

The Overcomer's Riches, Reward and Rest

by H.J. Vine

The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith in the Son of God and abiding in Christ for spiritual victory and eternal rewards.

Scripture: 1 John 4:4, 1 John 5:4, Revelation 2:7, Revelation 3:5, Revelation 3:12

Topics: "Overcoming The World", "Faith And Victory"

Description

H.J. Vine preaches about the importance of believers being in the world but not of the world, emphasizing the victory over the world that comes through faith in the Son of God. He contrasts the true children of God with religious leaders of the world, highlighting the need to overcome the world through their nature, faith, and belief in Jesus. The sermon delves into the rewards and encouragement given to overcomers in Revelation, pointing to the ultimate rest and glory awaiting those who remain faithful to Christ.

Transcript

Earnest religionists, in their endeavours to flee from the flagrant corruptions of the world, have often fallen into worse forms of lust and pride by entering monasteries and nunneries. The true believer in the Son of God, on the other hand, is to be "in the world" and yet "not of the world." The place of the children of God, as regards the world, is the same as Christ's, "the world knows us not because it knew Him not." They are known in the matters of everyday life, but in their true nature and relationship with the Father the world is incapable of rightly knowing them. It is because of this nature and the faith which belongs to their new relationship that overcoming the world marks them. "For all that has been begotten of God gets the victory over the world; and this is the victory which has gotten the victory over the world, our faith" (1 John 5:4: N.Tr.). This is the one place where the Spirit uses the word "faith" by John. It is "our" faith, and it is centred in the Son of God.

While the world remains in ignorance of the children of God in their new relationship, it has its religious leaders and teachers today just as distinctly as it had in Judaism. Of them we are told in 1 John 4:5, "They are of the world, for this reason they speak as of the world, and the world hears them;" and in verse 19 an arresting contrast is given, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the wicked one;" but this need not cause despondency to God's children, for we read "Ye are of God, children, and have overcome them, because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world" (4:4). The nature, the faith, the Son of God on Whom they believe and the Spirit given, all unite in securing victory for them, through the water and the blood which flowed from the Saviour's side. And what a present abiding place is

theirs in the Father's love! "Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God" (3:1).

Seven times the overcomer is addressed in the prophetic verses of Revelation 2 and 3. He is encouraged by divine grace and wisdom to be loyal amidst the varied phases of danger which beset the assemblies! Great are the riches and rewards the Lord holds out for the stimulation of faith and faithfulness!

1. "To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (2:7).

2. "He that overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death" (2:11).

3. "To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knows saving he that receives it" (2:17).

These first three were all preceded by a word to each one who had an "ear to hear" telling him to hear, not what the churches say, but "What the spirit says to the churches" or "assemblies." In the last four (where the return of Christ is immediately in view) this word follows instead of preceding as in the first three. In view of the soon coming of Christ how we use the ear is of the last importance!

4. "And he that overcomes and keeps My works unto the end, to him will I give power [authority] over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father. And I will give him the morning star" (2:26-28).

5. "He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels" (3:5).

6. "Him that overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the Name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven from My God: and I will write upon him My new Name" (3:12).

7. "To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I ALSO OVERCAME, AND AM SET DOWN WITH MY FATHER IN HIS THRONE" (3:21). What a glorious climax!

Let the Lord's own possessive pronoun "MY" be observed in these final four words of encouragement!--"MY works"; "MY Father" three times; "MY God"--four times; "MY new Name"; and "MY throne." How great are the riches and rewards of the one who overcomes! How infinitely blessed his rest! What a wealth of splendour, what a divine abiding place is opened for him!

The perfect Overcomer is no less an One than the Son of God Himself. He is now seated on high with His Father on His throne. He cheers on the overcomer through the deceptions or direct attacks of the world with the promise of sitting with Him in His throne. "Press faithfully forward and upward!" He seems to say to us. "Overcome evil with good." "Follow that which is good." As we respond to this exhortation, present peace within and power without will mark us all the way. And how exceedingly stimulating is the word of Revelation 21:7--"He that overcomes shall inherit all things."

Those who are born of God--the children of God--are encouraged by the Lord, and they avoid what is said of some who only outwardly take up the path, "for if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world . . . they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."

Such however, are illustrated by the Spirit as unclean animals--the dog and the sow (2 Peter 2:20-22), and not as the sheep of Christ. The children of God overcome, as we have seen, by reason of their nature, faith and object--the Son of God.

Jeremiah shows that even Israel shall at last be enriched, and be rested gloriously through Christ, in the two glowing prophecies which directly designate Him (22:5-8; 33:14-16). Israel shall dwell safely in their own land. Jerusalem shall dwell safely also; while both she and her Saviour, her Messiah, shall be called JEHOVAH TSIDKENU.

If this shall soon be the rich and restful portion of the earthly nation, what of the heavenly family--the children of God? After Jesus had uttered the words, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world!"--He lifted up His eyes to heaven and addressed His Father! HEAVEN, and not earth, is where ineffable blessedness and glory await those who are called according to God's eternal purpose. Said the Son of God, "In My Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you."

"High in the Father's house above,

Our mansion is prepared,

There is the home, the rest we love,

And there our bright reward."

Words must necessarily fail to describe the rest and rejoicing of that glorious home where Jesus is. Fully conformed to the very image of God's Son, we shall dwell with Him for ever. Where He abides we shall abide eternally, for he said, "I will . . . receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

"All taint of sin shall be removed.

All evil done away;

And we shall dwell with God's Beloved,

Through God's eternal day."

The prophet said, "His rest shall be glorious," and ours will be likewise, along with Him. Indeed, to behold His glory will be the crowning of all glory. We shall be like Him. We shall see Him as He is. The riches and rewards of the overcomer in the Kingdom will be wonderfully great, as types, prophecies and promises so truly declare; but, ah, to be with Jesus, who bled and died to redeem us--who gave Himself for us--who loves us with a quenchless love--to be with Him in His Father's house of changeless love, rejoicing, holiness and beauty, surpasses all telling, exceeding our highest thought.

Yet even here the great Overcomer had peace and rest which naught could disturb; and He gave rest to others. The Father's bosom was well-known to Him. He kept His Father's commandments and abode uninterruptedly in His Father's love, and He said to the Father in regard to His own, "I have declared unto them Thy Name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them." Here is the love which fills His Father's house, made ours now. The glory we shall share soon. The love is ours to rest in already. Eternal praise be to our God and Father!

The snares or onslaughts of the world--of its "god," "ruler" and "deceiver"--of Satan, who even appears "as an angel of light"--would turn us away from our Lord Jesus Christ, and thus spoil our being like Him as overcomers. Therefore it is repeated in 1 John 2--"ABIDE IN HIM." In verse 27 this is said to the babes among the children of God, and in verse 28 it is reiterated to the oldest as well as to the youngest--"The same Anointing teaches you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as has taught you, ye shall ABIDE IN HIM. And now, children [i.e., the whole family], ABIDE IN HIM!" As we abide in Christ all is well.

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