

# Overcomers – Achieving Victory in This World No Matter How Bad Things Get

The Last Eyewitness Series – A Study of the First Epistle of John (Chapter Five)

## Lesson One Highlights: The Last Eyewitness

- John was the oldest and last surviving disciple, now called apostles.
- Eyewitness to (or still alive when this occurred):
- Jesus miracles and ministry on earth (one of the first four disciples chosen.)
- Jesus' crucifixion, burial, resurrection, and ascension into Heaven
- Witnessed the overpowering descent of the Holy Spirit on them at Pentecost
- Peter changed from denier of Jesus to one of the leaders of His church
- The death of James, his brother, by King Herod- the first disciple martyred
- Persecution of Christians by and salvation of Saul-Paul
- Deaths of all his fellow apostles
- The birth of the Christian church and its struggles to survive
- Exiled, with "criminals", on Patmos, an island in the Aegean Sea, for preaching the Gospel.
- Moved to Ephesus to spend the rest of his life preaching and exhorting the church.
- Like Paul, he battled Gnostics who were challenging the Truth of the Gospel.
- We saw the importance of personal **testimonies** to reach people for Christ – including ours.
- We learned the biblical meaning of the word **fellowship**

and what it looks like.

- John said Jesus was the **propitiation** (appeasement) for our sins. We studied the meaning.

### **Lesson Two Highlights:** Five Evidences from the life of a Christian

- Obedience
- Love (no one born of Christ can hate)
- Hating sin and not loving the world
- Evidence against – being a pretender or antichrist
- The Anointing of the Holy Spirit

### **Lesson Three Highlights:** Child of God or Child of the devil

- Child of God
  - If we abide in Jesus, we do not **practice** sin (live in sin or a sinful lifestyle)
  - Practices righteousness.
  - We obey His commands
  - We live as He lived
  - We love as He loved
  - Child of the devil
- Abide or live in sin (practice sin) with no remorse or repentance.
- Do not practice the righteousness of Christ
- Do not love their brothers or others or others—love selectively.

### **Lesson Four Highlights:** The True-False Test (Testing the Spirits)

- This epistle was written to combat false spirits working thru teachers and prophets
- He instructed them to test false spirits against the Holy Spirit
  - Jesus Christ is God and came from Him in the flesh (True)
  - Does not admit or confess this (False) John called

it a spirit of error.

- We discussed understanding the love of God
  - To us because God sent His only Son to save us
  - Thru us demonstrated in that we love one another
  - With us – meaning by His Holy Spirit we live and stand secure in Christ

### Overcomers

Today we complete our study of this amazing short, powerful letter the Apostle John wrote from Ephesus (in Turkey) to **warn, instruct, remind, and encourage** believers in the churches he shepherded and beyond. It was not addressed to a specific church or person, as most epistles were.

### John Repeats Himself on Love and Obedience

*Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father **loves** the child born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and **observe His commandments**. For this is the love of God, that **we keep His commandments**; and His commandments are not burdensome. (5: 1-3)*

- **Love** (one another meaning other Christians)
- **Obedience** (see also 2: 3; 3: 22, 24)
- Not burdensome like the law (and that which Pharisees added)

### Overcomers (Gr nikē (nee' kay – conquest or victory)

*"For whatever is born of God **overcomes** the world; and this is the **victory that has overcome the world—our faith**. (vs. 4)*

*"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." Hebrews 11: 6*

*"Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who*

*believes that Jesus is the Son of God? 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. For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. 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. 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." 1 John 5: 5-10*

*"and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."" (Matthew 3: 17 baptism and again at the Transfiguration – Matthew 17: 15)*

*And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. 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." 1 John 5: 11-13*

### **How we become overcomers into eternal life**

- *Born again in Christ – saving faith – we believe*
- *Our ongoing faith – we are believers*
- *We believe the testimony of God the Father, Jesus God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit*

### **Overcomers have Confidence in Approaching His throne of grace – Praying**

*"(Eternal life in Christ gives us the right) This is the **confidence** which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything **according to His will**, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we*

*have the requests which we have asked from Him.” vs 14-15*

The key phrase is **according to His will**. Some may say or think that is a cop out or making excuses for errors in the Bible or letting God off the hook. God is in control not us. He works everything according to His will and plan (Romans 8, Ephesians 1). That should encourage us to pray anything and everything and let God answer as He will and believe it is best.

*“If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death; I do not say that he should make request for this. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not leading to death. We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God (Jesus) keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. 1 John 5: 16 – 20*

- Difficult verse (vs 16) The word “a” is not in the Greek. It was added by translators. Any sin Christians confess is a sin not leading to death.
- Sin leading to death is the unconfessed sin of a lost person if it leads to his physical death, while the unpardonable sin leads to spiritual death. John does not say we should pray for them.
- Again John said, Christians do not live sinful lives. We sin but we do not live in sin.
- God protects us against Satan. But the world is Satan’s workshop and playground.

- Jesus gave us understanding to know the truth. He is the Truth. We know Him and are certain of our salvation and eternal life.

### **Final Warning for Overcomers**

*Little children, guard yourselves from idols. (1 John 5: 21)*

Remember John was warning them about these false prophets and apostates who had been part of the church and left—moving from the truth to lies. He called them liars, spirits of evil, and children of the devil.

Idols are anything or person who comes between us and God—that which we worship in place of Him. Our world is filled with idols and idolatry today.

My closing admonition to you today is to ask the Holy Spirit to examine your heart and reveal any idols you may be worshipping—putting ahead of God. And for FAITH to OVERCOME all our fierce enemies throw at us no matter what!

For Christ's sake,

*Walter*