

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 he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? ⁶ This is He who came by water and blood – Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. ⁷ For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.

⁸ And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one. ⁹ If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. ¹⁰ He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.

Text: 1 John 5:4-10 A 5-1-22 Ezekiel 37:1-14 John 20:19-31 Psalm 2 Responsive Psalm: 46
Hymns: 201, 192 (1-3, 5, 7-8), 207, 472

OUR VICTORIOUS FAITH IN CHRIST

- 1. Jesus has given us the victory over sin, death, and hell**
- 2. Jesus has given us the victory over the world**

Dear fellow believers in Christ,

It sure seems that the unbelieving world is in control, and that there's little we Christians can do against the world's evil. Today in His Word our Lord assures us that by faith in Jesus we have not only been given the victory over sin, death, and hell, we have also been given the victory over the world.

1

In our text from his first epistle John speaks of *“whatever is born of God,”* literally from the original, *“whatever has been born of God.”* We're not God's children by anything we do or any decision we make. God made us His believing children, and God is keeping us as His believing children. John says just before our text, *“Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God...”* (1 Jn. 5:1a). God made us His children by giving us faith in His Son, Jesus Christ.

John says, *“This is He who came by water and blood – Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood.”* Water marked the beginning of Jesus' public ministry when He was baptized. Blood marked the end of Jesus' public ministry when He bled and died on the cross.

When Jesus was baptized God the Father said, *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”* (Mt. 3:17). In His name, Jesus Christ, *“Christ”* means *“anointed one.”* Jesus was anointed by the water of His baptism as He began His public ministry. *“Jesus”* means *“Jehovah is salvation.”* Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, sent by His Father to save us from our sins.

On the cross Jesus shed His blood for us – the blood from His back beaten and torn by His scourging, the blood from His head crowned with thorns, the blood from His hands and feet by which He was nailed to the cross, and the blood from His side pierced by the soldier's spear. On the cross Jesus suffered and died for our sins.

John says, *“It is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word”* (Jesus), *“and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son.”* Through their Word God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit bear witness to the truth they know about Jesus – that He is the Son of God and the world’s only Savior from sin, and that we’re saved just by believing in Him. John says, *“He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself.”* We believe *“the witness”* of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and *“the witness”* of Jesus’ baptism and bloody death on the cross. Our sins are forgiven, we’re saved, and we have eternal life in heaven!

2

When John says, *“Whatever is born of God overcomes the world,”* he’s referring to the war the world is waging against us. John says before our text *“Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you”* (Jn. 3:1). Jesus says, *“If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you”* (Jn. 15:20). Jesus’ enemies hated Him, persecuted Him, and eventually had Him crucified for telling the truth about Himself and salvation in Him. We tell people that Jesus is the Son of God and Savior of the world, and that we’re all sinners who can only be saved by believing in Jesus. We tell people that the Bible and only the Bible is the Word of God, that the Bible is the absolute truth from God, and that in the Bible God tells us what is right and what is wrong. The world hates to hear this, and hates us for saying it. And the battle is on.

“And this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith.” Notice that God doesn’t say, *“This is the victory that will overcome the world – our faith,”* as though sometime in the future, maybe not until we go to heaven, we will overcome the world by faith. God says, *“This is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith”* (my emphasis). We already have overcome the world by faith.

John says, *“Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”* John isn’t saying, *“If your faith is strong enough, you can overcome the world.”* He’s saying, *“Put your faith and trust in Jesus. That’s how you overcome the world.”*

To say that Jesus gives us the victory over the world doesn’t mean that He’ll make it so we don’t suffer at the hands of the world. Our whole human race has been corrupted by sin. Jesus’ solution to our sin problem isn’t to put “the right people” into positions of power and authority, to right every wrong and make everything fair, and to make life on earth easy and comfortable for us. That would make a nice world to live in, but it would still leave us in our sins, doomed to suffer forever in hell. Jesus’ solution to our sin problem was to die on the cross for our sins, and give us forgiveness and eternal life in heaven.

