

## Overcoming

### 1 John 4:1-4; 5:4-5

**Thesis:** The good news is that anyone who is born of God through Jesus Christ, who is a believer and follower of Jesus by faith, is by definition, nature, and action, an overcomer.

**Text:** 1 John 4:1-4; 5:4-5

**Context:**

1. **Give thanks for what the Lord did through our Seven Days of Worship, Prayer, and Warfare, July 29 – August 4.**
  - a. The Lord gave us a prophetic word and clear direction on how to respond to the attack of the enemy.
  - b. The Lord gave us grace to step up as one to fight the good fight of faith (1 Timothy 6:12; Philippians 1:27-28).
  - c. You responded with joy, fervor, and faith in amazing ways and through worship, prayer, and warfare.
  - d. You turned out and were willing in his day of battle (Psalm 110:3).
    - i. Participation by the numbers: almost 100 people 4 days (Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Saturday), 80 on Thursday and Friday, and 60 at 11:00am on Tuesday. Amazing. Calvary, you rose up in an awesome way.
    - ii. Thank you for hearing the trumpet call and for rallying to fight for your church and with the Lord for his plans, purposes, promise, and prophetic words over us.
  - e. *The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He [takes] great delight in you, he [floods] you with his love, he [rejoices] over you with singing" (Zephaniah 3:17).*
2. **Pray against any backlash, counter attack, or scheme of the enemy.**
  - a. Jay Kelley and Shannon Birdwell encouraged us to take a stance of faith after this week of battle. The war is not over.
    - i. *Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall (1 Corinthians 10:12 (NASB).*
    - ii. We don't want to get smug, satisfied, or complacent.
  - b. The Lord is still fighting for us and we don't have to fear; but we must not be ignorant of the enemy's schemes.
    - i. We won't let down; we won't leave our posts; we will serve and fight to the end, because of what the Lord is doing on our behalf.
    - ii. *The LORD shall cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you; they will come out against you one way and will flee before you seven ways (Deuteronomy 28:7).*

**Let's pray.**

**Message:**

Today, I want to talk about overcoming.

In this world, there are tensions that abound. Here is one tension. Sometimes, God intervenes with his miracle power of deliverance, healing, and rescue. Sometimes, we are kept from going through troubles and difficulties or we are delivered from or rescued in the midst of trouble.

And, we know that sometimes we have to go through the waters, the raging waters, the fire, and the raging fires; we are not exempt from pain, sickness, trouble, trial, or suffering. God gives us the gift of his presence, his promises, and his grace that we might endure, survive, thrive, and overcome.

Personally, I wish that I never had to go through trial, trouble, pain, or tribulations. I wish you didn't have to go through trouble and pain either.

In our day, some people lack the faith and courage to endure. Some people lack the skills or will to thrive. They simply give up, give in, quit, or lose the will to play or fight any longer.

But, I believe something better for you.

*So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. 36 **You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.** 37 For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. 38 But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." 39 **But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved (Hebrews 10:35-39).***

*With God helping us ... we're not quitters who lose out. Oh, no! We'll stay with it and survive, trusting all the way (Hebrews 10:39 MSG).*

**You are a part of a family of overcomers.**

Listen to what the Lord says of one of our spiritual forefathers, Jacob.

*That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maidservants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. 23 After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. 24 So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till*

daybreak. 25 When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. 26 Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." 27 The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered. 28 **Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome."** 29 Jacob said, "Please tell me your name." But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there. 30 So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared" (Genesis 32:22-30).

Because of the transforming work of the Lord, we have the kind of spiritual genes that won't quit, that won't back down, that won't give up. We come from a long family line (spiritually) of overcomers.

**We are a part of an overcoming kingdom. The Lord says that the gates of hell will not overcome the advancing church of Jesus; the advancing church of Jesus prevails and overcomes every obstacle.**

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and **the gates of Hades will not overcome it.** 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:15-19).

The advancing church of the Lord Jesus Christ overcomes the gates of the enemy.

**The Lord Jesus is the ultimate overcomer.** He has overcome the world, death, hell, satan, sin, and the grave.

"You believe at last!" Jesus answered. 32 "But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. 33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. **But take heart [take courage NASB]! I have overcome the world"** (John 16:31-33).

We can have courage because Jesus, the Overcomer, lives in us and empowers us to overcome just like him.

**The process of spiritual maturity involves learning how to overcome the enemy.**

*I write to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name. 13 I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because **you have overcome the evil one**. I write to you, dear children, because you have known the Father. 14 I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. **I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one** (1 John 2:12-14).*

Part of growing and maturing spiritually involves learning how to overcome the enemy and his tactics and attacks against us. We have to learn how to fight and do spiritual warfare.

**The good news is that anyone who is born of God through Jesus Christ, who is a believer and follower of Jesus by faith, is by definition, nature, and action, an overcomer.**

*Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. 4 **You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world** (1 John 4:1-4).*

Yes, there are real evil spirits at work in this world to still, kill, and destroy. But we overcome because the Overcoming Jesus who lives in us is greater than the evil one in this world.

