

Consumed with Evil vs Good

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[0 : 0 0] A new section of our study on perfecting that which is lacking, and in one of the areas I want to discover here this morning and continue on is this tendency to be consumed with what the Bible calls evil and not so much with good, and I showed you last Sunday that from the very beginning, from the Garden of Eden, going forward, man fell, he disobeyed God, and then he didn't kind of pick up this desire for righteousness and for goodness and to follow the Lord, but rather every imagination or thought of his heart was only evil continually, and the Lord said it's that way from his youth, and so we saw that last week, and for some reason we have a tendency to go toward what's wrong rather than toward what's right, and even when you get saved and the Lord Jesus Christ is in you, those desires and affections and infatuation with what's wrong doesn't just disappear, but as I'll say today, it needs to be overcome, and it needs to be put down, and last week we looked at two things, and

I want to add a third one to it, I said last week we must replace evil actions with good actions, depart from evil and do good, and I gave you some scripture there from Romans 12, from Ephesians 4, a second thought there was that we must replace our evil thoughts with good thoughts, and there was Philippians 4 in verse 8, which I won't quote because I know I'll mess it up, but it's whatsoever things are good and honest and just and so forth, lovely, of good report, those are the things to think on these things, but there's plenty of things of evil report in our life today, and there's plenty of evil in the world today, and for some reason you could drive down the highway, and if you see smoke or you see balloons, you're going to look at the smoke, you're going to turn and you're going to slow down, you're going to be consumed with, it's just, it's, I don't know what it is, it's in the nature to be infatuated with things that are destructive or that have gone wrong, and evil in your Bible is not always a reference to sin, it's the Lord creates evil, the Lord, if a nation is wicked before Him, He pronounces evil upon them and brings destruction upon them, so the word can refer to more than just unrighteousness, Christ said that sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, teaching us not to focus on tomorrow's problems, but rather to seek ye first the kingdom of God, and I'll stress that a little bit later today. A third thing I want to point out about replacing evil with good is we must replace evil speaking with speaking good, and I'm not just saying this just to come up with a third thought here, this is all over the book, and in 1 Peter and 2 Peter, this comes out really strong, so I thought we'll just run it through a few verses.

First, I'll do this backwards. Look at chapter 2 and verse 12. 1 Peter 2, 12.

I'll back up to 11. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evildoers. That's what they do, the Gentiles, the lost, speak against you as evildoers, and you're supposed to have such a clean testimony that he says that by your good works which they behold, they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Verse 15 says, for so is the will of God that with well-doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. You can shut their mouths by living right, always clean, having a clean and clear conscience and testimony. Now the point is, the Gentiles speak evil.

[4 : 17] against you as if you're the evildoer when they are. Look at chapter 3 and verse 16. 1 Peter 3, 16.

Having a good conscience that whereas they speak evil of you as of evildoers. It's the same context and same idea here, but the point I'm showing you is that the lost speak evil of you. They say things that aren't true or that are attacking or find fault. That's their conversation. That's their gossip. That's what fuels them. Did you hear about that? They speak it. It comes out of them. It flows from them.

Alright, let's see another one. Look at chapter 4 and verse number 4. It describes verse 3 that you were with the Gentiles and you walked in that lifestyle. And then in verse 4, wherein they think it's strange that you run not with them to the same excessive riot, speaking evil of you. Because that's their nature. That's what they do. When you come out from among them and be separate from them, then what do they do? They speak evil of you and attack you.

Okay, next one. Look at 2 Peter chapter 2. Turn a few pages. 2 Peter chapter 2 and verse number 2. Speaking of these false teachers, 2 Peter 2 verse 2.

And many shall follow their pernicious ways by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. Because that's what they do. Look at verse 12. But these, as natural brute beasts being made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not and shall utterly perish in their own corruption.

[6 : 06] Now come back to 1 Peter chapter 2. And I want to show you that there's something supposed to change in your life and in your mouth when you trust Jesus Christ.

Whether you're a babe in Christ or a fully grown and maturing Christian, that kind of speech or that way of thinking and talking about others is supposed to stop.

Look at verse 1. 1 Peter 2 verse 1. Wherefore laying aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisies and envies and all evil speakings, as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby.

I'll point out here that in replacing all of these negative things, you're to desire something that's pure. Something that's holy that can sanctify and cleanse your way.

The sincere milk of the word. And what are those things that you lay aside? I actually read this verse this week in reading my Bible and it just struck me. These aren't the big ones that you jump on a new Christian for.

