



Overcoming Through Jesus Christ

A Teaching Outline

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Overcoming Through Christ

The Gates of Hell cannot overpower the Church

Matthew 16:18

“I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

The rock on which Jesus would build his church has been identified as

- (1) Jesus himself (his work of salvation by dying for us on the cross);
- (2) Peter (the first great leader in the church at Jerusalem);
- (3) The confession of faith that Peter gave and that all subsequent true believers would give.

It seems most likely that the rock refers to Peter as the leader of the church. Just as Peter had revealed the true identity of Christ, so Jesus revealed Peter's identity and role.

We overwhelmingly conquer through Christ.

Romans 8:37

But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.

These verses contain one of the most comforting promises in all Scripture. Believers have always had to face hardships in many forms: persecution, illness, imprisonment, and even death. These sometimes cause them to fear that they have been abandoned by Christ. But Paul exclaims that it is *impossible* to be separated from Christ. His death for us is proof of his unconquerable love. Nothing can separate us from Christ's presence. God tells us how great his love is so that we will feel totally secure in him.

God gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:57

But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Satan seemed to be victorious in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3) and at the cross of Jesus. But God turned Satan's apparent victory into defeat when Jesus Christ rose from the dead (Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14, 15). Thus, death is no longer a source of dread or fear. Christ overcame it, and one day we will also. The law will no longer make sinners out of us just because we cannot keep it. Death has been defeated, and we have hope beyond the grave.

Paul says that because of the resurrection, nothing we do is useless. Sometimes we become apathetic about serving the Lord because we don't see any results. Knowing that Christ has won the ultimate victory should affect the way we live right now. Don't let discouragement over an apparent lack of results keep you from doing the work of the Lord enthusiastically as you have opportunity.

Thanks to God who leads us through the knowledge of Christ.

2 Corinthians 2:14

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.

In a Roman triumphal procession, the Roman general would display his treasures and captives amidst a cloud of incense burned for the gods. To the victors, the aroma was sweet; to the captives in the parade, it was the smell of slavery and death. When Christians preach the Good News, it is good news to some and repulsive news to others.

The God of peace will soon crush Satan.

Romans 16:20

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet the grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

When we read books or listen to sermons, we should check the content of what is written or said so that we won't be fooled by smooth talk and glowing words. Christians who study God's Word, asking him to reveal the truth, will not be fooled, even though superficial Christians may easily be taken in. For an example of believers who carefully checked God's Word, see Acts 17:10-12.

You have overcome the evil one because you know the father.

1 John 2:13

I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one I have written to you, children, because you know the Father.

One of the distinct features of John's writing style was his habit of noting both sides of a conflict. He wrote to show the difference between real Christianity and anything else. Here are some of his favorite contrasts.

You have overcome the evil one because God abides in you.

1 John 2:14

I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

John was writing to believers of all ages. The "children" had experienced forgiveness through Jesus. Those who were "mature in the faith" had a long-standing relationship with Christ. The "young in the faith" had battled with Satan's temptations and had won. Each stage of life in the Christian pilgrimage builds upon the other. As children learn about Christ, they grow in their ability to win battles with temptation. As young adults move from victory to victory, they grow in their relationship with Christ. Older adults, having known Christ for years, have developed the wisdom needed to teach young people and start the cycle all over again. Has your Christian growth reached the maturity level appropriate for your stage in life?

They overcame through the blood of the lamb.

Revelation 12:11

"And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.

The critical blow to Satan came when the Lamb, Jesus Christ, shed his blood for our sins. The victory is won by sacrifice—Christ's death in our place to pay the penalty for our sin, and the sacrifices we make because of our faith in him. As we face the battle with Satan, we should not fear it or try to escape from it, but we should loyally serve Christ, who alone brings victory.

Those born of God have victory to overcome the world.

1 John 5:4

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith.

Jesus never promised that obeying him would be easy. But the hard work and self-discipline of serving Christ is no burden to those who love him. And if our load starts to feel heavy, we can always trust Christ to help us bear it

The victorious stand on the sea of glass hold harps of God.

Revelation 15:2

And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God.

The seven last plagues are also called the seven bowl judgments. Unlike the previous plagues, these are universal, and they will culminate in the abolition of all evil and the end of the world.

The song of Moses celebrated Israel's deliverance from Egypt (Exodus 15). The song of the Lamb celebrates the ultimate deliverance of God's people from the power of Satan.

Overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:21

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Forgiveness involves both attitudes and actions. If you find it difficult to *feel* forgiving toward someone who has hurt you, try responding with kind actions. If appropriate, tell this person that you would like to heal your relationship. Lend a helping hand. Send him or her a gift. Smile at him or her. Many times you will discover that right actions lead to right feelings.

The word of the Lord is growing mightily and prevailing.

Acts 19:20

So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing.

Ephesus was a center for black magic and other occult practices. The people cooked up magical formulas to give them wealth, happiness, and success in marriage. Superstition and sorcery were commonplace. God clearly forbids such practices (Deuteronomy 18:9-13).

You cannot be a believer and hold on to the occult, black magic, or sorcery. Once you begin to dabble in these areas, you may become obsessed by them because Satan is very powerful. But God's power is even greater (1 John 4:4; Revelation 20:10).

If you are mixed up in the occult, learn a lesson from the Ephesians and get rid of anything that could trap you in such practices.

He that believes that Jesus is the son of God overcomes the world.

1 John 5:5

Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

At this time, there was a false teaching in circulation that said Jesus was "the Christ" only between his baptism and his death—that is, he was merely human until he was baptized, at which time "the Christ" then descended upon him but then later left him before his death on the cross. But if Jesus died only as a man, he could not have taken upon himself the sins of the world, and Christianity would be an empty religion. Only an act of God could take away the punishment that we deserve for our sin.

The overcomer will eat of the tree of life.

Revelation 2:7

'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches to him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.'

Two trees had been in the Garden of Eden—the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (see Genesis 2:9). Eating from the tree of life brought eternal life with God; eating from the tree of knowledge brought realization of good and evil. When Adam and Eve ate from the tree of knowledge, they disobeyed God's command. So they were excluded from Eden and barred from eating from the tree of life. Eventually, evil will be destroyed and believers will be brought into a restored paradise. In the new earth, everyone will eat from the tree of life and live forever.

The overcomer will not be hurt in the second death.

Revelation 2:11

'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.'

Pain is part of life, but it is never easy to suffer, no matter what the cause. Jesus commended the church at Smyrna for its faith in suffering. He then encouraged the believers that they need not fear the future if they remained faithful. If you are experiencing difficult times, don't let them turn you away from God. Instead, let them draw you toward greater faithfulness. Trust God and remember your heavenly reward

The overcomer will eat of the hidden manna.

Revelation 2:17

'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches to him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'

This "manna that has been hidden away in heaven" suggests the spiritual nourishment that the faithful believers will receive. As the Israelites traveled toward the Promised Land, God provided manna from heaven for their physical nourishment (Exodus 16:13-18). Jesus, as the bread of life (John 6:51), provides spiritual nourishment that satisfies our deepest hunger.

The overcomer will receive authority over nations.

Revelation 2:26

'He who overcomes, and he who keeps my deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS;

Christ says that those who are victorious (those who remain faithful until the end and continue to please God) will rule over Christ's enemies and reign with him as he judges evil

The overcomers name shall never be erased from the Book of Life.

Revelation 3:5

'He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

To be "clothed in white" means to be set apart for God and made pure. Christ promises future honor and eternal life to those who stand firm in their faith. The names of all believers are registered in the Book of Life. This book symbolizes God's knowledge of who belongs to him. All such people are guaranteed a listing in the Book of Life and are introduced to the hosts of heaven as belonging to Christ.

The overcomer will be a pillar in the temple of God.

Revelation 3:12

'He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.'

The New Jerusalem is the future dwelling of the people of God (21:2). We will have a new citizenship in God's future Kingdom. Everything will be new, pure, and secure.

The overcomer will sit with Christ on his throne.

Revelation 3:21

'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.'

The Laodicean church was complacent and rich. They felt self-satisfied, but they didn't have Christ's presence among them. Christ knocked at the door of their hearts, but they were so busy enjoying worldly pleasures that they didn't notice that he was trying to enter.

The pleasures of this world—money, security, material possessions—can be dangerous, because their temporary satisfaction makes us indifferent to God's offer of lasting satisfaction.

If you find yourself feeling indifferent to church, to God, or to the Bible, you have begun to shut God out of your life.

Leave the door of your heart constantly open to God, and you won't need to worry about hearing his knock. Letting him in is your only hope for lasting fulfillment.

Jesus knocks at the door of our heart because he wants to save us and have fellowship with us. He is patient and persistent in trying to get through to us—not breaking and entering, but knocking. He allows us to decide whether or not to open our life to him. Do you intentionally keep his life-changing presence and power on the other side of the door?

An invitation is given to open your heart's door.

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: Living Bible Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*.

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