

## Title: No Games, and No Lollipops

### Brandy Helton, Garden Gathering, 12/3/23

Holy Spirit entitled this, "No Games and No Lollipops." The children who come here on Sunday mornings get lots of candy and sweetness. They are truly being overwhelmed by sweet generosity, in "Taste and see that the Lord is good." We are not talking about that.

#### Colossians 3:1-4 NKJV

This is such a powerful, revelatory statement from the Holy Spirit. If you Body of Christ, "*have been raised with Christ, seek those things which are above.*" This is a command from Heaven. It is permission from Heaven. It is an invitation from Heaven, to continue to see Christ, who has ascended back into Heaven. To seek His kingdom and to believe and know, that "*we have been seated with Him.*"

#### Ephesians 2:6 NKJV

"*You have been raised with Him,*" when you believed on Him, and you were born again from above. The vision is, "*Set your minds on the things above, not on the things of the Earth.*" Right? "*You died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*" Say, "*My life is hidden with Christ in God.*" Wow. "*You died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*" The whole goal is that Christ is manifesting Himself through us every day.

Earlier during worship, we sang a part of a song, and I said it again earlier. He is targeting, what has you overwhelmed? Let Jesus overwhelm it. It is being immersed and taken over by God. Allowing Him to take over our difficulties, our trials, our tribulations, the tests, and the things that you go through in the flesh, your heart, your mind, your will and your emotions. Even lethargy, apathy, complacency, or slumber, and anything that is moving against, "*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*" Let Jesus overwhelm what is overwhelming you.

What does that look like? You invite Jesus to come and overwhelm that circumstance and take it over. Take it out, and bring truth to it and victory in it. Bring the breakthrough in it. Let Him have it. Amen. Let Jesus do that. We know we co-labor with Him. This is amazing to me. He could just fight all our battles. That would be easy. We prefer that where we do not have to get involved in this mess. But, He uses our mind, our will, our emotion, our hands, our feet, our heart, our whole soul and being. We are in the fight, beloved. We are in the fight. God says He wants warriors. This is what it looks like. Warriors are those who allow, "*Christ in you the hope of glory,*" to have the preeminence. Then you are being led by the Spirit. "*When Christ who is your life appears, you will appear with Him in glory.*" But, He is appearing every moment to our hearts. Amen.

#### John 2:13-16 NKJV

This is when Jesus comes into the temple. He is about to overwhelm it. Holy Spirit is drawing attention to what we are talking about. Jesus came in and took over something that was not supposed to be happening in His Father's house. It was His zeal that did it. Many times you think that He said, "my zeal will do this." Well, He did say it in scripture. But, the disciples remembered the word of God that said, "*Zeal for Your house has eaten me up,*" has consumed me and has overwhelmed me. His zeal, His emotion, His fervor, His heat, His passion, His jealous love and truth invaded the House to cleanse it out from the market that it had become.

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I do not know that goats, sheep and cattle should have been in the House of God. I do not think that there should have been tables where they were selling merchandise. But, that is an example of what we are talking about here. He wants to overwhelm us with His presence and with His wisdom. But, we have to be anticipating. We have to be looking. We have to know, that "*Christ in me is the hope of glory.*" We have to know where He is seated. We are supposed to set our mind on Him, His Kingdom and everything that pertains to this. "*My life is hidden with Christ in God.*" Amen.

#### 1 John 2:3-6 NKJV

Here is a key. How do you know that you know God? How do you know that you know Jesus? If you keep His commandments. If you obey His Word. That is all through the New Testament. If you obey His Word, and you keep His commandments. He who says, "*I know Him, but is not being obedient to Him, is a liar.*" Now those are not my words. It is either in or out. Either you do, or you do not? You are all growing. There are times when you say, "I did not even know there was such a thing as a tithe. I did not even know I was commanded to heal the sick. I did not know I was supposed to cast out demons. I did not know any of that. I just went to church." Right?

But, to know Him, is to know His whole work, His whole ministry, His word, His way, His life, and His truth. It is not just, "I obeyed verse fourteen." It is taking in who He is and living your life by the highest life. His life is the highest life. So, we choose to live our life by His Word, through His ongoing communion with us every day. Yes, now we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. "He who says I know Him and does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in Him." But, "whoever keeps His word," there is that communion. "*Abide in me, remain in me, and my word, and you are going to bear much fruit,*" John 15. There is fruit that comes from abiding in His presence, and being obedient to the Lord every day. If He tells you to drive around the block and talk to the neighbor at house #153, then go do it. That is abiding and keeping His commandments. Amen.