[7 : 17] You're smoking and you're drinking and you're cussing and you're chewing and you're partying and you push all that, which, amen, that should all be cleaned up too. But he says, lay aside the malice, the guile, that's deceitfulness.

The hypocrisies, you're being fake. You're trying to make somebody think you're something you're not. Envy and evil speakings. Those things from the inside need to get purged out of you and desire the word of God.

It'll get it out. All right, look at chapter 3 and verse number 10. 1 Peter 3, verse 10, talking about replacing our evil speaking with speaking good.

Verse 10 says, And remember Job last week, verse 11, So the lost or the way of the Gentile is to speak evil and to have no filter on their tongue.

And I don't just mean saying curse words, but just talk about anybody you want to anytime. Speaking lies and hypocrisy, corrupt communication, foolish talking, whisperings, backbidings.

[8 : 41] There's a long list of ways in the Bible that we can use our tongues for evil. You know what James says about your tongue? Do you remember what James says about your tongue? It's an unruly evil.

It's a world of iniquity. It says the tongue is set on the fire of hell. The stuff that comes out of your mouth, it gives hell the root for that.

That's interesting. Now we're to replace evil with good. Let me take you to just a few quick spots and then we'll move on and shift gears. Find Ephesians chapter 4.

I think we came here last week. Ephesians 4. And right after that we're going to get Colossians 4. But just go to Ephesians to begin.

So the word of God is given to us to do a whole lot more than just reveal God to us. Or to give us truth and tell us where we came from and where we're going.

[9 : 48] It's not just given to you so you can get saved. This is supposed to guide your life. It's supposed to be your authority. This is how you live now. Look at verse 29.

Chapter 4. Verse 29. Let no, not a little, but no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.

I want to point out it can be in your heart. But it's not supposed to come out of your mouth. Why is that? Because it's supposed to be put down. It's supposed to be overcome.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good. The evil is to be replaced with good.

To the use of edifying that is, the words, the communication that comes out of your mouth, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

[10 : 53] It doesn't say minister gossip unto the hearers. Minister grace unto the hearers. I have a tendency, and this is a fault of my own and in my flesh, of just saying something pretty plain and direct without thinking it through or being cautious of how it's going to affect the hearer.

I have a way, it's in me and it's always been, and I believe it's gotten better, I think, over the years, of just saying it the way I would think it.

And the way I've really noticed this was when I would reply to somebody in email form, that I would just reply, and then I'd go back and read it and think, now if I'm them reading this, how are they going to take it?

And so I look at the first line, I think, oh, that's what I want to say, but that's probably going to set them off a little bit or maybe offend them a little bit by telling them they're wrong and then giving them what's right.

They're probably going to not even read what's right because they're going to be upset that I told them they're wrong. So then I have to change it, and I adjust it so that it ministers grace.

[12 : 14] Look at Colossians 4, and I'll show you what I mean. Look at Colossians 4. I adjust the way I'm trying to convey my message to them so that they don't get offended and so that we can actually get something accomplished.

Look at Colossians 4, verse number 6. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer every man.

So you're supposed to minister grace unto the hearers. And what I found out was my tendency was just to be black and white, blunt, and expect them to sort it out and figure it out and be okay with it when the truth is they're a little bit tender and can be offended easily.

And so what advantage do I have by offending somebody? Now, I'm still going to do it. I'm probably going to offend you sometime. Just have grace with me, and I'll try to have grace with you and have charity amongst yourselves.

But I find that I have to reword it and say, hey, that's a great job. So I'll give you a quick example of this. I was working with somebody about a graphic, about a banner.

[13 : 34] This was six months ago or maybe longer. And we were going. It was a woman. She was a Christian. And I was afraid that it would be hard for me to convey to her exactly what I wanted if she kind of had her own ideas.

And she was the professional or the one that was doing the work for free, and she was trying to be a blessing. And I was genuinely afraid I would offend her. So I wrote what I thought about the graphic she sent me.

It wasn't what I wanted at all. And I couldn't just say, this is not what I wanted. Start over. I had to say, that looks nice. And I like what you did with such and such.

But here's what I'm, and I have to softly turn it to where I'm trying to go, and we were able to get somewhere. But my first reply was, this is trash. I don't want this.

And how would that have gone over? It wouldn't have gotten anywhere. I never would have heard back from her. And so what I had to do was season my reply with some grace.