John says, *“Who is he who overcomes”* (from the original, *“who keeps on overcoming”*) *“the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”* So how do we *“keep on overcoming the world”* by faith in Jesus?

- Here's one way we have we "*keep on overcoming the world*" by faith in Jesus: The world doesn't know what to do with its sin and guilt. Jesus tells us, "*Be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven*" (Mt. 9:2).
- Here's another way we "*keep on overcoming the world*" by faith in Jesus: The world has great power which it uses against us. But Jesus is stronger than the world, and Jesus is on our side. "*If God is for us, who can be against us?*" – Romans 8:31. "*You are of God, little children, and have overcome [the world], because [Christ] who is in you is greater than [Satan] who is in the world*" – 1 John 4:4.
- Here's another way we "*keep on overcoming the world*" by faith in Jesus: Whatever the world may try to do to us, "*We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose*" – Romans 8:28 (my emphasis).
- Here's another way we "*keep on overcoming the world*" by faith in Jesus: The world thinks we're all animals that evolved by accident from nothing. We know that God made us "*in His own image*" (Gen. 1:27), and that by faith in Jesus we're God's dearly-loved, saved children. "*But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, ... and He who formed you...: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine. ... You [are] precious in My sight, You have been honored, and I [love] you'*" – Isaiah 43:1, 4.
- Here's another way we "*keep on overcoming the world*" by faith in Jesus: The world thinks that money and material things and power are some of the best things life has to offer. We have the "*one thing [that] is needed*" (Lk. 10:42): Jesus and His Word and salvation in Him.
- Here's another way we "*keep on overcoming the world*" by faith in Jesus: The world is constantly searching for peace, but can never attain real peace. We have "*the peace of God which surpasses all understanding [that] will guard [our] hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*" – Philippians 4:7.
- Here's another way we "*keep on overcoming the world*" by faith in Jesus: The world keeps changing its beliefs and morals. God and His Word never change. "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever*" – Hebrews 13:8. "*The Word of our God stands forever*" – Isaiah 40:8.
- Here's another way we "*keep on overcoming the world*" by faith in Jesus: Everyone has problems and bad things that happen to them in life. The world has to face them without God. We face them with God. "*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble*" – Psalm 46:1. We never face life alone. After Jesus rose from the dead He promised us, "*I am with you always*" (Mt. 28:20). Our living Savior is "*with [us] always,*" guiding us, helping us, picking us up when we fall, restoring us when we stray, giving our lives true meaning and purpose.

- Here's another way we "*keep on overcoming the world*" by faith in Jesus: Even if we're put to death for our faith in Jesus, we have His assurance, "*Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life*" (Rev 2:10). The world fears death. We don't have to be afraid of dying, because "*death is swallowed up in victory.*' *O Death, where is your sting? O Grave, where is your victory? ... Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Cor. 15:54-55, 57, my emphasis).

God has a purpose in everything He does in the world, and in everything He allows to happen in the world. God is causing *all things* to work together for our good (Ro. 8:28, my emphasis). He tells us, "*Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!*" (Ps. 46:10)

Jesus has told us, "*In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*" (Jn. 16:33). Jesus' victory over the world is an accomplished fact. "*And this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith*" (my emphasis). By faith in Jesus we "*[have] overcome the world*" (my emphasis). In Christ, our victory over the world is an accomplished fact. "*Who is who keeps on overcoming the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*" (my emphasis). In this war the world is waging against us, as we keep placing our faith and trust in Jesus we "*keep on overcoming*" the world.

We close with these words from the eighth chapter of Romans: "*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: 'For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.'* *Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us*" – (vv. 35-37, my emphasis). Jesus has given us the victory over sin, death, and hell! Jesus has given us the victory over the world! Praise God for **OUR VICTORIOUS FAITH IN CHRIST!** Amen.