#### 1 John 2:5 NKJV

"*Whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in Him,*" because you trust that God is going to show up at that house. If He commands me to go, He is going to give me everything I need to do it. If He commands me to prophesy, He is going to flow through me, because I allow Him to do it. If I am going to play the guitar for Him, His truth is going to come through those sounds. Yes, in any area of life, I am abiding, that love has been perfected in us as we obey His Word.

#### 1 John 2:6 NKJV

"*By this we know that we are in Him. He who says He abides in Him, ought also to walk as He walked.*" That is a high call. If we say we abide in Him, we have been given a command to walk as He walked. Oh, that sounds great. No, "*He who says He abides in Him should walk as He walked.*" We should walk as He walked. We, the Body of Christ, should be walking, talking, living, ministering, abiding, remaining, encountering, being filled, being overwhelmed just as He did. "*When Christ who is your life appears, you will appear with Him in glory.*" He has appeared now. He is surely glowing inside of us, yes.

#### 1 John 2:15 NKJV "Do Not Love the World"

Because, we were transported out of that world. We were delivered and saved from the world. We were once lost in darkness. Overtaken by the world and the world systems and all that involved. We have been taken out of the kingdom of darkness and transported into the kingdom of light. Thank you, Jesus! Why are you still trying to live in love with the world when He took you out of that? Your dwelling place now is heaven. Your dwelling place now is in Me.

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Your dwelling place now is My presence. Your dwelling place now is in communion *with Me*. Do not go thirsting and lusting after the world anymore. That is what He is saying. *“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in Him.”* We miss something. Because, as soon as we are born again, our heart starts turning upward unto God. He starts transforming us. He is going to keep doing it until we see Him face to face. “Oh, Lord, how long?”

#### 1 John 2:16 AMPC

*“For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh [craving for sensual gratification] and the lust of the eyes [greedy longings of the mind] the pride of life [assurance in one's own resources, or in the stability of earthly things]—these do not come from the Father, but are from the world [itself].”*

*“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, craving for sensual gratification.”* We do not need a definition for flesh, do we? The lust of the eyes, that eye gate, always looking for something more, right? *Thou shalt not covet, or always having greedy longings in your mind. Having the pride of life, the assurance in one's own resources.* Human pride, and do not say you do not have any pride. If you do *think that*, we need to pray after service. It is that pride in every human being we were born with, and having to do everything for our self. We were born in that and separated from God. Of course, we are born in the nature of Satan, who is the father of all pride. Of course we were.

The Holy Ghost is bringing us out of that, saying, “Now you die *to self*. You live now with Christ. You abide now with Holy Ghost. We are going to change you from the inside out.” Versus a bunch of “do not that and slapping your finger.” It is a whole shift of our mentality and the understanding of what really has happened in us. Right? We do not need that pride, but He shows you that area where you are still striving in your own strength. You are just thinking way too much of yourself than you should. Usually it is, “I’ve got this,” and it is all about you. You are the man, right? That stuff right there.

He is going to keep working that out of us. Till we say, “No, You are the King, Jesus. I cannot do this, but, you can. Overwhelm me right now and take it. Do what you have to do in me. Break me, mold me, and shape me. Let's get it done, so that I can follow you and be like you. Do the things that you do. Walk as you walked. Oh, my goodness to walk as you walk.” You think that is impossible, but it is not *when done with* the Holy Ghost. It would not be in the word, if it was not possible.

Verse 17 says, *“And the world passes away and disappears, and with it the forbidden cravings (the passionate desires, the lust) of it, but he who does the will of God and carries out His purposes in His life abides (remains) forever.”* The world is passing away and the lust of it, but He who does the will of God abides forever. Holy Spirit is working on getting the world out of us. But, we are living in the world. While we are in the world, He says, “You are the light of the world. You are a city set on the hill.” I am not supposed to blend in with it. I am supposed to glow. I am supposed to have answers. I am supposed to walk as Christ walked in it.

He said, “Be of good cheer. In this world, You will have tribulation. But, be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. My peace I give to you. Be of good cheer. I am in the world. I am overcoming, hallelujah! That comes from the Prince of Peace, who is always laboring to show that we are not alone. We walk with Him. We serve Him. We walk for Him. But, we walk with Him, in Him and through Him. The world will pass away and disappear, and with it the forbidden cravings and those passionate desires, the lust of it.