[14 : 42] And this is not natural to me, and it may not be natural to you. But it's something in the new man, and it's something in our communication. We're supposed to be that which is good to the use of edifying.

It's not edifying to tell somebody they look like trash. I don't like, there's plenty that you could come up with. But our speech is supposed to be different than it was, not evil speaking.

Purposely be gracious with your words. The world pretends that it's okay to speak your mind. Maybe you think that.

Maybe you've been deceived to think it's okay to speak your mind. You have an opinion, and you're allowed to tell everybody what it is. Well, that's not true if you're a believer, and you desire for your words to be seasoned with grace, and your words to edify somebody else.

It's not true if there's evil thoughts or evil speaking in your heart. It's not true that you should speak your mind. If you would just be honest, the times you get into trouble, or the times you get in fights and odds with it, was when you do speak your mind without putting a check on the words that come out of your mouth.

[16 : 01] When you just blurt out what you feel. How often does that turn out well for you? Somebody tells you, well, you're supposed to speak your mind. No, you're supposed to put a check on your tongue and decide, is this edifying?

Is it good? And if it's not, then find a way to turn it into something gracious. You can, with the Lord's help, still convey what's on your heart, but do it in a gracious way.

You can do that. Your Bible's a very gracious book, by the way. As much as it condemns you, it tells you what you need, and it says it in such a way that you can get it and do it, and not be just beat, beat, beat, beat, beat the whole time.

And that's kind of how your speech ought to be. Now, I need to move on from this and shift gears, but the thought there being replacing your evil speaking with speaking good. Don't be consumed with evil.

This thought is more about focusing on the good. Now, we saw from Genesis that man leans toward the evil. But when God saves you, He wants to sanctify you.

[17 : 11] He wants to renew your mind with His Word. But those tendencies still exist, don't they? The Bible calls us children of the day, as in no longer children of the night.

It calls us children of light, as in no longer children of darkness. And so, though the world hasn't changed at all, according to the Word of God, we should be changing.

And man has been consumed with evil from his youth. But we should start to switch and get away from that and walk away from that. I want to try to cautiously and graciously introduce something here.

Look at Galatians chapter 1. Galatians chapter 1. And we'll begin at the very first verse and read down a few.

Galatians 1.

[18 : 49] It is God's will.

The will of God and our Father to deliver us from this present evil world.

It is not talking about hell. He is not talking about your sins. What is He talking about? He's not talking about the rapture.

He's not talking about the rapture. He's not talking about the rapture. He's not talking about the rapture. He's not talking about this present, today, right now, evil world.

He wants you to be delivered from it, not infatuated with it, not working its will. You understand a lost man is part of the world.

[19 : 59] He is of the world. He is of the world. And yet God saves him and plucks him out of that. But what happens if a man just doesn't change anything about his life?

What happens if a man or woman just stays right in tune with what's going on and doesn't shift its attention or focus or thoughts toward the Lord? He's not been delivered.

We're going to come back to Colossians, but before that, take a look at John 17. John 17 is a prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ to His Father.

And he's praying for his followers. And he makes a few statements about them.

Number one, he says that they're not of the world. They're chosen out of the world. Let's see. Let's start in verse 14.

[21 : 03] John 17, 14. I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world.

You know why they're not of the world? Well, you might say, well, because they're saved. Well, I'd say more specifically is because Christ has given them thy word. Yes, believe on Jesus Christ.

You can escape the pollutions of this world. Doesn't mean you will, though. It's the will of God that you are delivered from this present evil world.

And you're going to do that by the word of God. I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Verse 15. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth.

[22 : 09] You see that verse? We know 17 so well. Sanctify them through thy truth. Praise God. His word is truth. But see it in the context of getting them out of the world.

They're not of the world anymore. They're different. I've given them thy word. They're not of the world. What's the difference between you and a lost man? Beyond as far as the way you live your life, it's not just that you are born again, Christ is in you, but you've changed how you live your life by the word of God.

It sanctifies you. It enlightens you. It teaches you. And you obey it. And Christ gave them his word, and he prays two things. He prays that God would keep them from the evil and sanctify them through the word of God.

Truth. These are important thoughts here as I'm trying to convince you of something. Now come back to Colossians chapter 1. Colossians chapter 1.

I want to point out here as we read a handful of verses. I want to point out as we read this a different focus of somebody who's not of the world anymore.

[23 : 43] A different drive. Something to put your affection on and your thoughts on and to be growing toward. So verse number 9 says, We don't even have to read it, but just think.

