



July 25, 2025

So, what does it mean to be an Overcomer?

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast of lower Alabama. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

We're going through the book of Joshua, one of the Former Prophets, in our weekly Bible Basics interactive online study. In Joshua chapter 1, we see that Joshua was told by God multiple times "to be strong and of good courage". He was to be a conqueror. What is interesting is that the word conqueror can also be translated as "overcomer".

So, what does it mean to be an overcomer?

Let me rephrase the question if I may. What is it that we should be overcoming?

In my studies over the years, I've read what it says about overcoming many, many times.

If we examine the book of Revelation, chapter 2, in each of the seven messages to the seven churches they are told, "*To him who overcomes . . .*"

Then follows various promises, gifts, and blessings for those who do overcome. Some of the churches are corrected for their faults and deficiencies. Others are not. Another common refrain and imperative that is directed to all seven of the churches is, "*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*"

To be overcomers we need to be discerning, and open to being instructed and corrected about *what* to overcome and how to be overcomers. The Greek word translated "overcome" is *nikao* and is explained as "to conquer, to carry off the victory, come off victorious." (Online Bible Greek Lexicon)

We need to examine other scriptures to find out about what is it that needs to be overcome and conquered.

A clue is revealed later on in the book of Revelation. The same instructions is repeated again. *"He who overcomes shall inherit all things . . ."* (Revelation 21:7)

Then follows a list of sins that would keep one out of the Kingdom of God. *"But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."* (v.8) This is a list of ungodly and worldly behaviors that a sincere disciple of Christ would confront, repent of, seek to overcome, and be on guard for any tendencies to repeat them.

The apostle Paul assembled a similar list of behaviors - that if not repented of, would keep one out of the kingdom of God. *"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, will inherit the kingdom of God."* (1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

This is similar to the listing in Galatians 5:19-21 called "the works of the flesh". Our carnal mind is opposed to and resists God's influence and is naturally not subject to His laws. (Romans 8:7) The human heart is deceitful and easily justifies wrong attitudes and behaviors. (Jeremiah 17:9) To be overcomers we need to identify the barriers and obstacles that are standing in our way to be victorious in defeating them.

The apostle John writes to the members he was serving and encourages them in their efforts to overcome. *" . . . I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one . . . I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one."* (1 John 2:13-14)

Here we see the source of those attitudes and moods that lead to sinful and ungodly actions. Not only does the Devil, the god of this age, blind the minds of those who do not believe, but he powerfully injects an attitude of anger,

resentment, and rebellion. He is "*the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience*." (Ephesians 2:2) We must recognize that wrong spirit and then with God's help through His Holy Spirit reject its dynamic influence.

In a few weeks we'll be observing the Feast of Atonement and examine our adversary and his tactics even closer, prior to leaving for the Feast of Tabernacles.

If we have a tendency to give in to anger and resentment, that makes us vulnerable. These are attitudes that the enemy can work through to influence us to give in to wrong behaviors. We must be on guard to recognize destructive anger and defuse it in a timely way. "*Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil*." (Ephesians 4:26-27)

We must replace anger with patience, mercy, forbearance, forgiveness, and self-control. "*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good*." (Romans 12:21) You and I need the power that comes from God through the Holy Spirit to be able to truly overcome the evil one and our human nature.

We must yield to being led by God's Spirit and developing the fruit of that Spirit while we reject a wrong spirit that impedes our overcoming and gaining the victory over the Adversary. (Galatians 5:18, 22-25). We must go through a constant examination and judge ourselves, and not simply do it just once a year. (1 Corinthians 11:28, 31). We should actually be doing this on a daily basis.

The apostle Paul issues a strong encouragement and overview of how to be victorious as overcomers. "*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled*." (2 Corinthians 10:3-6).

And, even a more encouraging scripture is in Revelation 12:11 "*And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death*." Ultimately it is Jesus' sacrifice that makes it all possible for us to overcome, and the Spirit of God living in us.

Some thoughts which I hope help us all understand even better what it means to be an overcomer...

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. S. Hoefker', with a stylized, scribbled end.

T. S. Hoefker

Senior Pastor, CGM

Church of God Ministries (CGM)/(Ministerios de la Iglesias de Dios)

tshoefker@cogministries.org / www.cogministries.org

P.O. Box 983, Daphne, AL, 36526-0983 / 251-930-1797 Offices