of being addicted to it. And when I got into high school, it really didn't help. I joined the basketball team and that didn't take anything away, in fact, I feel like it really added to the struggle of this sin in my life. And I remember when I was 17, 16, 17, I came to this place in my life where I really wanted to be free from sin. I really wanted to be free. And I remember I had this conversation with God and I said, God, how can I be free? I was stuck in shame, was stuck in guilt. Did you know, by the way, let me just stop for a moment, that sin kills, sin destroys, sin kills. In fact, James, chapter one verses 14 and 15 says this, "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin and sin when it is full grown, brings forth death." Sin kills. And I

found myself as a 16, 17 year old girl, found myself being destroyed by the sin of lust. And I had this conversation with God. I said, "God, how do I overcome sin?" This is the first thing He told me, He said, "First, you've got to repent and confess quickly. You've got to repent and you've got to confess your sin." I love what that scripture says in first John, that "if we confess our sin," listen, "if we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sin." Did you know Jesus doesn't get mad at us when we confess? You know, Jesus doesn't look at us and He's not ashamed at us because we've got sin. No, He's saying, "When you confess your sin," you know what He's saying, "I'm faithful and I'm just to forgive you for it." So the first thing that we have to do is we've got to, one, repent and confess.

This word repent, by the way, simply means to turn away from. Repent means I was doing one thing, I was sinning. I was doing one thing. But now guess what I'm doing, I'm turning from it. I was living this way, but now I'm turning from it. Repentance is to turn away. It's doing one big massive U-turn and saying, I'm now, I'm no longer living this way. I'm turning. So we've got to one repent. We've got to acknowledge it, right? We've got to acknowledge I've got sin in my life. It's this conversation, "God, I recognize I'm addicted. God, I recognize I'm stuck. I'm bound to this thing. How do I get free?" What am I doing? I'm acknowledging, I'm recognizing I've got a sin issue in my life. And now that I've recognized it, guess

what I'm doing, I'm going to repent and I'm going to confess. "God, I repent, Lord forgive me. I confess that as sin and I ask that You would forgive me, and that You would cleanse me from all into righteousness." You know where the enemy wants to keep us stuck is in darkness. Sin will grow and sin will destroy when we keep it to ourselves. Watch, sin will grow and sin will continue to kill and destroy our lives if we keep it in darkness.

You know my goal in life, I remember when I was 17, probably any young girl, you're always thinking like, "God, I can't wait to be married." Right? It's always girls, probably always talking about that the most. Probably more than guys. It's conversation. I wonder who I'm going to marry, I wonder all these things. And I remember when I was 16, 17, 18, I would always ask, the Lord, "God, I can't wait to be married." And I remember the Lord told me this, He goes, "You know, Nicole, marriage won't solve your sin issue. Right?" And I was like, Huh? And I remember at 16, 17, 18, the Lord began to teach me, "Hey, start to prepare for your marriage. And this is how you do it. You free yourself from the sin of pornography. You allow Me to free you." And so the first thing is this, we've got to bring it to light. We're repenting and we're confessing. We're bringing it to the Lord "God, I've acknowledged this sin. God, here it is. I repent, and I confess." What's the second thing? How else can we bring it to light? Well, I encourage you that we've got

to bring it to light by sharing to somebody that we trust. In fact, James chapter 5:1 says this, "That when we confess our sins to one another," confess our sins and our trespass to one another, that's how healing actually takes place. So we confess to God and He forgives us. But when we confess to one another, guess what happens? Healing takes place.

And I remember and God revealed this to me. I wish I could tell you like, "oh, I can't wait to tell people my sin." Can I be honest with you? I remember I told God, and this is a truthful conversation. I said, "God, I'm just going to tell You, but I'm not going to tell anybody else. Just, it's going to be me and You. We're going to keep this between ourselves, and I'm just going to overcome this by you and me." And that's pretty much it. And I'm sure I heard the Holy Spirit say to me, "Nicole, you know, you've got to tell somebody. You've got to tell someone that you trust. You got to tell a trusted leader, a trusted mentor, trusted friend who will keep you accountable." And finally, over the course of, I think I wrestled with God for like three months, is like now I'm not going to tell anybody. Finally I was like, "Dude, I got to go. I got to get to that point because I was still struggling. I confessed. But I was I needed help. I needed someone to help me walk this out." And I remember I went to church and I had a trusted leader. And I went there and I said, "Hey, can I tell you something?" And I exposed, I brought my son to light. I said,

