

Consider the Overcomer

by Stephen Kaung

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being an overcomer, ready for the Lord's return, and the reward of inheriting the kingdom that is to come.

Duration: 1:14:15

Scripture: Revelation 14:1

Topics: "End Time Readiness", "Spiritual Overcoming"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being ready for the imminent return of the Lord, focusing on the need to be overcomers who are prepared to meet Him. It highlights the significance of living a life dedicated to Christ, being faithful, and allowing the Holy Spirit to work within us. The message stresses the urgency of repentance, consecration, and being filled with Christ, as well as the call to overcome self-centeredness and the works of the enemy.

Transcript

Will you please turn to the book of Revelation, chapter 14. We will read the first five verses. Revelation chapter 14, verse 1. And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing upon Mount Sion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having his name and the name of his Father written upon their foreheads.

And I heard a voice out of heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder. And the voice which I heard was as of harp singers harping with their harps. And they sing a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the elders.

And no one could learn that song, save the hundred and forty-four thousand who were brought from the earth. These are they who have not been defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are they who follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes.

These have been bought from man as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth there was no lie found, for they are blameless. May we have a word of prayer.

Dear Lord, as we gather in thy presence, our hearts bow in worship. Thou has been so good to us. Thou has kept us until now.

And Lord, we do gather in thy name, knowing that thy presence is here with us. Dear Lord, will you open our understanding that when thy words are given, that they may fall into good ground, bearing fruit unto

yourself a hundredfold, to the glory of God. We thank thee for having met with us through these days, and we thank thee for being with us this morning.

We commit this time into your hand. Pray that thou will take full charge over the time. Pray that thy Holy Spirit will open thy words to our hearts.

Pray that thy words will fall on good ground, bearing eternal fruit for thyself, because thou art worthy. Lord, we covet thy presence with us. Speak, thy servants heareth.

We ask all in thy precious name. Amen. Thank God for bringing us into this day.

He has been so gracious and merciful to us. He has been speaking to us. He has been preparing us for his imminent return.

Dear brothers and sisters, whenever we think of our Lord, we thank him, because he promised us that he is coming back to take us to be with him. He has promised this even at the first century, and he has promised us every century up into his present time. Is it because the Lord does not want to return? Of course not.

He, as the bridegroom, is most anxious to come to get his bride, but unfortunately his bride was not ready. The Lord cannot marry a little girl not growing up into maturity. To be his life companion, he had to see that his bride is ready, grew up, full of his statutes, that she may be able to be wedded to him.

So, brothers and sisters, it is evident. It is not the Lord. It is not we who are waiting for the Lord.

It is the Lord who is waiting for us. When he promised his disciples while he was yet on earth, he said, I'm coming. I'm coming to take you with me.

Where I am, you shall be forever. This promise, he has kept through all these centuries. He has not come during the first century.

Why? Because his bride was not ready. And now we are in the 21st century. Century after century, our Lord is waiting to return to claim his bride, but unfortunately, his bride is still not ready.

But brothers and sisters, when we read the scripture, we realize that all the prophecies precede the coming of the Lord had been fulfilled. What waits to be fulfilled are prophecies concerning his return and afterwards, not before. So, do not look for any prophecy to be fulfilled before we wake up.

Brothers and sisters, this is the time that we wake up, knowing that the Lord can come at any moment. If the Lord should come now, are you ready? Are you ready for him? Or do you ask the wicked servant, thinking that the Lord will be delayed? So, you begin to beat your fellow workmen, but the Lord shall come suddenly. So, dear brothers and sisters, as we meet this morning, do you have the sense that the Lord may come today? Or are you thinking that the Lord shall delay, so you can still continue to live your own lives until you realize that his coming is imminent? Do not deceive ourselves.

The Lord is coming. Every prophecy that precedes his return has been fulfilled. All that needs to be fulfilled are prophecies concerning his coming and afterwards, not before.

So, dear brothers and sisters, again I will say, we are living in a most thrilling time. The Lord may come at any moment, but are you ready? Are we ready if the Lord should come today? And this is absolutely

possible. Do not think that we are sitting here listening and we still have more time for ourselves.

Brothers and sisters, do not deceive yourself. The Bible tells us our Lord Jesus may come at any moment. What if he should be today? Are you ready? Are you prepared for him that when he shall come, one is taken and one is left? The one taken is the one who is ready, ready for his return.

But the one who is left is one who still lives for himself and is not ready for the coming of the Lord. Which one are you? Are you the one who is ready at any moment? If the Lord should come now, thank God you are ready to be taken, to be with him. But if you are not ready, if you, like the wicked servant, think there is more time, you begin to beat your fellow servants, rude to you.

