

OVERCOMER BASICS: 1 John 5:1-5 | Pastor Mark Bofill | 1/29/2023

- I. Overcomer Qualifications (1-3) – What Qualifies Us to be Overcomers?
- II. Overcomer Obstacles (4-5) – What are the greatest Obstacles for a Christian to Overcome?
- III. Overcomer Promises – What is Promised to Overcomers?

Intro: *A certain Civil War veteran used to wander from place to place, begging for food and shelter. He was a nice man who often shared his story about his friend, “Mr. Lincoln.” Because of his injuries he could not hold a steady job, but he just kept going. Wherever he went, he would always share about his beloved president. – One day a skeptic bystander asked, “You said you know President Lincoln? I’m not so sure you do...prove it!” – The old man replied, “Sure I can prove it, I have a piece of paper that Mr. Lincoln himself signed and gave to me!” As the old man pulled out a much-folded piece of paper from his wallet, he handed it to the man while apologetically stating, “I’m not much for reading, but I assure you that is “Mr. Lincoln’s” signature! – As the bystander examined the document his eyebrows rose in amazement! “Sir, do you KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE HERE? This is a generous FEDERAL PENSION authorized by President Lincoln! YOU DON’T HAVE TO WALK AROUND LIKE A POOR BEGGAR...Mr. Lincoln has made you rich!” (So too, many Christians walk through life with the same outlook, b/c they don’t take the time to read about God’s plan for an **Overcoming Life!**)*

Overcome – Grk G3529: *nikáō*, nik-ah'-o; to subdue (lit. or fig.-28x); overcome, conquer, prevail, get the victory. In the NT it speaks **of Christ** – as victorious over all His foes; **of Christians** - that hold fast their faith, even unto death against the power of their foes, and temptations and persecutions.

What does it take to be an Overcomer? John begins to answer that question in our text. *Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. ² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.*

I. OVERCOMER QUALIFICATIONS (1 John 5:1-3) – It’s first starts with right relationships!

1. **Genuinely Born of God (1a)** – We must believe that Jesus is the **Christ!** (*the Messiah or anointed One*) – In **(John 3:3)**, Jesus told Nicodemus that *“...unless one is **born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”* (Church, this is Christianity 101! – Expound, the life-long struggle!)
2. **Genuine Love is Manifested (1b-2a)** – Evidence of a two-fold love is required! **Love God first!** (*Expound*) – Secondly, **Love God’s children!** (*Expound*). How can we say we have love and hate our brother? – Read **(tt. 1 John 4:20)** – (*Question: Are you **harboring unforgiveness** towards another Christian right now? – If so, know that is keeping you from being an overcomer! – Repent!*)
3. **Genuine Obedience to God’s Commands (2b-3)** – Keeping His word should not be viewed as a **BURDEN**, but a **BLESSING!** – If we are experiencing God’s perfecting love, then we enjoy God’s Word! – **(Psalm 40:8)** *I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart.* – Yet, for so many who claim to be Christians, reading God’s Word with the intent to obey it is **DRUDGERY** rather than **DELIGHT!** **They view the Bible as a textbook, instead of a love-letter!**

CLOSING POINT: *If you want to live your life as an **Overcomer**, then start by asking yourself these three simple questions: **1) Do I truly believe that Jesus is the Christ? 2) Do I have a genuine love for God and his Kids? 3) Do I delight in obeying His will?** If the answer is **YES** to all three, **then you qualify!***

II. OVERCOMER OBSTACLES – Three Basic Obstacles Exist for All Believers!

1. **The World (4-5)** – Attraction to the “here and now” appeals to our flesh, which draws us away from our relationship with God. It’s so vivid...it’s right in front of us! (*tt. 1 John 2:15-17*)

a. **How then do we overcome the world?** John provides us with this simple answer “For Whatever is born of God OVERCOMES the WORLD” (1 John 5:4a). Simple, yet so powerful! – **If we are born of God, WE WILL overcome the world.** (*Do you believe that?*) – We can do this because the power of the Holy Spirit is within us! – (1 John 4:4) “*You are of God, little children, and have overcome them [anything worldly], because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*”

b. John speaks of **Victory over the world, which he makes clear in the second part of verse four:** And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. (1 John 5:4b)

- The Greek word for **VICTORY** is *Nike* [nee-kay], it was the name for the Greek goddess of victory. (*As Christians, we should put on our “Nikes” and “Just do it!”- Keep Running!*)
- In (1 John 5:1), John told us that “**BELIEVING**” was the key to being **Born of God**, here, he tells us that the key to becoming a “**VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER**” is our **FAITH!** (*a genuine faith which continuously abides in Jesus Christ – One that “Responds” with “Brokenness!”*)

c. **Okay Pastor Mark, I get your point, but how do I practically overcome it?** – The life of Abiding Faith and Trust in Jesus Christ is the life that overcomes the pressures and temptations of the world. John re-emphasizes this in (1 John 5:5), *Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?* (*He’s got our backs!*) **If fact, Jesus Himself tells us not to sweat it!** “*In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I [Jesus] have overcome the world*” (John 16:33).

