

GOD HAS MADE US OVERCOMERS IN CHRIST

No 250

(Mirerani Pentecostal Church – Mirerani, Tanzania – 25-27/4/03 - EKB)

Jesus Christ is the Overcomer of all things.

Scriptures: *Rev 3:21, Jn 16:33, Rev 1:18, Phil 2:5-11, Eph 1:20-23, Heb 2:14, Heb 1:2, Mk 14:36, Jn 4:34, Jn 5:30, Jn 6:38.*

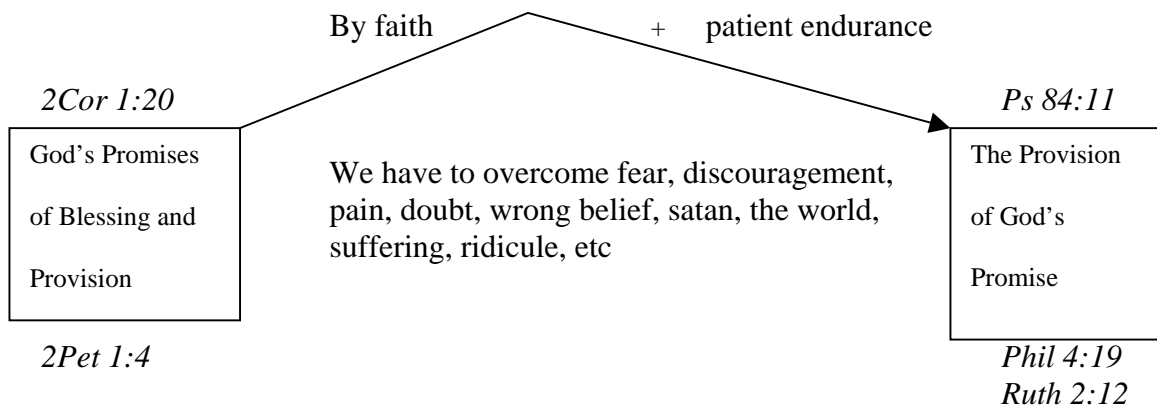
- a. **Jesus overcame self will**, *Mk 14:36, Mat 26:39,42,44, Jn 4:34, Jn 5:30, Jn 6:38, Phil 2:8.* Jesus did not want to go to the Cross. He asked the Father for a way out, *Mk 14:36.* However He did not leave it there, He added, **“Nevertheless not what I will, but what You will.”** **Because Jesus overcame self will** to do the will of the Father, **we can be saved** and receive God’s gift of eternal life, through faith in His finished work at the Cross, *Jn 19:30.*
- b. **Jesus overcame sin and every temptation**, *Heb 4:15, Mat 4:4,7,10.* Jesus was tempted in all points as we are but He did not sin. He overcame all kinds of real temptations as the Son of Man, crying out to God to save Him, *Heb 5:7.* He increased in depths of obedience to the Father, through the sufferings he went through, *Heb 5:8.*
- c. **Jesus overcame satan and all the powers of darkness.** *Heb 2:14, Col 2:15, 1Jn 3:8, Mat 12:28,29, Rev 1:18, Jn 16:11, Jn 12:31.* By His life of obedience to the will of the Father, Jesus overcame every temptation of satan to sin, *Mat 4:4,7,10, Heb 4:15.* In His death, burial, resurrection, ascension and His enthroning at the right hand of the Father, *Heb 1:3, Phil 2:9-11,* Jesus rendered satan powerless, *Heb 2:14.* He destroyed the works of the devil, *1Jn 3:8.* Jesus stripped and disarmed principalities and powers and made an open show of their defeat, *Col 2:15.* Jesus bound the strong man, the devil, and plundered all His property, *Mat 12:28,29, Lk 11:21,22.*
- d. **Jesus overcame this present evil world**, *Jn 16:33, Jn 12:31, Ac 2:40, Gal 1:4.* **The world is a satanically inspired and maintained system** that seeks to keep people apart and separate from Jesus Christ and His salvation, *1Jn 2:15-17, Mat 4:8,9.* The world works through “peer pressure” to conform to its ways and standards of pleasure, philosophy, entertainment, excitement, possessions, fears, worries, lusts, pride of life, and so on, *Lk 8:14, Mk 4:19.* The world mocks, despises, shuns and persecutes those who do not follow its ways, but rather choose to follow Christ and God’s Word, *Jn 16:33.*