Should the Lord come today, you will be left. You remember the story of the ten virgins? These were virgins. And the Bible always tells us that virgins refer to those who have believed in the Lord Jesus, because formerly we were all adulterous.

We have sinned greatly against God and we deserve nothing but eternal death. But brothers and sisters, the Lord has saved us. He has forgiven all our sins.

He has made us virgins unto himself. The Bible tells us ten virgins, ten is a number of responsibility. These ten virgins represent the living believers on earth.

They all go out to meet the Lord. They all have their torches with oil in it. But the five wise virgins, they have extra oil in their vessels.

Why? Because they believe that if the Lord should delay and the oil in their torch has gone out, but they can replenish it with the extra oil in the vessel. But the foolish virgins, they have oil in their torch. They all go out to meet the Lord.

But in their vessel, they put other things than oil. They think there are more precious things than oil. But at midnight, when the cry comes, the bridegroom cometh.

They all rose up. And in typology, these ten virgins represent Christians, true believers throughout the centuries. Every century, the saints are supposed to go out to meet the Lord.

Dear brothers and sisters, we are at the beginning of the 21st century. What are we going to do? The same. We are to prepare ourselves to go out to meet our Lord.

Thank God we are living in a most thrilling time. Brothers and sisters, I always feel we are living at such a wonderful time. Why? Because our Lord's return is imminent.

We are sitting here peacefully. What are we thinking? Are we thinking that we have more time to live for ourselves until we see certain prophecies being fulfilled? Then we wake up and get ourselves ready. Brothers and sisters, if that's the case, we are fooled because all the prophecies preceding the coming of the Lord has been fulfilled.

There are yet prophecies to be fulfilled. But all these prophecies are concerned with his coming and afterwards, not before. So let us wake up, realizing that we are living in a very thrilling time.

The Lord may come at any moment in our time. Should the Lord come today, are we ready? Are we prepared to meet him face to face and be not ashamed? And this is the problem before each and every

one of us. So brothers and sisters, ask yourself, if the Lord should come today, are you ready? Are you ready to come before him? Or do you still think there will be time? You are still living for yourselves.

Brothers and sisters, again I will say, we are living in a very thrilling time. This is the time that the Lord may come at any moment. Any moment means that from now on, anything can happen.

But are you ready? Are we ready? Are we prepared to meet the Lord and be taken into his kingdom? Or will we be like the foolish virgins? They do not have extra oil in their vessel. They consider other things more precious to them than extra oil. But when the Lord delayed and at midnight the cry came, the Lord returns, they got up.

They found their torch. They had no extra oil to rekindle their torches, to go to meet the Lord. But when they were going to buy for extra oil, I often wonder whether they did buy extra oil.

I don't think so. But when they came back, the door was closed. They were cast into outer darkness.

And there will be gnashing of teeth, which means repentance. So brothers and sisters, it is far better if we repent today than we wait until that time when we will be cast out and repent. It's a little bit too late.

So my burden is this. Are we ready for the Lord's return? The Lord may come today, may come tomorrow, or may come sometime later. We do not know.

It is not because the Lord does not want to return. Is there any bridegroom who is not anxious to meet his bride? Are we ready? So in this last day of my fellowship, I would like to read chapter 14 of Revelation. Why? Because as we look into the last book of the Bible, you find the theme of the last book of the Bible is very clear.

The Lord is calling for overcomers. Dear brothers and sisters, our Lord, while he was on earth, he overcame. He cast out the demon.

He lay captive all those belong to the demon and make a public show of them. He is the conqueror. And now he calls those who follow him, who believe in him, to be overcomers.

So the last book of the Bible, if you read it carefully, you will find the thought of overcomers is throughout that book. This is the last message God will give to his people. Dear brothers and sisters, have we heard this last message? Overcome as he has overcome.

Sometimes you wonder, why is it that we are living in such a miserable world, difficult world, hard world? Why is it that the Lord did not rapture us as soon as we are saved? Then I think we will enjoy forever and forever. But the Lord knows better. He knows there's much in us that needs to be dealt with.

Our self, self-centered, self-interest needs to be dealt with. We need to be delivered from ourselves and be filled with Christ Jesus. May I ask you a question? How is your life today? Do you live for Christ or do you live for yourselves? Are you filled with Christ? Are you filled with the things of this world, thinking that the Lord will delay? And as the Bible says, the wicked servant began to beat his fellow believers.