"Hey, I've been struggling with this for a very long time. I was wondering, would you help me walk this out?" Can I tell you, we can't just tell God that that's the most important. We've got to confess our sin. But to overcome sin, we need the help of people. We need accountability. We have the strength of people to say, "Hey, would you come alongside with me? Would you come along alongside this journey with me and help me overcome this?" And I'm telling you, I didn't want to admit it. I was embarrassed by it, but thank God that I did. Do you want to know why? Because today, I no longer struggle with those things. I don't even think about those things. But I bet you if I did not allow God to speak to me, I didn't allow myself to obey what He was saying. Probably would still be stuck in the very thing that I desperately wanted to be out of.

So how are we overcoming this? One, we repent, we confess quickly. Two, we're bringing it to light to other people. And I want to share this. The third point is this, we need to fill ourselves with the Word of God. We need to fill ourselves with the Word of God. John, chapter eight versus 31 and 32 says this, "Then Jesus said to those who believed Him, if you abide in my Word, you are My disciples indeed." And check this out, "and you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. If you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth and the truth will set you free." As you know, God's word is truth. I believe we shared this in the previous

teaching, that God's Word is truth. And John is saying this, that when you know His truth, it'll set you free. Often we've heard the saying before, and I've said it probably many times, that when you're free, the Bible says this, "Whom the son sets free is free indeed." So when you ask, "God, would you free me?" Can I tell you you're free? But there's a difference with being free and then walking in that freedom, and walking in that freedom is us choosing, "I'm going to overcome this sin and I'm going to walk in freedom." And here's what I got to do. I've got to repent, I've got to confess. I've got to bring to light with accountability. But now I've also got to fill myself with God's Word. I've got to fill myself with God's Word. I'm going to overcome this by filling myself with God's Word. When I struggled with this sin with lust, one of the things Lord told me is, He goes, "I want you to find every Scripture in the Bible that talks about being free from lust." So I did. I went from in fact, I Googled it. Thank you, Google. We got it, we got too easy these days. But I googled from Genesis to Revelations, "Give me all the scriptures talking about me being free from sexual sin, lust." And all of a sudden, as I went through all these scriptures, God said, "I want you to write on a note card all the Scriptures that speak out to you." So I did. I scrolled through and I began to write. And I wrote and I wrote and I wrote and I wrote. And by the time I got done, I probably had 10 to 12 different scriptures that really, really, really spoke to me. And the Lord said, "This is an article. I want you to get

those note cards and I want you to put them around your wall. I want you to put them around your wall." So I did. I got those note cards and I had those scriptures of me being free and I put them around my wall in my room, and can I tell you, every night before I would go to bed, when I would feel the temptation,, because the temptation would come and knock. You know what'd I do. I'd look over and I'd see a scripture on my wall. And I remember there's this one scripture, it says this, "Free all youthful lust." And I remember when the temptation would come, you know what I would do? I would combat it with God's word. I begin to fill myself with God's word. I begin to say Scripture. "No, I'm fleeing all youthful lusts. No, I'm pursuing. I'm walking in holiness." And when we fill ourselves with God's word, I'm telling you, it helps us. Now, not only does it help us, but it allows us to walk in the freedom that God has for us.

Can I tell you, we can't overcome sin if we do not fill ourselves with God's Word. God's Word is the truth, We just read this, God's word is the truth. And this truth, it sets us free. This truth, it sets us free. So when we know it, that's what it says, when you know it, you are free. And as I began to meditate on the Scripture, here's what happened. I wrote those note cards down and I begin to walk around. I begin to meditate on it. I remember I'd go to school and maybe a thought would pop up and I would just say, "Nope, flee all youthful lust." I might be in practice, right? And I would say, "Nope.

