

Victory Through Faith

Intro: John wrote in 1 John 5:4 “⁴ For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” Probably we have all heard the song: “We Shall Overcome.” The song leaves unanswered a basic question: What? Overcoming is a Bible subject. According to Webster it means “to get the better of in any conflict,” or Thayer says, “to carry off the victory.”

1. The basic idea: A battle rages.
 - a. Christian living is compared to an athletic contest.
 - i. 1 Cor. 9:24-26 “²⁴ Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. ²⁵ And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. ²⁶ I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:”
 - ii. Heb. 12:1-2 “¹ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, ² Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”
 - b. Christian living is also called a warfare; Eph. 6:10-18 “¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. ¹³ Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; ¹⁵ And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: ¹⁸ Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;”
 - c. There is, as ABC sports assert, “The thrill of victory, and the agony of defeat.
 - d. But in war it is a matter of life or death.
2. In any struggle you must know two things.
 - a. What you are fighting against.
 - b. What you are fighting for.
 - c. If either is lacking, then there will be no will to win.

I. SATAN IS THE ENEMY.

- A. **1 Pet. 5:8** “⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:”
- B. **He is called the “god of this world”; 2 Cor. 4:4** “⁴ In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”
 1. World: mass of men alienated from God (Thayer), 1 John 5:4 “⁴ For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith.”
 2. World: people controlled by thoughts and pursuits of this present age (Thayer), Rom. 12:1-2 “¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. ² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

3. The world is described:
 - a. By Paul; Eph. 2:1-3 ¹ And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; ² Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: ³ Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”
 - b. By John; 1 John 2:15-17 ¹⁵ Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

C. The devil seeks to influence the minds of men.

1. 2 Cor. 11:3 ³ But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”
2. Satan deceived Eve into thinking that God had withheld something good for man.
3. In withstanding temptation, we must remember that everything God commands is for our good.
 - a. Jam. 1:17 ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”
 - b. Notice Jam. 1:12-16 ¹² Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. ¹³ Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: ¹⁴ But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. ¹⁵ Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. ¹⁶ Do not err, my beloved brethren.”

D. Worldliness sometimes creeps into the church.

1. Manifested in indifference; Rev. 2:4 ⁴ Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.”
2. Seen in false teaching; Rev. 2:14-15 ¹⁴ But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. ¹⁵ So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.”
3. Failure to contend for the faith; Jude 3 ³ Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

E. The devil will see to it that:

1. There are worldly standards to try Christians.
2. Worldly things to fascinate God’s people.
3. Worldly doctrines to confuse the saints.

II. FAITH IS THE VICTORY

A. Faith that the world will pass away along with the lust thereof.

1. 1 John 2:15-17 ¹⁵ Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”
2. Mat. 16:26 ²⁶ For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

B. Faith which leads men to really love God.

1. Mat. 22:37 ^{“37} Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.”
2. 1 John 5:3 ^{“3} For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”

C. Faith that leads me to do the will of God.

1. Mat. 7:21-22 ^{“21} Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?”
2. God’s will is His law.
3. God has a law of pardon; Heb. 8:12 ^{“12} For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”
4. God has a rule by which saints are to live; Tit. 2:11-12 ^{“11} For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, ¹² Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;”

Conclusion: It is difficult for most people to develop a sufficient faith to give reality to: God, Christ, Holy Spirit, Inspiration, Heaven, Hell, love of God to man, etc. The devil’s goods are on open display: money, power, pride, earthly wisdom, pleasure, etc. Ultimately, God and righteousness shall triumph over the forces of evil. He shall overcome by faith; Rom. 10:17 ^{“17} So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”