Then the Lord shall suddenly, oh brothers and sisters, this is the time that we wake up. So when you read the last book of the Bible, you find the message in that book. Throughout that book is overcomer.

The last message the Bible tells us is to be overcomers. Why? Because our Lord is the overcomer. He had overcome while he was on earth.

He overcame Satan. He overcame all that was satanic and he brought them into public shame. Make a public show of them that our Lord is the victor of Calvary.

And because of this, he expects all those who follow him to be overcomers. So the question today is, are you an overcomer? One who overcomes yourself. One who overcomes the self-life in you.

One who overcomes the work of the enemy in your life. One who is totally dedicated to the Lord and be ready to receive him at his coming. Brothers and sisters, this is urgent.

This is not something casual. You have to think deeply about it. Are you ready for his return? Are you an overcomer? As our Lord Jesus is the overcomer, do you overcome the self-life in you? Do you overcome the work of the enemy in your soul? Do you really dedicate yourself completely to the Lord and follow the Lord ready for his return? So this is what the book of Revelation shows us.

If you read the last book of the Bible, Revelation, the message is very clear. It is the call for overcomers. This is the call today.

Even for the first century, when you read Revelation chapters 2 and 3, we see the seven churches in Asia. They were in the first century. And during the first century, what was their call? To every church, the call is overcome.

He that overcomes. Brothers and sisters, why is it the Lord has not yet come? I believe you must have asked this question. The answer is not in you, the Lord.

The answer is in us. The bridegroom delayed his return, not because he was not anxious to return. No.

Even in the first century, he promised that he will return. But why is it that we are now in the 21st century and the Lord has not yet come? I think it is very clear. The cause is not in him.

The cause is in us because we are not ready. So in the whole book of the Revelation, you find the message is to overcome. For instance, if you read chapters 2 and 3, the seven churches in Asia, towards the end of the first century, and to every church, whether that church is faithful or whether the church is a failure, you find to every church at the end is the call to overcome.

The Lord expects us to be overcomers. Do not blame your environment. If you live in a better environment, like the church in Philadelphia, it will be easier for you to be an overcomer.

But brothers and sisters, even in a church like Laodicea, you should be an overcomer. So the call today is the call to overcome. What is it to overcome? To overcome yourself.

To overcome the self-life in you. To overcome all the works of the enemy in your self-life. If you are willing to lay down yourselves, offer yourselves completely to the Lord and allow him to be your Lord and follow him faithfully, then you will be an overcomer.

So if you read through the book of Revelation, you find from the beginning to the end, there is the call to overcome. For instance, in chapters 2 and 3, which refers to the seven churches in Asia towards the end of the first century, there were good churches, and there were bad churches. But whatever the church they

were in during that time, the call is the same to overcome.

And those who overcome, they will inherit the kingdom that is to come. But those who are overcome, they will be cast into outer darkness. I know brothers and sisters, everybody is interested in knowing what the outer darkness is.

But again, I will say, from all the books that I've read, there was only one book that told us what the outer darkness might be. But let us not speculate. Let us be real.

In chapters 2 and 3, towards the end of the first century, to every church, whether the church is faithful, like Philadelphia, or the church is unfaithful, like Laodicea, the call is the same. He that overcomes, and he will be rewarded with the kingdom. All the promises, the rewards of the overcomers in Revelation 2 and 3, all refer to the kingdom age.

During the kingdom age, those who overcome will reign with Christ for a thousand years. Brothers and sisters, a thousand years is a long time. No one lives a thousand years today.

But to live a thousand years reigning with Christ during the millennium time is such a reward, such a glory. But if we are not ready for his return. Again, I want to emphasize, the Lord may come today.

What if he should come this afternoon? What will happen to us if we should meet in the afternoon? Who will be there? Hopefully, brothers and sisters, there will be none there. That we all will be taken and share the glory of the kingdom during that millennium time. But woe to those five foolish virgins.

They didn't prepare extra oil. In other words, they are saved but barely saved. So when the Lord shall delay, they all went out.

Their thoughts were there. They could not enter into the kingdom. They will be cast into outer darkness.

Again, I want to say, everybody is interested in outer darkness. As if we are interested in the negative more than the positive. Isn't that strange? But in outer darkness, they have nation of teeth, which means repentance.

So dear brothers and sisters, if we do not repent today, we have to wait to be repented during the millennium. Remember, it is a thousand years. So in chapter two and three, we have the call to overcome.

Whether you are with a good church, as it were, or you are with a bad church, the call is the same to be an overcomer. Wherever the Lord may put you, he wants you to be faithful to him. Do not look for better environment.