There are many other things that Jesus overcame, such as demons, sickness and disease, storms, false traditions, evil accusations and extreme danger to His life, *Lk 4:29,30.*

The last recorded words of Jesus Christ in Scripture to the churches, are in the letters to the seven churches in Revelation, chapters 2&3. Generally speaking Jesus commends each church for its strong points, calls it to repent of its sins and shortcomings, **and promises specific blessings to those who overcome.** For example, in *Rev 3:12,21,* He promises to make the overcomer a pillar in the temple of His God etc., and to sit the overcomer in His throne with Him.

Actually, God’s promises can only be obtained by those who overcome. You have to overcome to inherit God’s promises.

Heb 6:12 says, “Do not be lazy, but be followers of those of those who through faith and patient endurance inherit the promises of God.” Between the promise of God and the provision of the promise, there are problems to overcome by faith and patient endurance



Heb 6:15 – After Abraham had patiently endured
in faith he obtained the promise

“This is the victory that **overcomes** the world, even our faith.” *1Jn 5:4*.

“Who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” *1Jn 5:5*.

The General Promise to Overcomers, *Rev 21:7*.

Those who overcome self, sin, satan and this world, by faith and patient endurance in God and His Word, **inherit all things**. The Lord God Almighty will be our Father and we will be His sons and daughters.

Jesus Christ is the OVERCOMER in everything, and as such is also the inheritor of all things;

<i>Heb 1:2</i>	whom He has appointed heir of all things
<i>Col 1:16</i>	all things were created by Him and for Him
<i>Heb 2:10</i>	it became Him, for whom are all things
<i>Rom 8:17</i>	joint heirs with Christ

Why has God made us overcomers in Christ?

God has made us **OVERCOMERS IN CHRIST** so that we might **INHERIT ALL THINGS IN HIM** and with Him.

Because **Abraham was an overcomer**, *Rom 4:17-22*, God promised him that he would be the **heir of the world**, *Rom 4:13, Gen 17:5*.

“**Ask** of Me and I will **give** you the nations for your **inheritance** and the uttermost parts of the earth for your **possession**,” *Ps 2:8*.

When God made man, He created him as **the heir of all creation**, *Gen 1:26-28, Heb 2:6-8, Ps 2:8, Ps 115:16*.

In the Fall, *Gen 3:1-5*, man lost this to satan who became the “prince of this world”, *Jn 14:30, Jn 16:11, 1Jn 5:19, 2Cor 4:4, Eph 2:2*. Satan took man’s inheritance and rule.

But Jesus came, He overcame satan, established the kingdom and rule of God in the earth. He overcame in everything, and **so has become the heir of all things.**

Now all who believe in Jesus Christ are children of Abraham, *Gal 3:7*, and are blessed with faithful Abraham, *Gal 3:9*. God promised to give Abraham the nations, *Gen 12:3, 17:5,6*.

Writing by the Holy Spirit, Paul told the Corinthian believers that “all things are yours,” even “Paul, Apollos, Peter, the world, life, death, things present and things to come, all are yours, and you are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s,” *1Cor 3:21-23*.

