

# Leadership and Ministry Training #3

by Stephen Kaung

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of being an overcomer, relying on the grace of God, and surrendering ourselves to Him, in order to stand firm in our faith and be ready for His imminent return.*

**Duration:** 56:58

**Scripture:** Revelation 2:7, Revelation 3:21, Revelation 12:5, Revelation 14:1, Revelation 14:4, Revelation 15:2, Revelation 19:7, Revelation 21:2, Revelation 22:14

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare", "End Time Preparation"

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## Description

This sermon from Revelation chapter 14 emphasizes the call to overcome, highlighting the importance of being overcomers in Christ. It discusses the vision of the Lamb and the 144,000, the significance of following the Lamb wherever He goes, and the need for believers to be prepared for Christ's imminent return. The message stresses the urgency of surrendering to God, allowing the Holy Spirit to work in our lives, and being clothed with Christ's righteousness and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit to be prepared as the bride of the Lamb for eternity.

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## Transcript

Good morning. Will you please turn to Revelation. 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 Zion, 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 the heaven, as a voice of many waters, and as a voice of great thunder.

And a voice which I heard was as of harp singers harping with their harps, and they sang 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 bought 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 men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was no lie found, for they are blameless.

May we have a short word of prayer. Dear Lord, we want to thank Thee for gathering us together this morning. Lord, Thou hast been so gracious and merciful to us, and for this we are thankful.

As we gather here this morning, Lord, we want to give ourselves totally over to You. And say, Lord, what has Thou to say to each one of us? Thou hast bought us with Thyself. We are no longer ours.

We are forever Thine, Lord. And pray that Thou will continue to speak to us and draw us closer to Yourself. That Thy will may be done in each and every one of us on earth as it is in heaven.

We give this time into Your hand. And trust Thy Holy Spirit to release Thy Word to us. Speak to us, Lord, and bring us closer to Yourself.

That we may do Thy purpose, Thy will, and glorify Your name. We commit this time into Your hand. We ask in Thy precious name.

Amen. Thank the Lord for gathering us together here this morning. We believe that He has something more to say to us.

And we do want to open our hearts completely to Him. And let His Word sink deep into our hearts. He deserves our everything.

He has bought us with such a price of Himself. And there is nothing left for us to hold back. So we commit this time into His hand.

As we come to the last book of the Bible, Revelation. We find that the message there in Revelation is the call to overcome. Our Lord Jesus is the overcomer.

While He was on earth, He was tempted in all things. He overcame. And because He is the overcomer, He wants every one of us who believe in Him also be overcomers.

In the book of Revelation, the final message that God gave to His church is the message of overcomers. He has overcome. And He wants each and every one of us who are His to be overcomers.

When we open this last book of Revelation, from the very beginning to the very end, we find there is only one message. And the message is the call to overcome. When John was exiled to the island of Patmos, for the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus, he was put into hard labor.

And probably on the Lord's Day, he had some free time. So we can imagine he must be sitting on a rock, looking over the Aegean Sea to the coast of Asia Minor. We know that he was exiled because he was serving the churches in Asia Minor.

So naturally, his mind will be turned to these churches in Asia Minor. He must be thinking, what had happened to them? He had served them faithfully while he was there. But now he could no longer be there.

He had entrusted them to the Lord. But he wondered what had happened. And as he looked and wondered and contemplated, he heard a voice behind him.

He turned back to look at the voice, and he was given what we call the Patmos vision. He saw seven golden lampstands, which represent the churches in Asia Minor that he served before he was exiled. And he saw the Son of Man standing in the midst of the seven lampstands.

In other words, even though he was exiled and no longer able to serve these churches, but that doesn't mean that the churches were abandoned, because the Lord himself continues to serve these seven churches. And to these seven churches, we find spiritually they varied very much from Philadelphia to Laodicea. There was no comparison.

But whatever the conditions of the church may be, one thing is certain. The Lord is there serving them. And the call is clear.

It is the call to overcome. While our Lord was on earth, he was tempted in all things, but he overcame. Now he is in heaven, seated at the right hand of God.

He was interceding for us. And his prayer for us is that as he overcame, that we too be overcomers. We are still living on this earth, full of temptations, full of the work of God's enemy.

And yet in spite of the fact, we are called to overcome. It is not God's will that we should be overcome, but it is God's will that we overcome. So brothers and sisters, the question to each one of us is very simple.