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He who does the will of God and keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in Him. Whoever loves and keeps His word, the will of God is going to be accomplished. Whoever loves and keeps His word, the will of God is going to be accomplished. If you love and keep His word, God's will is going to be accomplished in our lives. Wow. He who does the will of God and His purposes in His life, abides and remains forever. Hallelujah! Now, that is a great introduction to launch us where we are going in some of the Apostle Paul's letters to the church, his flock, and some of his fellow laborers whose names are hard to pronounce in West Texas dialect, so do not judge my speech.

Colossians 4:1-18 ESV

I am reading from the ESV:

*“Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven. Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison.”* We know where he is writing from. *“That I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom towards outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. I have sent Him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here. Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you welcome him), and Jesus who is called Justus. These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. Epaphras who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in the will of God. For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. Luke, the beloved physician greets you, as does Demas. Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea and to Nympha and the church in her house. And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. And say to Archippus, “See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.” I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace to be with you.”*

Wow! These are the parts of the books that you can read through real fast, because it is the end of the letter. He is talking about all these people that you do not know. You really do not know anything about them. You cannot say their names. You are trying to do it and get through it, so you can go on to the next chapter which is Thessalonians. In this, you hear the Apostle Paul is in prison shepherding, giving counsel, giving wisdom, instruction, direction, praise, thanksgiving, honor, and encouragement from prison to his people. Right? This is in Colossae. He is always teaching. He is always encouraging. I encourage you to go through this during the week. You can preach a lot of sermons on every point, right?

Let Jesus preach to you this week. *“Continue steadfastly in prayer and be watchful in it with thanksgiving.”* All right, so just go there with the Lord instead of thinking, “I have to pray.” At the same time, he is saying, “pray for us. Pray for us.” You could hear that, too. He was exhorting the saints to always pray. Please pray for us. You have to pray for your *leaders*. You have to pray for the authorities. You have to pray for your heads always, to declare the mystery of Christ. This is the whole goal, which is what I am talking about. The whole mystery of Christ. That Christ would be revealed. Christ would be manifested in all things. Amen.

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He says, *“Walk in wisdom towards outsiders and make the best use of your time.”* He says, *“Be ready in season and out.”* God is going to use you. You never know where or when, so be ready. He will fill your mouth with the words you need to know. Yes, constantly working in their daily walk at the grocery store, at the market, or in the temple. It does not matter where. Then, he goes on and he breaks down all these brothers who are walking with him. Those he has raised up and who are serving. He mentioned one that chose to serve himself, named Demas. We are going to talk more about him.

In all of these things, he says, *“See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.”* As you go back and read them all, he has given special instruction for each name. He is saying, *“See to it, that you fulfill your ministry.”* You do what God has called you to do in proclaiming Christ and in bringing the revelation knowledge of Christ. Teaching His Word, His Spirit, and His ways for helping, serving, comforting, healing, delivering, and ministering, amen. There is a lot that is involved there. He says, *“Remember my chains.”* Wow. Now, we are going to talk about Demas for a minute. Note that in the book of Philemon, verse 24, Paul said Demas was one of his fellow workers. He mentions his name again.

Say, *“I am a worker for Christ, not just going to church.”* The Lord has empowered the saints to do the works of the ministry, to abide in Him, remain in His word, and just be obedient. Let the river flow. This is going to be a wonderful start.

#### II Timothy 4:1-2 NKJV

He is telling this to Timothy His son in the faith.

*“I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living in the dead at His appearing and His kingdom. Preach the word.”* You hear it? *“I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”* What is he doing? He is bearing witness to the call on Timothy's life. He stands before the Ancient of Days, and says, *“You were called, therefore I charge you.”* That power right there is the authority of Heaven. That is who is speaking.

#### II Timothy 4:1-22 NKJV

What are you hearing? You are hearing such a charge from prison. Actually, it was not too long after this that Paul was beheaded. Right? He was slaughtered and killed for the faith of Christ. He knew his time was drawing near. He continued to exhort and build up in his letters which are life giving. Every sentence is just so revelatory. He is abiding. He has laid hold of his mission from Christ to take the gospel to the Gentiles. He has labored with the circumcision. He has healed, raised the dead, and cleansed the lepers. He has walked with Christ. He has demonstrated Christ, and He is standing firm. He has been standing fast in the truth and the word of God.