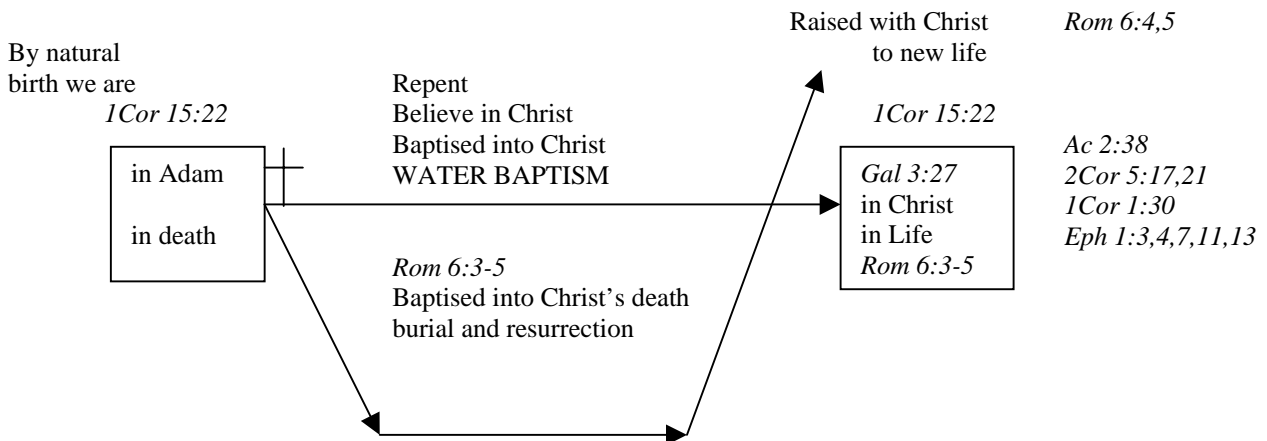
Now How Has God Made Us OVERCOMERS?

When we repent and believe in Jesus Christ, and are baptised in water, **WE ARE BAPTISED INTO CHRIST, the overcomer, and we put on Christ,** *Rom 6:3-5, Gal 3:27, Ac 2:38, 8:16, 10:48*.

What does it mean to be IN CHRIST?

If I take this piece of paper and put it in this Bible, **whatever happens to this Bible also happens to this piece of paper.** If the Bible travels in a car, the piece of paper travels in a car. If the Bible flies in an aeroplane, the piece of paper flies in an aeroplane. If the Bible sits on the table, the piece of paper sits on the table. Whatever the Bible does, the piece of paper does.

NOW WE ARE IN CHRIST, BY WATER BAPTISM THROUGH FAITH. We used to be in Adam but now we are IN CHRIST, *1Cor 15:22*.



Please note: When we are baptised into Christ, *Gal 3:27, Rom 6:3*, we are also, through Him, baptised into the Father and the Holy Spirit, as it says in *Mat 28:19*.

We are baptised into Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. We are now **IN CHRIST**, *Gal 3:27*. Old things have passed away, **ALL THINGS HAVE BECOME NEW**, *2Cor 5:17*.

We are **NOW DEAD TO SIN**, *Rom 6:6, Rom 6:10,11,22*. We are able to overcome sin.

As we **believe and confess this** it becomes **real in our experience**.

Example: For many years I was a slave to anger. I struggled to get free and overcome it. The more I struggled the worse it got. Each day it affected my life, family and relationships. One day someone said to me, “You do not have to be angry anymore! On the Cross Jesus Christ smashed its power and set you free.” They showed me *Rom 6:1-6,10,11,14*. They explained that I had been baptised into Christ’s death, burial and resurrection to new life. **That the old nature of sin and anger had been smashed and shattered at the Cross 2000years ago, and that now I was free.** Suddenly I saw it. **Yes, Jesus had already set me free.**

For 14 days I believed and confessed *Rom 6:6, & 6:11*, thanking and praising God **that He had already set me free from anger**. After 14 days most of the anger had gone. I was 29 years old at this time. Now I am 69 years old and I am still free from being a slave to anger, *Rom 6:14*. Hallelujah to Jesus, forever. The power of God is in the Word of God and it is released by faith, thanksgiving and praise. By being baptised into Christ, into His death, burial and resurrection, we have been made overcomers of sin. Believe it, receive it, live it.

We are **IN CHRIST**. We have been **BAPTISED INTO CHRIST**. We have put on Christ, *Gal 3:27*. We have been put in **WHAT HE HAS DONE**, *Rom 6:2-5*. We have been **put into His overcoming victory**, *2Cor 2:14*. Also we are **IN WHO HE IS**, *1Jn 4:17, Col 3:1-4*. Christ is now our life.