Are you an overcomer? How can you overcome? By yourselves or by the grace of God? In chapters two and three of the seven churches in Asia Minor that John served before he was exiled, we find their conditions are so varied, from Philadelphia to Laodicea and in between. But in spite of the various conditions of the churches in Asia Minor, God's call is one. At the end of each letter, we find there is a call.

He who overcomes. So dear brothers and sisters, what the Lord is expecting us who are here this morning. We believe we are in the last days.

All the prophecies precede us have been fulfilled. There are still prophecies to be fulfilled, but these prophecies are concerned with the coming of Christ and afterwards, not before. So what are we waiting for, brothers and sisters? Are you still waiting for some prophecy to be fulfilled so you can get yourself ready? Brothers and sisters, that time has already gone.

The Lord may come at any moment. I always say to myself, what if the Lord shall come now? Am I ready for him? I remember Brother Lee once told us one day he was walking with Miss Barber who helped him most. As they were walking, turning the corner, Miss Barber said to Watchman Lee, maybe when we turn the corner we met the Lord.

She was a person who waited daily the coming of the Lord. Dear brothers and sisters, are we such people? The Bible tells us the lazy servant will say to himself, the Lord will not come back now. And because he had that kind of thought, he began to beat his fellow students, fellow servants.

But without his knowledge, the Lord suddenly came. And he will be cut into two. Brothers and sisters, beware.

This is the time we are in. Do not think that we still have time while we are sitting here. The Lord may come suddenly, now.

If this should happen, what will become of you? Will you be taken by him? Or will you be left behind? Will you be reigning with the Lord for a thousand years? Or will you be left behind in utter darkness, weeping, gnashing your teeth, regretting your life? Thank God he is merciful. He is not suffering. In spite of the fact that we may fail him, he will not fail us.

So, even with this evil servant cast into utter darkness, with gnashing of teeth, he was given the chance to repent. But dear brothers and sisters, which is your choice? When the Lord shall come, you go with him and to reign for a thousand years with him? Or to be cast into utter darkness with gnashing of teeth, that is, repenting for your carelessness? I do thank the Lord. In spite of our carelessness, in spite of the fact that there will be some believers who will be left behind and not able to attend the feast of the Lamb, but be cast into utter darkness.

But thank God his love never changes. He still gave him the opportunity to repent and to return to the Lord. But dear brothers and sisters, which will you choose to have? When the Lord shall come, to go with him and reign for a thousand years, or to be cast into utter darkness, repenting of what you had done in living this world just for a short period.

No matter how long you may live, even you live to over a hundred people, a hundred years, in comparison with millennium, a thousand years, it was short. But to be in utter darkness, to repent, we do not know how long this will continue. The Bible does not tell us, and we dare not imagine, but we do know that in utter darkness there will be repentance.

It may take a thousand years. It may take shorter by the grace of God. We don't know.

But brothers and sisters, what are we looking for? So the Bible in the last book emphasizes this matter of overcome. We are surrounded by the world full of temptations. The Lord knew what happened.

You know, I always, after I was saved, I used to think how good it would be if the Lord would take me to himself instead of leaving me on this earth. But the Lord knows better. He wants us not to be only barely saved.

Heaven is not to be filled with babies. Babies are lovely to look at. But babies are very difficult to take care of.

Brothers and sisters, the Lord is looking for overcomers. He wants every one of us here to be an overcomer. It is not Lord's will that we should be left behind.

It is God's will that he should come, we will be raptured and to be with him. That is the will of God. So dear brothers and sisters, are we ready for his imminent return? As you read the book of Revelation, you will find from the very beginning to the very end, the message is one.

He who overcomes. God does not expect anyone of his to be overcome by the world, by sin, by himself. God wants everyone he has saved to be saved to the uttermost.

So dear brothers and sisters, he wants you to be an overcomer. True, to be left on earth, surrounded by the world and all the temptations. It was hard, difficult, but the Lord knows what he is doing.

He is using this time. We don't know how long it will be to train us, to perfect us, to allow us to grow into maturity that we may be like him in order to be fit to be his bride. And that is God's purpose for us today.

Not only in Revelation chapter 2 and 3, we find the call to overcome. And this call came not only to Philadelphia. It also came to Laodicea.

