



## ***VICTORY IN JESUS***

*Victory Won to Victory Lived ... The Path of the Victorious Overcomer*

### **1) You have to believe the gospel—the only one.**

- (1 Corinthians 15:1–4 ESV) Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, 2 and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

We want to give words of assurance ... we want to hold the ones we love and say with conviction and assurance that ... “Hey, c’mom ... everything is going to be alright” ... we want to bring back the smiles on the faces of our family and friends ... we want to remove the doubt and fear ...

But if we believe God we will overcome the temptation to lie to them ... to present false hope ... and to give false words of encouragement ... a lie is a lie no matter how well intended ...

### **2) Victorious overcomers know that they have won.**

- (1 John 5:1–5 ESV) Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. 4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

**Gary Derickson ...** in the Evangelical Exegetical Commentary on 1 John 5:4 ... gives us great insight into the ... “overcoming victory” believers have over the world ... that “it is a conquering victory that he [the Apostle John] has in view. It is **not a battle** that has been won, **but the war**. There is finality to this victory with no other battles left to be fought. There is little way to make a stronger statement in Greek than this. The child of God stands as conqueror. Thus John is affirming that the spiritual rebirth of a believer is what provides victory over a world standing in opposition to God

**3) Victorious overcomers believe what God says about inheriting the kingdom of God.**

- (1 Corinthians 15:50–53 ESV) I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. 53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.

**4) Victorious overcomers believe God for the total victory he gives us over death and the sting of death.**

- (1 Corinthians 15:54–56 ESV) When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” 55 “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.

Death is swallowed up. The sting of death is removed.

**Notes on “sting” and “swallowed up” ... A sting is a painful wound caused by the thrust of an insect’s venomous stinger into skin. The Greek word used here for sting is ... κέντρον [kentron] ... that even sounds ominous, doesn’t it ... kentron ... a sting, as that of bees, scorpions, locusts ... animals wound by their sting and sometimes even cause death.**

**Swallowed up means ... to be destroyed ...**

be swallowed. Our Greek word here for “swallowed up”... καταπινω [katapino] means ... to drink down, swallow down; to devour; to swallow up, destroy.

**5) Victorious overcomers believe that only God and God alone gives the victory.**

- (1 Corinthians 15:57 ESV) But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- (Deuteronomy 20:1–4 ESV) When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. 2 And when you draw near to the battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the people 3 and shall say to them, “Hear, O Israel, today you are drawing near for battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint. Do not fear or panic or be in dread of them, 4 for the LORD your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory.”
- (Proverbs 21:31 ESV) The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the LORD.

**6) Victorious overcomers have overcome total defeat, helplessness and despair by believing God.**

We have total and complete victory over this world through our belief in Jesus Christ, but we will neither understand nor live in that victory until we first experience the total and complete failure of our self-efforts.

You may doubt that so let me give you the outstanding example of ... the fearful followers we looked at earlier ... twelve men who were hand-picked by our Lord himself ... who answered his call to follow him ... who lived with him ... and were taught by him in word and deed ... for three years ... **and that wasn’t enough** ...

What happened in their lives ... and in the lives of other men and women who continued to believe God ... for them to eventually be accused of turning the world upside down ...

- (Acts 17:6 ESV) And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities, shouting, “These men who

have turned the world upside down have come here also.”

So what happened in between ... three years of following and training by Jesus Son of God was not enough ... being taught the principles of godly living by Christ himself was not enough ... daily observing the life of the Son of God on earth was not enough ... what happened ... was there a secret ingredient ... how did they take the next step to becoming mighty ... turn-the-world-upside-down ... men and women of God ... victorious overcomers in the name of Jesus our Lord ... what happened ...

Failure happened ... abject failure ... failure to the maximum degree ... miserable, humiliating, wretched ... crash and burn ... gut-wrenching, agonizing ... failure ... full on helplessness and complete despair ... absence of hope ...

Failure ... failure was their necessary next step ... they checked the balance in their spiritual bank accounts and found their righteousness ... their goodness ... to be only dirty, filthy rags ...

They had to come to the end of themselves to find the starting line to victory through Christ ... their self-efforts ... their dreams ... their hopes ... even their religious beliefs had to come to the foot of the cross of Calvary and die ...