The devil always tries to imprison him, shut him up, and keep him locked up. They gave him some parchment, and he wrote three fourths of the New Testament. Amen. Okay, the word of the Lord will go forth. You hear his heart, and the charge. He says in verse two, *“Convince, rebuke, and exhort with all long suffering and teaching.”* Church, *“convince, rebuke, and exhort with all long suffering and teaching,”* because, *“there is going to come those that are not going to endure the sound doctrine.”* I talked about that a few weeks ago, *“pure doctrine,”* the Bible. He said, they are going to come, but they will not listen to this anymore. They will go astray from it. He warns him, *“they will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to fables.”* They just kind of make it up as they go. He says, *“But, you have to be watchful in all things.”* He says. *“You have to endure afflictions, and you have to do the work of the evangelist.”* You have to do the work. He says, again, *“fulfill your ministry.”*

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He says, *"I am being poured out."* You can hear him saying it. *"My departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight. I finished the race. I have kept the faith."* Can you just see him giving glory to God? But, this was his part. Jesus did not do it all for him. Yet, Jesus worked through him. We have to agree with this. We are being poured out like a drink offering, right? We *don't* know when the Lord will choose to take us home. Glory be to God! But, we have to fight the good fight of faith, carry on, and do the work. Amen. Finally, he knows that there is a great crown laid up for him for all of this. The Lord, the Righteous Judge, is going to give him that crown at the judgment seat of Christ, where we are all rewarded for the work that we have done. He knows that. He saw that. He wrote about it. Hallelujah. It is better to go now Lord, but we have to finish.

In verse nine, he says, *"Be diligent to come to me quickly, for Demas has forsaken me."* Now he brings him up again, *"having loved this present world."* I read to you about him before in *Colossians*. Demas was "one that was serving him," this was a disciple. This is one that is growing. Now, he has forsaken Paul. Then Paul calls out all these other names. He says, *"they are still doing the work of the Lord."* At one point, in verse sixteen, He says, *"When I had to stand in defense of the gospel, everybody forsook me."* I have been there. They all say, *"See you later."* He says, *"All forsook me, but may it not be charged against them."* That is like Christ. *"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."* Amen. This is rough stuff. This is some serious persecution. But, he gives glory to God.

Here is your key, in verse seventeen, *"The Lord is faithful."* Can you see the glory in this? He says, *"But, the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, that the message might be preached fully through me."* That the message *"be preached fully, that all the Gentiles might hear."* What did he say? Did he say **all**? "Well, Lord, I hope you can save my grandma." He wants to save your grandma, but how much more! Are we really thinking **all**? **All** the people on my street, Lord. **All** the people in my office, Lord. Every one of my grand babies, Lord. This is the heart of Christ, *"that all the Gentiles may hear."* *"Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom."* We are kept by the power of God. *"To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen."*

Yes, that all sounds so wonderful. Then all of a sudden, we note Demas, because it is just the warning. This is what it looks like. *"Having loved the present world."* When the Apostle Paul penned by the Spirit, what constantly wars against the house of faith and against humans who have been born again from above, *"the love of the world and the things in it."* *"Having loved this present world he left."* Demas was a fellow laborer with Paul. He pursued Paul at one point in time. We have no scriptural record of what actually happened to him after he leaves for Thessalonica. Here is the hope that perhaps he abandoned his *"love for the present world."* Started to love the appearing of Christ, and began to set his affection on things above. I quoted that to you in *Colossians*. Perhaps he did, but we do not know. But, there is the opportunity that he just left and never came back. Right? That is in the Lord's hands. But, look at the warning.

There is no retirement in the Kingdom of God. I say it all the time. "It is till death do us part." It is called a "covenant." You cannot say, "Well Jesus, I have hit age 65 now. I have fulfilled my ministry. I have done it." No, actually you are just getting started, because you are finally old enough to listen to Me. Get out there and work with some folks. It has taken Me 65 years to get you to obey. You say, "I am just getting started." Amen. "Till death do us part."

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That work may change from one season to another. We are always manifesting the Kingdom in Christ. We go through seasons in the works of the ministry. I am not where I was when I was first saved and neither are you. Right? We are following Christ. We obey and fulfill the ministry He has for us. We are always growing, and we are always maturing.

From Saturday till Sunday morning, I usually do not read emails, texts, or anything else from people. I am just guarding my glory there in my mind for what the Lord wants to bring. I felt this morning, that I needed to look at the email. There was a reason. I am going to read you something that Nancy Hadley sent to the leaders. She says the title of this is, "The Mission," and it is dated 12/2/23.