Sometimes we may think it will be easier for us to be an overcomer in Philadelphia, surrounded with such good company, surrounded with such good environment. But dear brothers and sisters, it may surprise

you. Your better environment may not be able to give you better chance.

We feel the urgency in our hearts. Brothers and sisters, on the one hand, we thank God for putting us in these last days. But on the other hand, we fear and tremble lest we fail.

It doesn't mean we will not be saved. We will be saved. But we will remain as babes, not grown up, matured to be the bride of the land.

So brothers and sisters, this is the call to overcome. Revelation 2 and 3 happened during the first century. In the first century, towards the end of the century, the call was He who overcomes.

And this call continued on. When you look into Chapter 7, the second part, we find there are multitudes and multitudes of people. They had the palm tree, leave, branches in their hands.

And on their face was the name of the God and of Christ. They are there before the throne singing the song of victory. Now who are these people? These are the people throughout the centuries.

After the first century to the coming of Christ. Thank God they are numberless but in spite of the fact they are multitudes and yet in comparison with the world they are just a few. They have palm trees in their hands and that represents overcoming.

They sing a song with the harp and harp is always heart singing. They sing from their heart. They are redeemed by the Lord.

Brothers and sisters, in spite of the fact that in comparison the overcomers are rare. But thank God throughout the centuries God has his overcomers. Then when we look into chapter 12 we find a vision of a woman with child.

She was crying for birth and yet before him her stood the red dragon. The red dragon represents Satan. We will think Satan will swallow that woman because that woman represents the church at the end time.

But he stood before the woman. He did not swallow of that woman. The woman meant nothing to him because the woman was already under his control.

The woman represents the church in the last days. It was already under Satan's control. He didn't care for her but he knew that out of the travail of that woman will come out the man-child.

And this man-child marks the end of Satan. He knew that. This man-child is a corporate name.

It is not just one. Now some people think this man-child was Christ. Of course Christ is the overcomer.

But we must remember after Christ was born he was not raptured immediately into the third heaven. He lived on earth thirty-three and a half years. So he did not represent Christ.

He represents overcomers in the last age which we believe are ours are us. We are the people of God who live in this last age. Satan paid his attention not to the woman but to the man-child.

He knew that the man-child would become his end. So he wanted to swallow that man-child as soon as he was born. Brothers and sisters do you see the scene? Do you see where you are? We are to be the man-child by the grace of God.

And Satan's attention is completely towards us because he knew that when the man-child was born that is to say when the overcomers the number had completed that will be the end of Satan. Dear brothers and sisters what a thrilling time we are in. We are in the most dangerous time but we are in the most thrilling time.

The Lord may come in any moment while we are sitting here. Do not think that there will be tomorrow. Maybe it can be.

Suddenly the Lord came but the problem is where will you be? Will you be raptured? The Bible tells us as in the days of Noah so shall be the coming of the Son of God. During the days of Noah God said man still have a hundred twenty years and God commanded Noah to build the ark. I can imagine there was no rain before that.

While Noah was building the ark people would come and say Noah what are you doing? He said God commanded me to build the ark for the flood is coming. They said where was the flood? They have never seen the flood before and that is our situation. But after Noah has finished the ark and God commanded him and his family to enter into the ark and God brought animals five pairs to preserve them in the ark then God shut the door.

When God shut the door the flood came. I can imagine how people flocked to the place where Noah's ark was knocking at the door and said please open it for me. But it was God who shut the door not Noah.

Then the flood came. For forty days forty nights rain flood even the highest mountains were overcome. Brothers and sisters this happened once in history.

It will happen again. So do not think that it will never happen. The days in Noah the people in Noah's days they thought it would never happen because it had never happened before.

Brothers and sisters we should know better because we already have Noah's time the flood. We have been warned we have been told so how can we be careless be prepared for his imminent return. Thank God in chapter 12 as soon as the main child was born he was immediately raptured to the third heaven.

Satan didn't have a chance to swallow him. In other words brothers and sisters we are supposed to be that main child. We are to be ranked among the people who compose the main child.

When the number is few the overcomers will be raptured. Do you know brothers and sisters we are living at this juncture. How can we be complacent? How can we like a poor slave the Lord is not coming yet.

