

Date: September 2, 2012

Subject: Overcome the World - 1 John 5:4 part 2

"For whosoever is born of God overcomes the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith." 1 John 5:4

Continuing on from where we left off last week, there are two more points I would like to bring out of this verse.

Last week we saw how this verse speaks exclusively to those who are "born of God" and so the remaining two points from this passage we will look into, are meant for the edification of those who are already "born of God."

II. It speaks of our daily battle with sin and the process of our sanctification, "overcomes the world."

III. How we obtain this victory over sin, "even our faith."

Notice how our verse begins with the word, "For"

"For whosoever is born of God..."

Meaning this is the reason for what was just said before in verse 3, let's read that,

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous."

Most people get the impression that to be a Christian means living a life in a box without any enjoyment whatsoever, and that obedience to God shackles men to a life of slavery to keep commandments that seem burdensome [i.e. "grievous"]; however, this proves false ~~because~~ ^{for} "for..."

"For whosoever is born of God overcomes the world:"

Our natural depravity inclines us to rebel against any law of God, it is the,

"Thou shalt/not" laws that excite our rebellious nature. This can easily be seen by simply telling a child not to touch a certain button; and it will be the only button he will now want to touch.

"Because the carnal mind is enmity [i.e. "hatred"] against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Romans 8:7

We are all born with the "carnal mind" that hates God and defies His laws; but once we become "born of God" by His Holy Spirit, we are declared righteous and perfect because of Christ's righteousness, in God's sight; and we also grow in loving obedience to the laws of God. The latter is in view in how ~~the~~ he who has become "born of God" ~~is~~ now ~~the~~ ^{the are} who...

II. "Overcomes the World"

The "world" in view here is not the earth; but refers to ~~the~~ unsaved people - as how

we all were before Christ - are "dead in trespasses and sins," as we read in Ephesians 2:1-3

"And you has He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

This means that before we were saved, "quickened" [same as being "born of God"], we were so dead in sin, that all we did was sin; and this is the state of all the unsaved world. By nature, we love sin, we serve sin, we see nothing wrong with sin, and we call evil, good. While we were still of the world, we were busy "fulfilling the desires of

the flesh and of the mind" and we delighted in things contrary to God, and were not the least bit concerned about it. We used foul language, drugs, sex, stealing, even hurting other people for our own advantage; to gratify "the lusts of our flesh." This, and much more, is meant by "the world" in 1 John 5:4, and now that we are "born of God" we can now overcome "the world." The life we once lived and all of its sinfulness, we may now overcome.

After May 21, 2011 and even more so after October 21st, two verses laid heavily upon me. The first was Galatians 3:11 "The just shall live by faith" which I have at length discussed. The second was this passage in 1 John 5, "Overcome the world... even our faith." These two Scriptures go hand in hand, our salvation begins the moment we first truly see Christ by faith, "The just shall live by faith" and this is the victory He gives us, and it so continues as we conquer the sins which have so easily beset us, and we conquer them, we overcome

then, by faith. You see, Christ has already overcome the world for us,

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33

The ~~little~~^{war} is already won, the Captain of our Salvation, Jesus Christ, has already, "overcome the world." He is the Victor; but along our journey here, before His Return, we are faced and assailed with many battles.

Is the Christian life one of a future victory, but of present defeat? Satan walks about as a roaring lion, should we just lie down and let him have the mastery over us? Sin is everywhere in the world and, "the whole world lies in wickedness" (1 Jn. 5:19), should we just allow sin to overcome us also? God forbid!

"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." 1 John 4:4

Not only has Christ won the war, but He desires for us to win the battles. Does this mean that we can attain a perfectly sinless state while yet in this body? No, our perfection doesn't come until our glorification; but what this means, beloved, is if we are struggling with a sin, Christ has given us all we need to overcome that sin, "For whosoever is born of God overcomes the world:" Again, we read in Romans 6:12

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."

Although we have lived in sin our whole life, once we are given the Holy Spirit, there should be a change in our life, "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Rom. 6:2).

If you remember in my last letter to you all, ~~that~~ that i said i lived the life of a Pharisee - i trusted in my obedience, rather than in the full forgiveness in Jesus Christ. Herein lies the problem of a works gospel, our faith becomes attached to our works and we lose sight of the rest in Christ, and His works.

i had no assurance of my forgiveness, so i constantly sought to become more obedient, to feel more forgiven... do you understand what i am talking about? Have you ever doubted your salvation because you have sinned? Now there will be times when the Spirit of God will press sore upon us, and we should always remain tender to His touch, like David did; ^{but} herein lies the liberty in Jesus Christ: there is a difference between being saved and being perfect.

We think that if we sin then we cannot be saved; but there is ~~the~~ a difference between our justification (sins forgiven in Christ) and our sanctification (our overcoming of sins by Christ). If we had to wait until we were

perfectly obedient to the law of God before we could know if we are saved... we would never know here. Look at the Apostle Paul's struggle with sin in Romans 7, he shows that he isn't yet sinless for he still does what he knows he shouldn't (verse 15); but does this detract from his faith in the forgiveness of Jesus Christ? Decide for yourself,

"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."
Romans 7:24-25

And neither should any who are truly "born of God," and it is by this removal of the threat of the law, that Christ spurs us to greater obedience by "faith which works by love" (Gal. 5:6). Our love for Christ is the ~~only~~ reason that should constrain us to forsake the sins which still cleave to us. We should never befriend the ^{very} poisons that

cost our Saviour His life. Should a son cherish the very viper that killed his father? Let us likewise stomp the serpent; yea, ^{let} us crush the very egg, and may we please our Lord with our stomping and crushing all that opposes our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and day by day, moment by moment, "overcome the world."

Thus far we have saw the who, "born of God"; the what, "overcome the world;" and - God willing - next week, we will look at the how, "even our faith."

Your servant for Jesus' sake,

Rev. F. W. W. W.

Now let's turn our stomping and crushing...
into Marching!

Onward, Christian Soldiers by Gould 1865

Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
with the cross of Jesus going on before;
Christ, the Royal Master, leads against the foe;
forward into battle, see His banners go.

Like a mighty army moves the Church of God;
brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod;
We are not divided, all one body we,
one in hope and doctrine, one in charity.

Crowns and thrones may perish, Kingdoms rise & wave,
but the Church of Jesus constant will remain;
gates of hell can never against that Church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise, and that cannot fail.

Onward, then, ye people, join our happy throng,
blest with ours your voices in the triumph song:
Glory, laud and honour unto Christ the King,
thru' countless ages men and angels sing.

Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
with the cross of Jesus going on before.