

THE GOSPEL 7

VICTORY: EASTER AND OVERCOMERS

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After the crucifixion, the disciples were defeated and despondent and probably locked in the upper room for fear that they may be arrested as followers of the Lord Jesus.

The Easter story has to begin with why Christ died. He died for the sin of the world, for all who would accept Him.

Sin is often said to only refer to serious crimes, but it is any disobedience to God. In one sense, sin could be said to be not entirely our fault. Satan is the instigator of sin and we read that in sin did our mother conceive us. However, we do sin and of our own accord.

The wages of sin is death. It is what we earn and what we deserve unless there is a remedy. And there is. It is not in the church or in the sacraments but in the Lord Jesus Christ. He who knew no sin was made sin for us. Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ. Note it is a gift. It can be accepted or refused. You do not have to give years of service or go to university or pass exams. It is free gift.

Some people insist that a Christian is a mere good doer. But he is not. He is someone who believes in the Lord Jesus and has accepted Him as Saviour.

The remedy for sin is in the Lord Jesus and we have victory through Him and that victory is over sin, death, hell and judgment. It also means that, ultimately, the Devil will be defeated. O grave where is thy victory? O death where is thy sting?

The strife is o'er, the battle's done
The victory of life is won
The song of triumph has begun
Alleluia

People do not always understand the meaning of the word Alleluia. There is a modern worship song that says Praise Him with alleluias for Jesus is Lord which translated reads Praise Him with Praise Hims for Jesus is Lord.

Christ died for our sins. He was born to die.

The grave is not our final resting place. God said to Hosea, I will deliver you from the power of the grave.

Easter is the most vital event for the Christian. In 1 Corinthians 15. 7 we read, And if Christ is not risen your faith is vain and you are still dead in your sins.

Faith is worthless had the Lord not risen from the dead in His glorious resurrection. Because of this we have the victory.

The victory is not a military campaign. It is a spiritual victory from the Lord. It is He who will overcome. In all my 50 years as a Christian, I have not heard this aspect taught.

The Lord said, In the world ye will have tribulation but be of good cheer I have overcome the world.
John 16.33

When we are hurt we often feel like putting things right and showing up the one who has hurt us, but Romans 12.21 says that we are to overcome evil with good.

Those who believe in the Lord Jesus are overcomers of evil, writes 1 John 2.14

Revelation 2. 7 states that to whosoever overcomes, the Lord will give the right to the tree of life which is in God's paradise.

There are many cases of the Lord overcoming.

1. Abraham and Sarah could not have a child but the Lord overcame.
2. The children of Israel were slaves in Egypt but the Lord overcame.
3. With Pharaoh's army in pursuit, the Israelites faced the crossing of the sea. The Lord overcame
4. The Lord provided manna in the wilderness although the people complained, they were fed.
5. The enemies in the land of Canaan were formidable but the Lord overcame
6. In the days of Hezekiah, the Assyrians camped nearby ready to attack but illness spread through their camp that night and Lord overcame and gave His people victory
7. After their captivity in Babylon, the Lord delivered them from exile and overcame for them.

It never ceases to surprise me why God's people turned their backs on the Lord. They made idols out of wood and metal and said, These be thy gods, O Israel. These idols could not walk or talk. The Jews worshipped Baal and other false gods and used the Temple prostitutes, both men and women, and were abominable to the Lord who had delivered them and shown them His love and mercy. I have recently been subject to such treachery by a friend and did so much for that friend and so I have a better understanding of how God feels about the treachery from His own earthly people.

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