Now on to the second obstacle...

2. **Satan** – The Bible calls him “*the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world . . . the accuser*” (Rev 12:9–10), “*the ruler of this world*” (John 12:31), and “*the god of this age*” (2 Cor 4:4). He is our “*adversary [who] prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour*” (1 Peter 5:8). – It is true that he is a powerful foe, but we must understand that he also is a “Created Being,” who must yield to the sovereign will of an omnipotent God!

a. **How then do we to effectively overcome Satan:** Do what Jesus did when He was tempted! Of the three times that Jesus was tempted, Jesus responded with a **quote from God’s written Word**; each from the book of Deuteronomy (8:3; 6:16; 6:13), where He declared, “*Away with you, Satan! For it is written, you shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.*” (Matt 4:10). Then it says in (Matt 4:11a), “**Then the devil left him...**”

b. So then, knowing God’s Word is a basic tool to overcome Satan! It helps us to grow in faith which makes us Strong! **READ** (*tt. 1 John 2:13-14*), for the three spiritual stages—(*Expound*)

And now, on to the final obstacle...

3. **Self** – Of the three obstacles, **SELF is the most difficult to overcome!** Why? Because, even though we may be **Born of God**, we still have a “**sinful nature**” (aka: *old nature, old man, flesh*).

a. Our flesh **wars against** the new nature in Christ, which desires to be obedient to God. It constantly desires full control of our mind and body! – In **(Rom 7:18)**, the apostle Paul spoke of this struggle, “*For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.” **(Rom 7:18)***

b. Wow, if the apostle Paul had a struggle within himself, **IS IT EVEN POSSIBLE FOR US TO OVERCOME OUR FLESH?** – **YES!** The Bible provides a **three-step process** for overcoming the flesh and restoring oneself to a right relationship with God.

- **The first step: Confession** – First, examine yourself “**honesty**” and acknowledge any sinful behavior before God. – **(1 John 1:8-9)** “*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*”
- **The next step is to Walk in the Spirit** – A consistent walk in Spirit empowers a person to live rightly before God and not obey the flesh’s desires. **(Rom 8:13)** “*For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*”
- **The last step is a Death** – We must learn to “**starve our flesh**” so that eventually dies. **(Gal 5:24)** *And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

“If we do not die to ourselves, we cannot live to God, and he that does not live to God, is dead.”- George Macdonald

CLOSING POINT: The Obstacles of World, Satan and Self will always come against the work of the Spirit in our lives. Jesus told us to *consider the cost!* There may be trials and tribulation as a result, but anything worthwhile is always an uphill battle. *And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.* **(1 John 5:4b)**

III. OVERCOMER PROMISES – Overcomers have a special place in the world to come. Jesus promised, *I will grant [overcomers] to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne* **(Rev 3:21)**. This is just 1 of 17 promises to overcomers mentioned in the book of revelation, which reveals that *something good is about to come!* – **Overcomers...**

- will eat from the Tree of Life **(Rev 2:7)**
- will not be hurt by the second death **(Rev 2:11)**
- will have their names written in the Lamb’s book of life **(Rev 3:5)**

CLOSING POINT: All throughout the Bible we learn that the faithfulness and favor of GOD is always for His people...

Joseph was in the dungeon, but **God released him**. The Hebrews were in slavery, but **God delivered them**. David was overwhelmed by the guilt of his sin, but **God forgave him**. Daniel was in the lion's den, but **God preserved him**. Jonah was in the belly of the fish, but **God retrieved him**. Jesus was in the tomb, but **God raised Him**. – No problem has been so great that God in His power has not overcome it. And that is the promise that comes to each of us this today. What He has done in the past, He will do again today. **Through God's power, we too can overcome!**

"But thanks [be] to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor 15:57)

Die to self
Pray to overcome
Be watchful