What knowledge are you filling your mind with on a daily basis? What consumes you? What attracts you in your down time?

What are you, that's knowledge that you're inputting through your eyes and into your mind. And Paul prays that ye be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

So that focus is now on God, on his will. In all wisdom and spiritual, spiritual, spiritual understanding. Verse 10.

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge, here it is again, of God.

[25 : 02] See how your attention and your desire and what you're putting in is all upward? It's toward the Lord. It's his will. It's him. Verse 11. Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness, giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Notice this. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.

So if you've been born again, the Lord has rescued your soul from hell. He has saved you and put in you a new man.

And that new man is now challenged to seek the kingdom of God, to seek the knowledge of God, to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He is to seek the knowledge of the will of God. You'll find that in the Bible. You're to grow in spiritual understanding and in wisdom and be strengthened with might.

[26 : 22] You'll be thankful to the Lord God. This will all start to happen all at once. And he translates you from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son.

You realize that we're not going to cover these verses, that when you get saved, he places you into his Son, Jesus Christ, into the body of Christ.

You are now bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. You're now member of his body. Christ being the head. Matter of fact, that's even verse 18.

He's the head of the body, the church. And back in Ephesians, he describes this even more detail. When he puts you in Christ, you are now in the kingdom of his dear Son.

Elsewhere we read last week, Matthew 6, to seek ye first the kingdom of God. I say this cautiously, and I'm not intending to offend anybody or to rile anybody up, but I do want you to have a focus on what the Bible tells you to do and how to live and who you are now.

[27 : 40] You've been taken out of this world, placed into Jesus Christ. And in Christ is holiness and sanctification and justification and righteousness.

And he is not interested in the kingdoms of this world. They're his for the taking down the road. And he will take them. For the moment, there's someone else who's called the God of this world.

You know who that is, right? He runs things. He's been given liberty to run things. The Lord Jesus Christ is one day going to take over the kingdoms of this world.

And in that day, we will shout, Alleluia! And say, the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ. And he's going to rule and reign in righteousness.

And that's where you're going to want to be, you're going to have a full realization of how the world should be run. How a government should be set up.

[28 : 42] In that day, you'll see it, you'll experience it, it'll be something like, you've read about it, the prophets prophesy about it, it's coming to earth.

One day. But today, you've been taken out of the kingdoms of this world. You've been called out of the Gentiles and placed into the kingdom of his dear son.

Let's keep reading a little bit. That was verse 13. He translated us into the kingdom of his dear son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.

For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers.

All things were created by him and for him. All right, verse 17. Focus. He is before all things and by him all things consist and he is the head of the body, the church.

[29 : 47] That's who you're a part of now. That's where your allegiance is. That's where your loyalty is. In the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that, notice this, in all things, he might have the preeminence.

For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. I want to draw your attention. If, let me say it like this, hope this comes across.

If you were dropped out of the sky and you found yourself, your eyes opened up for the first time ever to see light and you were in Ecuador or you were behind the wall or you were in China, let's say you were in Bolivia, let's, you were in Canada or you're in California and your eyes open and you have no history lesson, no knowledge of the past, no where did I come from, how did this place get settled.

You look at the sea, you could be in the Indian Ocean and looking out across that and you don't have anything and the only thing you have is a Bible. All right, let's just pretend the only thing that gets input into you is the scripture.

You know what you would believe? You would believe that God created the heaven and the earth. You would believe that right away because that's what it says right away. And you would go through and you would see that man is evil and man is against God and he's wicked.

[31 : 34] You would see that Jesus Christ is the redeemer of mankind and if you would apply the scriptures, you would trust Christ as your savior and then you would realize, I need to live for him and I need to let my light so shine before men that they may see my good works.

And you'll start to strive and you'll start to strive to please the father as it read there in verse 19. That's what Jesus Christ did and you'll see Jesus Christ as preeminent above all things.

You'll also see this world. Whatever country you're in, whatever country you're born in, you'll see it as this present evil world.

Any single one. There's not one country that's God's country and the rest of them aren't. You'll see the whole thing as the kingdoms of this world and Jesus Christ calling you out of that and placing you into his kingdom, spiritual kingdom and then you'll understand that one day he's going to give this whole thing a retrofit that's going to be something wonderful.

What I'm trying to do with this study here, at least in this portion of it, is cause you to not be consumed with what the Bible calls evil. To not be infatuated with the affairs of this life.

[33 : 01] No man that woth and tangleth himself with the affairs of this life that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. I don't want you to get sucked into things that are going on now or in the future, but rather stay focused on your calling and on what God wants you to do today in this world.

