



April 18th, 2010
Morning Service

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Teaching Elder

How to be an Overcoming Christian

How do we know we are saved? John addressed this in his epistle which he wrote to clear up the confusion started by the false prophets or churches of his time. He shows in plain terms that Christians can be assured of salvation in ordinary ways;

- Continual and true, Biblical belief in Jesus.
- The continual love of others.
- The continual keeping of the commandments.

What does it mean to be saved? In this section, John writes of the overcoming aspect of salvation in Christ. Again in very clear terms he point out that those in Christ, who believe in Christ and keep his commandments will overcome the world and its ways because Christ is an overcomer.

John portrays a unique view of our Savior in his epistles. He shows Him as a conqueror, or overcomer. Jesus, the Lamb Who was Slain, was the only one able to open the seals or Jesus going out on a White Horse preaching and defeating evil. These are just two of the illustrations used to show what a mighty victory we have in Jesus and how we overcome the world by keeping in Him and keeping Him in us.

We can further see the magnitude of Christ the overcomer and how we can overcome through him in the Book of Revelation. Christ clearly explains to these seven very different churches the benefits of overcoming, how to overcome, or the consequences of not overcoming the world.

We can look at seven churches mentioned and see that nothing in the World has really changed.. All of these issues are still alive and well. The enemy of Christ has been, and always will be false churches and tyrannical governments that seeks to replace God. Fortunately it pleased the Lord to also give us clear instruction on how we can combat these issues.

Remain in Christ. This is not something you do, it really is what or who you are. This is an active pursuit of godliness. We cannot gain victory on our own, but we gain it through Christ actively working in us from the time we were saved. The Victory is His and His alone.

As you listen to the sermon consider the following:

- Do I see the evidence of Christ daily in my life?
- Do I feel foolish for my beliefs outside of church?
- Is my Salvation something I'm deciding to do, or is it who I am?
- What would the 'Report Card' look like for my church if it were in Revelation? What will I do about it?

Scripture References

1 John 5:1-13 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the *child* born of Him. (2) By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. (3) For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. (4) For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. (5) Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (6) This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. (7) For there are three that testify: (8) the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. (9) If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His Son. (10) The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning His Son. (11) And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. (12) He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. (13) These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Revelation 2:1-3:22 "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this: (2) 'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them *to be* false; (3) and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary. (4) 'But I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. (5) 'Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place--unless you repent. (6) 'Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds 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 grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.' (8) "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: (9) 'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. (10) 'Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until 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 by the second death.' (12) "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this: (13) 'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. (14) 'But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit *acts of immorality*. (15) 'So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. (16) 'Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth. (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.' (18) "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and

His feet are like burnished bronze, says this: (19) 'I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first. (20) 'But I have *this* against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit *acts of immorality* and eat things sacrificed to idols. (21) 'I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality. (22) 'Behold, I will throw her on a bed *of sickness*, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. (23) 'And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. (24) 'But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them--I place no other burden on you. (25) 'Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come. (26) 'He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; (27) AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received *authority* from My Father; (28) and I will give him the morning star. (29) 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' (3:1) "To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. (2) 'Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. (3) 'So remember what you have received and heard; and keep *it*, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. (4) 'But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. (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. (6) 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' (7) "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: (8) 'I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. (9) 'Behold, I will cause *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie--I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and *make them* know that I have loved you. (10) 'Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that *hour* which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. (11) 'I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. (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. (13) 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' (14) "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: (15) 'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. (16) 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. (17) 'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, (18) I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and *that* the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. (19) "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. (20) 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. (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. (22) 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"

Hebrews 11:1-40 Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. (2) For by it the men of old gained approval. (3) By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible. (4) By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks. (5) By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; AND HE WAS NOT FOUND BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM UP; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. (6) And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. (7) By faith Noah, being warned *by God* about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. (8) By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. (9) By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign *land*, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; (10) for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. (11) By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised. (12) Therefore there was born even of one man, and him as good as dead at that, *as many descendants* AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER, AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE. (13) All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. (14) For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. (15) And indeed if they had been thinking of that *country* from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. (16) But as it is, they desire a better *country*, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them. (17) By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten *son*; (18) *it was he* to whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED." (19) He considered that God is able to raise *people* even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type. (20) By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, even regarding things to come. (21) By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, *leaning* on the top of his staff. (22) By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones. (23) By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's edict. (24) By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, (25) choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, (26) considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. (27) By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen. (28) By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them. (29) By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though *they were passing* through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned. (30) By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. (31) By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace. (32) And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, (33) who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed *acts of* righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, (34) quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. (35) Women received *back* their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; (36) and others experienced

mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. (37) They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (38) (*men* of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground. (39) And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, (40) because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.

We are glad you have chosen to listen to this sermon and pray that it gives you strength, the want for obedience, and a desire to have God's abundant Grace mortify sin in your life. If you have any questions or comments please email chuck_ezell@yahoo.com.