Our environment is determined by the Lord. He allowed us to pass through things because he knows what he is doing. He wants you to be completed.

Whom he has predestinated, he has called. Whom he has called, he has justified. Whom he has justified, he will glorify.

So it is the thought of our Lord. His thought towards us is precious. He who has saved us, he will save us to the uttermost.

He will not save us half done. But if we do not repent today, during the millennium time, we have to repent because God's will is that we may be perfected as he is perfect. Then when you read to chapter seven, the second part, you find there was countless people staying with the Lamb on Mount Zion.

And the Mount Zion here does not refer to the Zion on earth where David set up his kingdom, but it refers to the heavenly Zion when God will establish his kingdom. And there in chapter seven, you find countless people. You cannot count them.

And they all have the mark of God and of the Lamb on their foreheads. In other words, they were out and out Christians, not hidden Christians. And they were there clothed with white clothing, which refers to Christ, our righteousness.

And they all have palm trees in their hands. Palm trees represents victory. They were there proclaiming the victory of the Lord.

Brothers and sisters, these are the people, the overcomers through the ages. Thank God they are countless. Even though as we look at the overcomers, they seem to be few, minority.

But throughout the centuries, in every century, God will have his overcomers. Then you come to chapter 12 of Revelation. You find a man child to be born.

Brothers and sisters, this is our time. The church has failed. But out of the church, God will raise up the overcomers, like the man child to be born.

Of course, there are different interpretations of Revelation 12. Some think that the child stands for our Lord Jesus. But that cannot be.

Why? Because when the man child was born, he was immediately taken to the third heaven. But when our Lord Jesus was born on earth, he lived on earth 33 and a half years. So this man child represents the overcomers towards the end of this age.

In other words, this man child represents you and me, represents us here. We are supposed to be that man child. The target of God's enemy is no longer towards the church because the church as a whole has failed.

But thank God through all these torments and troubles in the church, he is bearing a man child. So in chapter 12 of Revelation, you find Satan's attention is not towards the woman, which represents the church at the last age. The church was already in his head.

He didn't care about it. But his whole attention is towards the man child to be born. Because he knows that if the man child should be born, that will be his end.

Brothers and sisters, this man child represents the overcomers at the coming of the Lord. We are in that time. Today, we are expecting rapture.

Today, we have passed through deep troubles. But out of these troubles, we learn our lesson. By the grace of God, we try to be faithful, obey the Holy Spirit, cooperate with him, allow him to work deeply in our lives, that we may be totally his.

Are we living in such a way? If so, brothers and sisters, there is no fear. We are waiting to be raptured at any moment. Who knows? We are here this morning.

Where we will be this afternoon, nobody knows. Only God knows. If the time is right, the rapture will happen at any moment.

How good it will be if in the afternoon, this auditorium will be emptied. No one will be left behind. Everyone will be raptured.

You know, to be raptured is to get through the air into the third heaven. The air today is where the enemy of God had his headquarters. To be able to get through his headquarters, to get to the third heaven, that means victory.

That means in their lives, they have overcome the enemy. Brothers and sisters, this is a picture of us today. Are we within the man child? Have we overcome the enemy? Are we able to get through his territory and up to the third heaven to meet the Lord and to lead him back to this earth? What a privilege that must be.

Do you admire it? Do you want it? Do you have a part in it? I suppose you do. But if that's the case, how can we be a man child? We have to consecrate ourselves totally to Christ, allow him to work in our lives, deal with our soul life, deal with all the works of the enemies in our life until Christ is fully formed. And thus, we be the man child.

In Revelation chapter 12, it tells us the secret of their victory. It says they overcome the enemy by the blood of the lamb. In other words, they know the preciousness of the blood of the lamb, not because they had been saved by the blood of the lamb.

We need to be saved continually by the blood of the lamb. I suppose you must have heard this story. Martin Luther, the reformer, greatly used by God.

And one day he dreamed a dream. He saw Satan came to him, bringing with him a scroll, a book. And the name of the book is The Sins of Martin Luther.

And this book was filled with words, inside and outside. So, Satan came to Martin Luther and said, look at this. This is what you are.

Dare you to be a reformer? Thank God, Martin Luther knew the Lord. He took up a red pencil and wrote upon him, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses him from all his sins. And Satan disappeared.

May this be our testimony. Oh, dear brothers and sisters, I cannot make it more urgent. We are living at this crucial time.