**We say it again. The good news is that anyone who is born of God through Jesus Christ, who is a believer and follower of Jesus by faith, is by definition, nature, and action, an overcomer.**

*Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 2 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. 3 This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 4 **for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.** 5 **Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God** (1 John 5:1-5).*

*Every person who believes that Jesus is, in fact, the Messiah, is God-begotten. If we love the One who conceives the child, we'll surely love the child who was conceived. 2 The reality test on whether or not we love God's children is this: Do we love God? Do we keep his commands? 3 The proof that we love God comes when we keep his commandments and they are not at all troublesome. Every God-begotten person conquers the world's ways. The conquering power that brings the world to its knees is our faith. 5 The person*

*who wins out over the world's ways is simply the one who believes Jesus is the Son of God (1 John 5:4-5 MSG).*

**There are great promises and rewards for overcomers—for those who endure the tormenting pain, despise the shame, and prevail until they possess their inheritance.**

*Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:2).*

1. Jesus was captured by the joy, the vision which God set before him.
2. Jesus endured the cross in all of its agony, pain, and suffering. He courageously faced it and went through it.
3. Jesus scorned the shame. He despised what was happening to him, which was meant to humiliate, dehumanize, and crush his spirit and his will to fight. He didn't let what he went through define him or his identity.
4. Jesus prevailed and overcame by enduring and by not giving up, so he has possessed the prize which belongs to him.

**In Revelation Chapters 2 – 3, the Lord gives great promises and rewards for those who overcome.**

Ephesus: Real life is in loving the Lord and doing acts in accordance with his love. Those who overcome the trap of neglecting their first love experience real life.

*Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. 5 Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. 6 But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God (Revelation 2:4-7).*

Smyrna: In this broken world, we face persecution and accusation. Those who endure to the end receive the crown of life and overcome.

*Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death (Revelation 2:10-11).*

Pergamum: The church at Pergamum seems to have fallen into cultural assimilation. "There's no point standing out; we are part of this society, let's go with the flow" (NT Wright: New Testament for Everyone – Revelation). And when direct spiritual attack fails, the enemy often comes with sexual temptation to get us to compromise the testimony of the bride of Christ. To those who overcome, the Lord gives secret manna

that feeds and sustains us in a difficult place. And, he invites us to experience an intimacy that others can't imagine.

*Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality. 15 Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 16 Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. 17 To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it (Revelation 2:14-17).*

Thyatira: It is dangerous to believe that our spiritual freedoms and grace in the Lord allows us to push moral boundaries and to play around with evil without being burned or tainted. Those who overcome experience true authority and shine with a testimony as bright as the morning star.

*Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. 21 I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. 22 So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. 23 I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds. 24 Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan's so-called deep secrets (I will not impose any other burden on you): 25 Only hold on to what you have until I come. 26 To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations-- 27 'He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery'-- just as I have received authority from my Father. 28 I will also give him the morning star. 29 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches (Revelation 2:20-29).*

Sardis: These believers were living off their reputation, but their way of life was empty and dead. And, their laziness was evident in habitual acts of falling short, which have allowed their lives to be soiled and polluted. They have settled for less than the Lord offers to them and calls them to be. Those who overcome will experience the life and favor of their triumphant King; they share in his victory. And, to those who wake up, who stay unpolluted, and who conquer, Jesus acknowledges their names before his Father and the angels. What an honor.

*To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. 2 Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. 3 Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you*

*will not know at what time I will come to you. 4 Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. 5 He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels. 6 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches (Revelation 3:1-6).*

Philadelphia: For these believers, there is an open door before them and they must step through as faithful witnesses to Jesus. Even in the face of ridicule and accusation, they are to hold on, to endure, and to overcome. For these overcomers, the Lord will vindicate them before their accusers, reveal them as pillars in his temple, and publicly write on them his name as a testimony to who they are in him.

*I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. 12 Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name. 13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches (Revelation 3:11-13).*

Laodicea: The believers here are trapped in apathy and complacency. They don't know what they don't know. They think that they don't need anything. Their indolence stands in contrast to the one who is the Amen (so be it), the faithful and true witness, and the ruler of God's creation. Here is their true condition: they are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. To those who wake up and greet the master of the house, they will experience the Lord's intimacy and authority; these overcomers will rule and reign with the Lord.

*Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. 22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. (Revelation 3:20-22).*

### **How do we overcome?**

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. 2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart (Hebrews 12:1-3).*

1. Reframe and get a new perspective.
2. Get rid of everything that hinders, encumbers, or trips you up.
3. Run your race with endurance. Don't quit. Don't give up.
4. Fix your eyes on the Jesus and the finish line, and tackle life like he did.

5. Consider Jesus and what he went through as a way to renew your strength and courage.

### How do we overcome?

*Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. 11 They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death" (Revelation 12:10-11).*

1. **We overcome by the blood of the Lamb.** The sacrificial and surrendered life of Jesus forgives us, redeems us, restores us, changes us, and empowers us.
2. **We overcome by the word of our testimony.** We speak forth the plans, purposes, promises, and prophetic words of the Lord, especially what the Lord says in Scripture. (In his wilderness temptation, Jesus fought the enemy with the weapon of Scripture: "It is written....")
3. **We overcome by enduring to the end and surrendering our lives to the Lord.** We have already died to ourselves in Christ; now we have life forevermore; there is no fear of death because we have already died and are alive in Christ.

### Summary

The good news is that anyone who is born of God through Jesus Christ, who is a believer and follower of Jesus by faith, is by definition, nature, and action, an overcomer. Let's live into who we are with the help of the Lord.

Don't give up; don't give in; if you don't quit, you win.

### Ministry Time