- (Psalm 23:1–3 ESV) The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. 3 He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Well ... not only will the Shepherd lead you there but he will be with you the whole way ...

- (Psalm 23:4–6 ESV) Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

See ... you need to know how much he loves you ... you need to know that this is why he took you to the dark place ... you had to die so he could live in you ...

- A) **So ... we need to follow our Shepherd to the place where our hopes die.**

Our hopes and plans and dreams have to die ... and as you have probably already experienced to some degree ... they do not go quietly ... they do not go without tears and pain and agony of heart ... but they must die ... and they must stay dead for our hope through our Lord Jesus Christ alone to abound in our lives.

**We need to learn the Emmaus Lesson ...**

- (Luke 24:21a ESV) **But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.**
- B) **The Shepherd will also lead us to and through the place where our religion dies.**

All our religious self-effort and religious determination must die and stay dead.

- (Matthew 26:33-35 ESV) Peter answered him, “Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away.” 34 Jesus said to him, “Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” 35 **Peter said** to him, “Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!” **And all the disciples said the same.**
- (Luke 22:60–62 ESV) But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about.” And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. 61 And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, “Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.” 62 **And he went out and wept bitterly.**

They did not have total victory in Christ until they faced the thorough, bitter hopelessness and defeat of their self-efforts ... even their self-efforts in which they had Jesus on the top rung of their beliefs ...

And here is where so many believers falter and struggle ... their achilles heal we might say in their spiritual growth ... they have Jesus at the top ... but he is not their everything ...

And this is what too many people who are followers of Jesus don't understand ...

Jesus is at the top of many false gospels ... but he is not everything ... people still count on their self-effort and their works ... they have yet to come to believe God ... that salvation is by faith alone ... in Christ alone ... by grace alone

... no works ... no self-effort ...

- (Ephesians 2:8–9 ESV) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

These people have yet to allow the Shepherd to lead them through the shadows ... of their false gospel ... to victory in the way of grace.

**CONCLUSION: In conclusion I would like to go back to the questions that I asked at the beginning ... the questions that the Lord asked his fearful followers during the great storm ...**

**Why are you afraid ... why are you so afraid ... have you still no faith ... and ... where is your faith?**

We should receive these questions as Christ intended his disciples to receive them ... yes ... as a rebuke ... and as a very necessary lesson to be learned ... the questions should direct us to self-examination ... not self-denial ...

**If you are afraid, it means one of two things ...**

**First**, it may mean that you have never believed ... that you are not a follower of Jesus ... and that you should be afraid ... very afraid ... because there is no hope for any of us apart from Christ ...

So I would hope that the questions would direct you to believe in the Lord Jesus and receive his gift of salvation ... to a place where there is hope ... and peace with God which is the only peace that ultimately matters.

**Second**, it may mean ... that you are a believer who is not believing ... that you are not believing God as you should ... if you are a follower of Jesus Christ ... and if you remain fearful ... and live in fear ... you are not believing ... Jesus would ask ... Why are you so afraid? Where is your faith?

The fearful follower concentrates more on the storm than on the Savior ... and at some time ... or more likely multiple times ... as evidenced by your fear ... you have refused the leading of the Shepherd to the dark places of your heart where he calls you to turn from and give up the things that keep you from believing God fully ... as a fearful follower you need to repent and confess your sin ...

**And finally some words for the victorious**

**overcomers ...** you will still face fearful times ... the victory is won but the battle rages ... the darkness still tries to speak ... but your plan forward is the same as it always has been ... you keep believing ... soldiers of Christ arise ... believe and follow your Lord ... don't deny your fear ... just keep following the Shepherd ... through the darkness ... through our fears ... through our uncertainty ... through everything ... the victorious overcomers keep believing God and the word of God ... God alone ... and only God ...

- (Psalm 23:4 ESV) Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- (Psalm 62:5–7 ESV) For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him. 6 He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. 7 On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God.
- (Psalm 56:3–4 ESV) When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. 4 In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?
- (Psalm 56:8–11 ESV) You have kept count of my tossings; put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book? 9 Then my enemies will turn back in the day when I call. This I know, that God is for me. 10 In God, whose word I praise, in the LORD, whose word I praise, 11 in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?

**And one very last word to the victorious overcomers ... believe ... be strong ... and behold ... this is your God ...**

- (Isaiah 35:3–4 ESV) Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. 4 Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you."