That's not me, I'm feeling all youthful..." You know what I'm doing? I'm meditating. That word meditate simply just means to ponder, to really think. It's not like, "ummm," it's pondering on God's word. I'm getting God's word so in my life that when the temptation knocks, it's not me falling for it. It's not me going, "oh, well, I am just so weak." No, I'm strengthening myself. No, I'm getting His word. I'm saying nope, nope, nope. Flee all youthful lust. I remember one time in particular, I was driving with a group of friends and we were on our way to the beach. And on the way the beach was on the freeway and people were talking and music was playing. All these things were going on. And I remember just sitting there and all of these thoughts, these lustful thoughts, came into my head. You know, it's so funny. Here's what I did. I just I said it, I suppose, quite loud because people heard me, but I just said, "Nope, it's not my thought." And I had heads turn and they all looked at me. They're like, "What are you talking about?" And I just kind of ignored them, was like, Sorry, my bad. And I whispered underneath my my breath, I said, "God, I thank You. I'm going to flee all youthful lust, but flee all and pursue You. I'm going to walk in holiness, I'm gonna walk in purity. You know what I was doing? It's just getting God's word. I was meditating, I was just pondering. I was just getting His Word in my life. Why? Because I need to know His Word. Because when we know the Word and we know the truth, the truth will set us free.

So here's a couple of things we said. How do we overcome sin? We're really breaking it down. So simple today is we repent, we confess. Quickly. We're bringing it to light. We're filling ourselves with God's Word. Well, what's the next thing? Next thing is this probably one of the most important? Actually, they're all important. But I love this one. It's we've got to cut off the source of sin. We've got to cut off the source of sin. I want to read to you, Matthew five 29:30, it simply says this, "If you're right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you, for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish than for your whole body to be cast into hell." What is this saying? Hey, if something is causing you to sin, it's saying literally cut your arm off. Right? Don't do that. Don't pluck your eye out. But what is it saying? It's showing us this extreme thing where it's saying, "Hey, if something causes you to sin, get that out of your life." Can I tell you, one of the first things that I had to do was I cut off secular music. Just, it was just a bunch of junk that I was putting into my ears. And it's so funny. Someone once told me, they said, "Have you ever read the lyrics of the songs you're listening to?" And my response was, "Oh, no. I just, I love the beat of it, you know, I just I love the beat." And he was like "Have you ever read the lyric?" And I was like, "No." And I

remember one day, I would listen to a lot of rap music and I was like, you know, let me just Google the lyrics. And I read, I just read the lyrics. I didn't even put the music, I just read the lyrics. And as I was reading the lyrics, I was like, "Oh, my goodness, no wonder, no wonder I'm stuck. No wonder I'm bound, no wonder I can't be free." Why? Because I'm allowing junk, I'm allowing these things to get into my life.

The second thing, you know what I did? I stopped watching certain movies, certain TV shows. There's like a I won't even watch a certain like PG 13, I won't even go to rated R films. Why? Because I won't allow those things. It looks extreme, but I'm free, right? It feels like, "Are you really going to?" But I'm free. And we've got to cut off the source. So if our thing, like me, if my thing was that I've got this sin issue, I'm addicted to things on the Internet, I'm addicted to things on my phone. Then I'm going to do things to cut it off. And then I'm also going to do things to protect me. Right. So I bring that accountability and I tell them, "Hey, can you lock my phone? Hey, can you make sure I don't have certain songs on my phone? Hey, can you make sure that on my laptop you can see what I'm on?" Can I tell you my friends, my accountability partners can see everything I search. They can see everything I look at. Why? Because it seems extreme, but I just don't want to go back. It seems extreme, but I'm cutting it off. I'm cutting off the source of where the sin is coming from. And I want to encourage

you today, friends, that you and I, we can overcome sin because of Jesus. Because of Jesus, we can overcome sin. But friends, can I tell you, we've got to walk this process of freedom. You are free. Whom the sun sets free is free indeed. But I encourage you today, would you and I choose to walk in the freedom that Jesus already gave us. Let's confess. Let's repent quickly. Let's bring it to light. Let's fill ourselves with the Word of God, and let's cut off the source of our sin.

Can I pray for you. Father, I thank You for who You are. God, I thank You for sending Your son Jesus to not only done the cross for us, but Lord, because of You, we can walk in freedom here today on Earth. God, I ask that You would strengthen my brothers and sisters to walk in the freedom that You've given us. God strengthen us to cut off the sin, strengthen us to bring to light and to accountability our sins. Strengthen us to confess and to acknowledge our sin, Lord. God, we thank You that when we do, You're not mad at us, but you're faithful, and just to forgive us of our sins. God, we love you and we bless you. In Jesus name, we all say Amen, and amen.