

Study Series: The Overcoming Life

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Lesson Title: “The Overcoming Life” (pp. 104-118)

Session 8

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The main point of this lesson is: Jesus Christ enables a believer to overcome both internal and external foes.

Focus on this goal: To help adults identify the greatest foes they need to overcome at this point

Key Bible Passage: 1 John 5:4-5

During the Session

Step 1. Create Interest / Jumpstart Discussion

Ask: What are some ways we might complete the statement, “Yeah, they won but . . .” to downplay a sports team’s victory? How might we complete the statement, “Yeah, Christians are supposed to be overcomers but . . .”?

Refer to the Introduction (p. 103) to elaborate on the noticeable lack of overcomers in Christ’s church.

State: We don’t want our teams to barely eke out a victory, we want them to win well. God wants the same for His followers. He doesn’t intend for us to just survive life, but to have an overcoming life.

Step 2. The Christian’s Warfare

Discuss Day One, activity 1 (p. 104). Determine keys to winning any battle. (Samples: Good leaders, battle plans, and supply chain. Strength. Powerful weapons.)

Invite volunteers to read 1 John 4:4 and Galatians 2:20. Ask: How do we already have the keys to be overcomers in this life? Then why aren’t we always overcomers?

Invite responses to Day One, activity 2 (pp. 105-106).

Declare a crucial key to being an overcomer is knowing your enemy.

Step 3. Internal Foes, Part 1

State believers contend with internal and external foes. Ask if learners agree with the first sentence of Day Two (p. 106) and why.

Invite a volunteer to read Romans 7:15-23. Ask if learners can identify with Paul’s struggle. Ask: If Christ has set us free from sin why do we struggle so much with sin? How can we keep from being overcome with discouragement as we consider our struggle with sin?

Request a volunteer read Romans 7:24—8:1. Urge adults as the group examines examples of internal and external foes to keep in mind that Christ empowers believers to overcome all internal and external foes. Ask: Why might the author identify appetite as an internal foe? How can even good appetites become an enemy to an overcoming life?

Discuss the first part of Day Two, activity 1 (p. 107). Emphasize that the appetites for food, sex, money, power, exercise, appearance, and approval can consume believers if they’re not brought under Christ’s control.

Discuss the second part of Day Two, activity 1 (p. 107).

Explore how temper can be positive and negative in a believer. Request a volunteer read Genesis 4:3-7. Explore specific ways believers can rule over the internal sin of temper.

Step 4. Internal Foes, Part 2

Evaluate why covetousness is such a dangerous internal foe.

Invite volunteers to read from Day Three (pp. 108-109, or their Bibles) what Scripture says about covetousness. Discuss Day Three, activity 1 (p. 109).

Request a volunteer state from Day Three (pp. 109-110) the other internal foes the author identified. Invite the group to name other internal foes Christians battle regularly.

Call on a volunteer to read Romans 8:1-13. Ask: When it comes to overcoming these internal foes, what is: God’s role? Our role? How can we consistently set our minds on the Spirit? How can we put these internal foes to death?

Note anything dies if it’s not fed. Guide adults to consider how they can not feed these internal foes so they will die.

Step 5. External Foes, Part 1

Discuss Day Four, activity 1 (p. 111). Guide the group to evaluate what John did NOT mean by saying Christians are not to love the world. Note God certainly intends us to love His beautiful creation, including people He made in His image. Then evaluate what Scriptures does mean when it tells us to not love the world.

Stress that in Days Four and Five the author provided examples, by no means an exhaustive list, of external foes Christians face in this world. Ask: If the author were writing to twenty-first century believers, what might be some examples of worldly habits, fashions, and pleasures that he would say we need to battle if we’re to have an overcoming life?

Read the Day Four pull quote (p. 112). Guide the group to draw from 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 some principles believers can follow in overcoming external foes of worldly habits, fashions, and pleasure.

Step 6. External Foes, Part 2

Discuss Day Five, activity 1 (p. 114). Consider how Christians who are overcomers regard the business side of life.

Ask: How is persecution an external foe to the overcoming life? How might tolerance and flattery be a greater foe than persecution? As you guide the group to discuss Day Five, activity 2 (p. 115), lead them to identify specific examples of the foes listed in the Romans 8 passage.

Step 7. Practical Application – Live Out the Lesson

Request learners prayerfully consider the greatest foes they need to overcome at this point in their lives. Ask: Can we overcome these foes by trying really hard? Explain. How can we overcome all these enemies of an abundant, victorious life?

Read John 16:33. Invite a volunteer to read the Day Five pull quote (p. 115). Urge adults to remember Christ is able as they battle internal and external foes this week.

Close in prayer.