*"On November 28th, while praying for the Garden, the Lord gave me a vision of the mission of the Garden. It consisted of two images. One depicting the Garden and the other depicting the "typical church." The Lord has continued to speak to me about these differences. She shows two pictures. One is of Navy Seals and their boats on the ocean, and the other one is of a cruise ship. Who has been on a cruise ship, raise your hand? Who liked the waves?*

*Now you have the Navy Seals and their hot rod boats in the ocean, and you have the cruise ship. You have that visualized? Both are in the ocean and accessible to the individuals who are swimming in the water, which can be very dangerous and even shark infested. However, the mission of each is very different. The Navy Seals go through intensive training. Think of it as in our Apostolic Training Center. Every man is capable of rescuing and delivering. Thus, every saint is a minister. However, there is no training required for the passengers of the cruise ship, which is more focused on providing a pleasant, relaxing ride for all participants. The Seals operate in small committed teams, as our cell groups. Whereas passengers on the cruise ship are not necessarily grouped together. They can lose themselves in the anonymity.*

*An important mission of the Garden is to equip everyone to be a highly trained, fully engaged member of a rescue team. Whereas the mission of the cruise ship is just to have a successful cruise. Those who are overboard needing rescue would probably call out to the Navy Seals, who are equipped for the rescue. However, once rescued, not all want to become a Navy Seal. Many just want to cruise. It is important that we recognize the difference between the missions. It is also very important to appreciate and support the mission of equipping that is flourishing in our ATC and the Garden Gathering messages. We are bearing much fruit, amen. Can you hear it? This gives you a real understanding.*

Demas, "who loved the present world." Contentment with the world and the things of the world. I am busy with life. It can take you over, right? But, we are all in Christ, and we have a mission to encounter Christ and His glory and reveal that glory to others. We are all called to fulfill the work of the ministry. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. Say, "Use me, Lord."

1 John 3:7-8 NKJV

Wow, Jesus was sent. "For God so loved the world." He did not just float down here. He came down here and annihilated and destroyed the works of the devil. He went back into Hades and took the keys of hell, death, and the grave, after He was raised. I am just saying. We are talking about a King of Glory. This was His mission. If that is His mission, I am in Him, and He is in me. Guess what? We are charged with destroying the works of the devil. When every saint is equipped and empowered, we are destroying the works of the devil.

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But, some have left me, He says, and gone back. For *they* loved the present age and the present world. There is your battleground. Especially when it heats up.

Romans 12:9 NKJV

That was the book of Romans, to Rome. "*Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil.*" How do you destroy the works of the devil? Abhor what is evil, and cling to what is good. Do what is good. Think what is good. Act good and walk righteously and upright in this current age.

Romans 12:17 NKJV

He says, "*repay no one evil for evil, have regard for good things in the sight of all men.*" It is that whole, "*Vengeance is mine says the Lord,*" thing. "*Repay no one evil for evil.*" Paul turned that around to say, "*this is the great harm he did to me,*" but this is what Christ in me is doing, "*May it not be charged against him.*" This is what we are reading here. Paul wrote the same book.

Romans 12:21 NKJV

He says, "*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*" As saints of the Most High in Christ's righteousness, we are "*overcoming evil with good.*" Right? You do not have to go down to some dark, dead dungeon in the inner city and go tearing up something that is dark and creepy. It is our lifestyle to "*overcome evil with good.*" It is our lifestyle to walk with Him and in Him, in this present age. Knowing that He is speaking to us today. What did He entitle this? He said, "No Games and No Lollipops." Holy Ghost has a little bit of humor, right? "No Games and No Lollipops," it is no cruise ship. There is not a cruise ship here. But, we are in for a ride.

Let's stand up. May you have ears to hear what He is saying. Father, for such a time as this, I ask in Jesus' name, that you impart spiritual understanding to the words that you are speaking. That eyes would open, ears would open, and the heart would understand. Lord God, *may* we devote ourselves to Christ, to fulfill the ministry you have imparted to us, individually and corporately as your body. We thank you for blessing your people with an abundant amount of revelation of "*Christ in us, the hope of glory.*" Be revealed through us every day, as we continue steadfastly in prayer, in the word, and in administration of the word and the works of God. As we pray for one another, we know and we long for your appearing. Lord, we thank You. We thank you for pulling up at the root those things that cause us to go astray in our heart. I pray you bring conviction where it needs to be. Grant repentance where it needs to come. Lord, just pour out more oil to where He is says, "Well done, good and faithful servant." We love you, Lord. In Jesus' name, amen. All right, go in peace.