The Lord may come at any moment. Are you ready? Are you ready? Have you surrendered yourself to the Lord to such an extent that you may obey him follow him at any time any case that you will be ready for any moment should the Lord come. Now this should be our attitude.

So brothers and sisters this is what you find in Revelation chapter 12. Those who have not been ready will be left through the great tribulation. The great tribulation is coming.

The world has never seen such tribulation. To the Jews it is called Jacob's trouble but to Christians it is the great tribulation. But brothers and sisters even with great tribulation the disaster that the world has never seen and yet God's purpose is positive.

He wanted to use the great tribulation to wake up some of the sleeping saints. Thank God even with the great tribulation God wanted to save some out of it. So we find in chapter 15 that there will be those who came out of the great tribulation by the grace of God they were able to give their lives for the Lord instead of bowing to the antichrist.

But I personally believe probably such people will be few. And after that you came to Revelation chapter 17 the marriage of the man and also chapter 21 and 22 the eternal marriage of the Lamb. Brothers and sisters we have two marriages at the end of the Bible.

The Bible began with marriage the marriage of Adam and Eve representing the marriage between Christ and his church. And now this is the fulfillment. In chapter 19 you find the marriage of the Lamb.

The bride has made herself ready. He was given the bright shining living truth. In other words if you read to Psalm 45 you will find that where the bride was to be led to the bridegroom in 14 if I think correctly he will be clothed he was clothed with gold garment and that represents all who come to Christ will be clothed with Christ as our clothing just like the prodigal son.

The first thing the father will do is to clothe him with gold clothing. Gold clothing represents Christ our righteousness. We have no righteousness of our own but by the grace of God when we come to him he clothes us with Christ.

We are all clothed with Christ and that enables us to stand before God. But when you look to chapter 15 verse 15 the following verse you find the bride will be led to the bride room with an imploded clothing. In other words there is a second clothing.

The first clothing is the clothing of gold representing Christ our righteousness enables us to stand before God. The second imploded clothing represents the holy work of the Holy Spirit in our life. Why? Because when you imploded a clothing how much time you will spend.

It will be stitch by stitch and of course every stitch is painful but it teaches Christ into you and that is what God is doing with us today. He is preparing you with a wedding garment. The Holy Spirit is working in your life as if stitch by stitch.

It's painful but something glorious is being stitched. There will be our marriage closing. So brothers and sisters are you closing clothes with only one clothing of rot gold? Thank God for that.

But that's not enough. In God's purpose He wants us to be closed with embroidered clothes. Do you know the Holy Spirit is doing embroidering in your life? The Holy Spirit dwells in you for only one purpose to stitch Christ into you.

He is to complete the wedding garment for you. Should we not welcome the stitching of the Holy Spirit? How are we afraid of that stitching? Because it is painful. But thank God it is a wedding garment in preparation.

So thank God for leaving the Holy Spirit in you, in doing this work of stitching in you. He is not hurting you. He is completing you.

And with that stitch garment you become the bride of the Lamb. You can stand before God for eternity. So dear brothers and sisters, this is one you will find in the book of Revelation.

When you come to chapter 21 and chapter 22, to eternity to come, you will find every believer will be clothed with two garments. One of rock gold representing Christ our righteousness. One, the righteousness sits of the saints.

This is the eternal purpose of God. Thank God for his patience working in each and every one of us. So we do want to commit ourselves totally to the Lord.

Even though in this remaining time on earth it may be difficult. You may feel painful. It is always painful trying to follow the Lord in this world because this is a world of the enemy.

But thank God he is using this to perfect it. Thank you. So your eternity to come.

You will reign with Christ for eternity. That is the wonderful purpose of God. Shall we pray? Dear Lord, our hearts to bow in worship.

What thou hast planned for thy own is beyond any expectation of ours. We thank thee that thou will not only save us but thou will save us to the uttermost. Whom thou hast called righteous thou hast also made holy.

So Lord, we will gladly and with thankful heart give ourselves to thee and allow thy Holy Spirit to stitch Christ into our life. Lord, sometimes we find it is painful but, Lord, we know it is worthy. Lord, we want Christ to be our all early in all.

So, Lord, we come this morning to give ourselves over to you. We cannot do it but thou will do it. Lord, spare us not.

Stitch us, prepare us that we may be able to be your fit pride for eternity. We give thee glory in your precious name. Amen.

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