

## The Overcomer!

Text: Revelation 12:1-8

Revelation 12 is a fantastical chapter in the Bible! It encompasses a great theme of the Bible. The world is in desperate need of redemption because of man's fallen nature. Satan is addressed as "the serpent" in the protevangelium: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15). In Revelation 12 we see that through Israel (specifically through Mary) the Christ-child is born and the Devil dedicates all his energies to destroying the Messiah and His influence in the world. We see the interplay of war in Heaven when Satan first fell and then war in Heaven at the end of time. Because the Devil cannot defeat the Lord Jesus, he fights Israel and then the church. Revelation 12:9, 10 records the earlier and final defeat of Satan: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." It is at this point that Revelation 12:11 explains how we escape Satan's doom: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

First of all, consider the word "overcame." It comes to us from the Greek word *nikao*, which means to subdue, conquer, overcome, prevail, or get the victory. According to I John 5:5 all believers are, in fact, overcomers: "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" Sometimes we need to remember that Christ won the victory on the cross and therefore we can and should claim our title as overcomers. I John 2:14: "I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." I John 4:4: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world."

There are three ways mentioned in our text that we overcome:

### I. THE BLOOD ATONEMENT

Revelation 12:11a: "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb...." Should you examine our hymnal, you will find a plethora of songs that speak of the blood of Christ. To list a few: *Saved By The Blood*; *Nothing But the Blood*; *The Cleansing Wave*; *When I See The Blood*; and *There is a Fountain Filled With Blood*."

Why is the blood so important?

#### A. The Blood Speaks of Forgiveness.

Hebrews 12:24: "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." I remember the old commercial, "Tide get out what dirt gets in." Well, the blood of Jesus can certainly get out anything that sin puts in. There is another old song that I love that says, "Praise the Lord for full salvation, God still lives upon His throne. And I know the blood still reaches deeper than the stain has gone!" How true! How true!

Hebrews 9:12: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

#### B. The Blood Gives Us Boldness.

Hebrews 4:16: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 9:14: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

#### C. The Blood Expresses Finality.

Hebrews 10:9-12: "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God."

### II. OUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Revelation 12:11b: "...and by the word of their testimony." I remember at the age of four having a sincere desire to know Jesus Christ as my own personal Savior. The Bible says in Luke 18:16: "But Jesus called them unto Him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." The Gospel permeated our home. It is no wonder that at the age of six, I began my sinner's prayer with, "Lord, I'm sorry I put you off for so long."

Our faith is not anchored in a church catechism, pedobaptism or a second-hand faith borrowed from someone else. Romans 5:1: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Galatians 2:16: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Christianity is not real in our lives until it's personal.

### III. THE EXPULSIVE POWER OF UNABATED LOVE

Revelation 12:11c: "...and they loved not their lives unto the death." John 21:15: "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" I Corinthians 13:13: "And now abideth

faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity” [agape/love]. Mark 12:30: “And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.” Romans 12:21: “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

More than two hundred years ago, the saintly, Thomas Chalmers (1780–1847) wrote a message that packs as much punch today as the day he wrote it. It is entitled, *The Expulsive Power of a New Affection*. He opened his argument with these words, “There are two ways in which a practical moralist may attempt to displace from the human heart its love for the world — either by a demonstration of the world’s vanity, so that the heart shall be prevailed upon simply to withdraw its regards from an object that is not worthy of it; or, by setting forth another object, even God, as more worthy of its attachment, so that the heart shall be prevailed upon not to resign an old affection, which shall have nothing to succeed it, but to exchange an old affection for a new one... From the constitution of our nature, the former method is altogether incompetent and ineffectual, and the latter method will alone suffice for the rescue and recovery of the heart from the wrong affection that domineers over it.” Chalmers went on to say, “Such is the grasping tendency of the human heart, that it must have a something to lay hold of — and which, if wrested away without the substitution of another something in its place, would leave a void and a vacancy as painful to the mind, as hunger is to the natural system.”

If I want to get the air out of a glass, I do not strain and experiment by attempting to suck the air out by some sophisticated means, thus creating a vacuum. I do something far more simple and thorough; I simply fill the glass with water. How do I eliminate the weeds from my yard? I read of one man who eliminated the crabgrass in his yard by nourishing the dandelions. I will go a step further and eliminate the dandelions by nourishing the Augustine grass.

I John 2:15: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

-Pastor Pope-