You're not of the world. Your battle's not with the world. Look at Colossians chapter 2. Colossians chapter 2 and start in verse number 6.

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Beware, beware Christian. You're supposed to be established in the faith and walking in him. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

Men and the world, beware. Beware that you're not sucked into things that are after men and after the world and not after Christ.

[34 : 30] Christ has called you out. Look at chapter 3. Colossians chapter 3 and verse number 1.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on the things on the earth.

You think it's just talking about boats? Think it's just talking about toys or money? It doesn't say that though, does it? It says the things. The things.

Let's keep that thought and let me turn you to another place. 1 John chapter 2. The things. Set your affection on things above.

1 John chapter 2. Verse 15 and 16 and 17.

[35 : 43] 1 John 2.15. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

It doesn't say he's not saved. He's loving the world instead of loving the Father. Who should you be loving? Who called you out of the world?

What's the Father want you to do right now? Verse 16. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away. Kingdoms rise and kingdoms fall. Don't set your affection on them.

Because the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. Remember when the Lord Jesus Christ was missing?

[36 : 48] As a young boy, adolescent, 12 years old, he's missing. His parents came back and found him. They found him in the temple. He was hearing.

You know what they do in the temple? They teach the scripture. They proclaim the word of God. And he slipped away from the temple. He slipped away from whatever everybody else was consumed with and got himself into the temple where the men that have devoted themselves to the scriptures were proclaiming and reading the scriptures.

And he heard them. And he asked them questions. And he said this. When the parents came back, wished ye not that I must be about my father's business?

He wasn't at the governor's house knocking on his door, signing some petition. He wasn't chasing down. He was going to where the word of God was being proclaimed and taught and was learning and hearing it and growing in it and asking questions about it.

And they were astonished at his answers, his understanding and his learning. They couldn't believe this young man had such insight or knowledge. It doesn't say that he was teaching them.

[38 : 10] It says that he was hearing them. Isn't that interesting? His father's business was going and hearing the word of God. Now I know that you have this, a lot of people have this idea, we need to stay informed.

We need to stay informed of our world around us and know what's going on. And it's hard to say, no, you shouldn't. I would never say, no, just go stick your head in the sand.

But I fear that people's staying informed is more of an excuse to stay consumed. And hours a day is not staying informed.

That's staying consumed. And I don't want to go down that road too much further, but remember what Jesus Christ said to a man who had a real deal situation at home.

His father died and he wants to go bury him. He said, let the dead bury their dead. Just let them do what they do. But go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

[39 : 13] Kingdom of God. Let that stuff take care of itself. You preach the kingdom of God. You stay focused on spiritual understanding and the knowledge of God and growing in grace.

You stay focused on the scriptures. Some of you guys in here are taking Bible courses online. I think that's a wonderful way to spend your evening, to spend your time.

If you feel so inclined and you have that ability and time, do it. What else would you be doing? You wouldn't know. You wouldn't know in five years what you did.

But you study that book, you'll grow. And you'll be more equipped in the kingdom of God. Last verse, and I'll just read this and we'll quit here.

2 Timothy chapter 3. I'm just going to read it real quick when I find it. 2 Timothy 3, verse 13, the Bible says, But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

[40 : 18] But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them. And what would that be? And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise in a salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

All scriptures given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, for instruction and righteousness that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Being consumed and being infatuated and lending your ear and your heart to the voices and the jabber that's going on nonstop in this world is not going to perfect you in Christ Jesus, but the word of God will.

And so, let's not be consumed with evil or this present evil world, but rather consumed with good and the work of the church, the work that God calls us to do.

We're not going to fix a nation, let's fix our church. How about we focus on that? Focus on what God has given us because that's what He's given us is a body to meet and to grow and to grow tight and to work and to serve.

[41 : 34] And I'll stop with that. Let's pray. Father, thank you for this lesson. Thank you for this challenge to be different than the world and to come out from among them. Thank you for the reminder that we're not of them anymore.

So, Lord, help our minds and our hearts and our affections not to be there. And, Lord, convict us when they are and help us to replace that desire with a longing for truth and for righteousness and for your word.

And, Lord, I pray that you'll sanctify us through your truth, that you'll clean us up and set us in the right direction. And, Lord, instill in us a desire to grow, never to be satisfied or content, but to continue growing until you come and get us.

We thank you for this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Take a 10-minute break.
Amen.