



Be Overcomers – Running the Race

Introduction

The term **“overcomer”** is a powerful biblical concept, rooted in the Greek word *nikaō*, which means to conquer, prevail, or gain victory. In the Christian life, being an overcomer is not about earning salvation, for salvation is already secured through faith in Jesus Christ. Rather, it is about faithfully living out that salvation in obedience, endurance, and spiritual victory.

Every believer is justified by faith alone, but not every believer will receive the same reward. The **Bema Seat** of Christ is not a judgment of sin; Christ bore that on the cross, but an evaluation of faithfulness. Those who “overcome” will receive crowns, honors, and responsibilities in Christ’s coming kingdom.

In Revelation 2-3, Jesus promises blessings “to him that overcometh.” These promises are **rewards** for faithful believers who persevere in love, purity, and obedience.

Overcomers: Who Are They?

The Apostle John defines the overcomer clearly: “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:4-5).

Every believer, by virtue of faith in Christ, has already overcome positionally. The believer’s justification ensures victory over sin and death. Yet Scripture also speaks of practical overcoming, living out that **victory** on a daily basis.

The Christian life is both a standing and a walk: we are declared righteous before God and then called to live righteously in this world. **Overcoming** means **walking in faith**, **resisting sin**, and **remaining steadfast** in trials.

This can be compared to Israel’s journey: redeemed out of Egypt (justification), traveling through the wilderness (**sanctification**), and entering the Promised Land (reward). Many are saved from Egypt, but not all enter into inheritance because of unbelief or disobedience (Hebrews 3:12-19).



The Bema Seat of Christ

All believers must appear before the judgment seat of Christ: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10).

This is the *Bema Seat*, a term used in ancient Greek athletic contests to refer to the platform where victors were awarded crowns. It is a place of reward, not punishment.

The Bema Seat determines not *where* we spend eternity, but *how* we spend it. Every believer’s works will be tested by fire: “Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it... the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is” (1 Corinthians 3:13).

Those whose works endure will receive reward; others will suffer loss, yet still be saved. Overcomers are those whose faith has produced lasting fruit and whose lives reflect faithfulness to their Savior.

The Overcomer’s Life in Scripture

• Faith That Endures

Faith is the foundation of overcoming. “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4). Faith keeps believers anchored through temptation and persecution. Hebrews 11 portrays overcomers who “through faith subdued kingdoms... obtained promises... stopped the mouths of lions.”

• Love That Conquers

Paul wrote, “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12:21). Overcoming includes responding to hatred with love, to injustice with mercy. True victory is moral and spiritual, not merely circumstantial.

• Obedience That Rewards

Jesus declared, “He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations” (Revelation 2:26). Faithful obedience results in eternal authority.



The Overcomer Promises in Revelation

Jesus' seven letters to the churches (Revelation 2-3) each contain promises "to him that overcometh." These promises represent distinct rewards, not the guarantee of salvation itself. They reveal the scope of eternal blessings available to the faithful believer.

- **Ephesus - The Tree of Life**

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Revelation 2:7).

Reward: Access to the Tree of Life: eternal fellowship and fullness of joy.

- **Smyrna - The Crown of Life**

"He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Revelation 2:11).

Reward: The Crown of Life—symbolizing victory through persecution and martyrdom.

- **Pergamos - Hidden Manna and a White Stone**

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone..." (Revelation 2:17).

Reward: Intimate provision and personal acknowledgment from Christ Himself.

- **Thyatira - Authority Over the Nations**

"He that overcometh... to him will I give power over the nations" (Revelation 2:26).

Reward: Co-regency with Christ during the Millennium.

- **Sardis - Clothed in White Garments**

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment..." (Revelation 3:5).

Reward: Recognition and purity in the presence of the Father.

- **Philadelphia - Pillar in the Temple**

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God" (Revelation 3:12).

Reward: Eternal stability and honor in God's presence.

Laodicea - Sit with Me in My Throne



“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne...” (Revelation 3:21).
Reward: Co-reigning with Christ—the highest privilege of the redeemed.

The Crowns of the Overcomer

At the Bema Seat, overcomers receive crowns symbolizing eternal reward and responsibility:

- **Crown Incorruptible** – for disciplined endurance (1 Corinthians 9:25).
- **Crown of Rejoicing** – for leading others to Christ (1 Thessalonians 2:19).
- **Crown of Righteousness** – for longing for Christ’s return (2 Timothy 4:8).
- **Crown of Glory** – for faithful shepherds and leaders (1 Peter 5:4).
- **Crown of Life** – for enduring trials and persecution (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10).

Our **crowns** represent opportunities for service in eternity. They are not for personal glory, but for casting at His feet” (Revelation 4:10).

Overcoming the World, the Flesh, and the Devil

The believer’s battle is threefold: against the world’s system, the sinful flesh, and the devil.

- **Overcoming the World:** “Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Through Christ’s victory, believers stand secure despite worldly opposition.
- **Overcoming the Flesh:** “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16). Daily surrender leads to overcoming temptation.
- **Overcoming the Devil:** “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony” (Revelation 12:11). The believer’s authority rests in Christ’s finished work.
- **Overcoming Through Suffering:** Suffering refines faith. Jesus said, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Paul reminded believers, “If we suffer, we shall also reign with him” (2 Timothy 2:12).

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Our trials of daily life are not obstacles but training for **reigning**. The Bema Seat will reveal how believers endured hardship with faith, producing “an eternal weight of glory” (2 Corinthians 4:17).



The Eternal Perspective

Overcoming means living with eternity in view. Paul urged believers to “press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14).

This “high calling” is not salvation but reward. The overcomer fixes his eyes on Christ, not the temporary pleasures of the world. As Hebrews 12:1-2 declares, “Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.”

At the end of life’s race, faithful believers will hear, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant... enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Matthew 25:21).

Conclusion

Being an overcomer is not about human strength but divine grace. The believer who abides in Christ, **walks** in obedience, **endures** trial, and remains **faithful** will be richly rewarded at the Bema Seat.

The overcomer’s victory is already secured through the blood of Christ, but the reward depends on faithfulness now. Salvation is a free gift; inheritance is earned.

Every act of faith, every trial endured, and every temptation resisted adds to the eternal glory awaiting the believer.

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son” (Revelation 21:7).