If the Lord shall come today, you will either be taken or you will be left. But it all depends on whether today you are willing to give yourself completely and allow the Lord to work out his fullness salvation in you. In verse 12 of Revelation 12, it says, they overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb.

We need the blood of the Lamb at any moment. Do not think because you have believed in the blood of the Lamb, have your sins forgiven. Therefore, this is something of the past.

No, brothers and sisters, we need the blood of the Lamb every moment of our life. And they overcome Satan because of the word of their testimony. They have a testimony to give.

And they say the word, not something hidden. And when they say the word, there's power in the word because they live such a life. And they love not their soul life even unto death.

They are willing to give up their soul life to the Lord, to follow the Lamb with us wherever he go. Brothers and sisters, these will be the overcomers at this hour. The Lord is coming soon.

If he should come this afternoon, are you ready? And if you read chapter 12, you find 144,000 standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion. This is not a Mount Zion on earth where the throne of David is. But it is the Mount Zion in heaven when Christ is enthroned.

And there you find 144,000 standing with the Lord on that mountain. You know Jehovah Witness, they have a strange teaching. They say the number 144,000 had been fulfilled.

So if you become a Jehovah Witness today, you are a second class citizen. Isn't that absurd? The 144,000, I believe is not a complete number because it cannot be that there will be only 144,000 overcomers throughout the ages. The 144,000 is the multiple of 12.

12 is a perfect number. And 144,000 is the multiple of that 12 number. In other words, they have been perfected by the Lord.

And this 144,000 had the name of the Father and the Lord's name written upon their foreheads. Now if anything is on your foreheads, it is visible to anybody. Today we find many Christians try to hide their faith.

But here you find these people, these overcomers, they openly confess the Lord Jesus. They may suffer for it, and yet they are faithful to the Lord. So they have the name of the Father and of the Lord upon their foreheads.

In other words, everybody can see that they are the Lord's. This is their public testimony. Then she said, I hear a voice out of heaven as the sound of many waters and the voice of great thunder.

And the voice which I heard was of harp singers harping with their harps. Now brothers and sisters, we know what harp is. Harp is a soul music.

It is not something outward. It is from within. Harping.

So you find these overcomers during their lifetime, they have learned a new song. A song that only they have learned. They learned it in their lives.

They learned it by the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. And they sang a new song. In verse 4 of 14, he said, These are they who have not been defiled with women, for they are virgins.

What is meant here is they are virgins in the sight of God. Because they have dedicated themselves totally to the Lord. And in verse 4, These are they who cannot be seen, defiled with women, for they are virgins.

These are they who will follow the Lamb with us wherever he goes. Wherever the Lamb goes, they go. That's their life.

And these are have been brought forth. Man has first fruits to God and to the Lamb. They are the first fruits to God.

And in their mouth was found no lie. They are honest in the Lord. And it concludes with they are blameless.

Blameless by the grace of God in the sight of God. So brothers and sisters, these are the overcomers of the ages. And it is our hope that every one of us here will be among the wrecked.

None will be accepted. This is our prayer before the Lord. Dear brothers and sisters, may I finally emphasize the Lord is coming.

Are you ready? If you are ready like those of 144,000, then when he shall come, you'll be raptured into third heaven and be with him and even be used by him to bring the Lord back into this earth to begin the millennium kingdom. If you are not in the rank, how sad it will be. But dear brothers and sisters, thank God.

No matter what we are, he who has saved us, he will save us to the uttermost. So in Romans chapter 8, we are told, whom he has known, he has justified. Whom he has justified, he has sanctified.

In other words, if the Lord's mercy come upon you, he will not leave you until that work is done. We thank God. We who are here this morning, I believe the Lord has already laid his hand upon us.

He has already saved us and he will save us to the uttermost. So eventually, we will all be kings with the Lord in his eternal kingdom. But today is the test.

So brothers and sisters, are we ready? Are we prepared to be raptured? Again, I want to emphasize it may happen at any time. May the Lord have mercy upon all of us that if he should return and we will all be raptured, the place will be emptied to the glory of God. And this is the burden of our heart.

May the Lord have mercy upon each and every one of us. Let us pray. Dear Lord, we want to thank thee for thou has saved us and will save us to the uttermost.

Sometimes we may be complacent, but thou are always faithful. In spite of all our failures, thou will continue to work in our lives. If not today, then during the kingdom age, until all of us, as the Bible says, shall be kings, reigning with Christ for the glory of God.

Oh dear Lord, how we want to thank thee for all the mercies and grace that thou has so bestowed upon us. And as we gathered here this morning, we want to give thee all the glory in thy precious name. Amen.

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