As you become established as overcomers in Christ, God will give you Mirerani city and the people who live in it. The harvest is “plenteous”, *Mat 9:37*. “Plenteous” is 75% or more. As you become overcomers in Christ, God will give you and the other believers in Mirerani His harvest of souls, *Ps 2:8*. You are His labourers, His overcomers, His harvesters.

NOT ONLY THAT, BUT CHRIST IS LIVING IN US, *Gal 2:20, Col 1:27*, by the presence, life and power of the Holy Spirit, *Ac 2:38,39, Eph 5:18,19, Rom 8:2, Lk 11:13, Jn 14:26*. **HE IS OUR LIFE. THE GREATER ONE IS LIVING IN US**, *1Jn 4:4*. **He is greater than** sin, satan, this wicked world, fear, sickness, disease, demons, death, hell, things present, things to come, and He is living in each one of us.

THE OVERCOMER IS LIVING IN US, AND WE ARE LIVING IN THE OVERCOMER.

We have to know these things and live in them. God says, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge,” *Hos 4:6*. We must **know** and we must **overcome, by faith**.

Rev 21:8 is a serious warning to those who do not overcome, fear, unbelief, abominable behaviour as in *Pro 6:16-18*, murder or hate, *1Jn 3:15*, immorality, *1Cor 6:9-11*, sorcery and witchcraft, idolatry and idols and telling lies. We must be overcomers.

Jesus has overcome all these and many more. Because we are baptised into Him, and live in Him, **God expects us also to rise up in faith and overcome** these things.

God says, “**Do not let sin reign** in your life,” *Rom 6:12*.

“**Sin shall not rule over you**,” *Rom 6:14*.

God says, “**You have put off the old man** with his deeds, and have **put on the new man**, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him who created him.” *Col 3:9,10*.

Now be an overcomer.

Overcome pride, judging others, unforgiveness, hate, fear, inferiority, lust, self-centredness, unbelief, (or wrong belief), doubt, anger, violence, stealing, lies and so on.

I want to talk about **overcoming pride**.

Jesus talked about this in *Lk 18:9-14*. The Pharisee and the tax collector went up to the Temple to pray. The Pharisee prayed with himself, “God I thank You I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers or like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give tithes of all I have.” The tax collector bowed his head, beat on his chest, and said, “**God be merciful to me a sinner.**” God rejected the prayer of the Pharisee but accepted and **answered the prayer of the tax collector**. God forgave him.

The Pharisee's sin was pride. He trusted in his own good works and despised the tax collector. Jesus said whoever lifts himself up will be brought down, **but whoever humbles himself will be lifted up**, *Lk 18:14*. The Bible says that pride goes before destruction, *Prov 16:18*.

No matter what our gifts, calling, responsibilities, and authority, we are **ALL ON ONE LEVEL BEFORE GOD**. We are all brothers and sisters in Christ, *Gal 3:28*, *Mat 23:8*. **ALL EQUAL BEFORE GOD**.

We all have different callings, giftings, responsibilities and authorities, given to us by God, *1Cor 12:28*. No one believer is superior to another. We are all responsible to do God's will and serve Him, in our God given calling, gifting, responsibility and authority. The mother, the pastor, the elder, the father, the prophet, the business man, the apostle, the president, the evangelist, the king, the boy, the girl, the teacher, the care-giver, the mechanic, the shop keeper.

The one thing God is looking for is humility to God and others. God gives grace, mercy and blessing to the humble, *1Pet 5:5*, but He resists the proud. God is preventing the proud from making any progress

Humility is surrendering to God's will to obey Him, *Lk 9:23*, *Is 66:1,2*.
Humility is taking the place of being a servant to other people, in love, for their highest good, by the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus took a servant's place and washed the disciples' feet, *Jn 13:3-17*. He said, "You call Me Lord and Master, and so I am. If I have washed your feet, you are to wash one another's feet." We are to be servants of one another, *Gal 5:13*.

One day John and James asked Jesus if they could sit on His right and left in His Kingdom, *Mat 20:20-28*. (They asked through their mother.) Jesus did not give them their request. The other ten were angry they did this, *20:24*. Jesus said, "In the world, people boss others around, (*20:25*), but among you it will not be this way." "If you desire to be great, (*v26*), or chief, (*v27*), your influence will increase **as you humble yourself to be a servant of others.**" Jesus said, "**Just like the Son of Man. He did not come to be served by others, but to serve and give His life a ransom for others,**" *Mat 20:28*.

Now before we can humble ourselves to serve others, we have to have a secure identity in God, significance in God, self worth in God, and security in God.

Identity in God = Knowing my calling, gifting and ministry to serve God.

Significance in God = Knowing that I am important to God, to do His will in my life,
Lk 19:12,13, *Mat 25:14,15*.

Self worth in God = Knowing that God loves me and I am precious to Him, *1Jn 3:1*.

Security in God = Knowing that God is keeping me in His care, as in *Ps 91, 23, 121, 27, 1Pet 5:7*.

We can see this truth clearly in *Phil 2:5-11*.

v5 We are to **think like Jesus thinks**.

v6 His starting point of service is a **secure identity of who He is in God**. He knows He is God and knows He is not robbing God to think that. (KJV)

Rom 12:3 says this too. We are to think about ourselves with sound and sober judgment as God has given to each of us "the" or "a" measure of faith.

The attacks upon Jesus' life, all through His ministry of 3 1/2 years, was upon His identity in God, *Mat 4:3, Lk 4:18-29, Jn 19:7, Jn 8:58,59, Jn 10:30,31,33, Jn 5:18.*

v7,8 Out of His secure **identity**, (and significance, self worth and security in God), Jesus **humbled Himself to be of no reputation. He humbled Himself to be a servant**, (doulos), and to come as a man. He humbled Himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the Cross. If we try and humble ourselves, to be a servant of others, without having a secure identity, we end up in humiliation. This is not God's will for us. When we have a secure identity in God, we can humble ourselves to serve others and we lose nothing. We are secure in God.

v9-11 **For this reason God has highly exalted Him** above all to His right hand, *Eph 1:20-22, Heb 1:3.*

Pride comes in many forms. Two common ways pride works are:

- a. **judging others**, *Mat 7:1-5, Jam 4:11,12, Rom 14:4,10.*
- b. **holding unforgiveness**, *Mk 11:25,26, Mat 18:32-35, Mat 6:14,15.*

Humility towards others is:

- a. **releasing others from judgment**, *Jn 8:11, Lk 6:36,37.*
- b. **forgiving others their sins against us**, *Lk 23:24, Mk 11:25,26.*
- c. **handing the problems over to God to solve and work out**, *1Pet 5:7, Ps 55:22, Rom 12:19,20, Mat 11:28-30.*
- d. **praying wholeheartedly for those who have hurt us**, *Lk 6:27,28,35-37.*

For an example:

For many years, when my wife did something that did not please me, I held critical and judgmental thoughts towards her. One day the Holy Spirit showed me my pride, and that I was holding a cloud of judgment over her. I confessed this to my wife and to God asking for forgiveness. I repented. I changed my mind. From that time on I have **released my wife from my judgment, and prayed for the full blessing of God upon her**, whenever she does something that does not please me. This has **greatly blessed our relationship together and our ministry in God**. God gives grace to the humble, *1Pet 5:6*, and resists the proud.

We must all overcome pride and take the place of serving others in love, *Gal 5:13*. When we are serving others we are serving God, *Rom 13:8-10, Gal 5:13,14, Mat 25:35-40.*

We also have to **overcome inferiority**. The African is not more important in Christ than the European, and the European is not more important in Christ than the African, *Gal 3:28*. They are equal. The same is true about the rich and the poor, or the female and the male, *Gal 3:28, Jam 2:1-9*. In Christ we are all daughters and sons of God, *2Cor 6:18*. Refuse inferiority, Smash it off your life by faith confession of God's Word, *2Cor 5:17*. Jesus has set us free, *Jn 8: 32,36*.

The parable of the sower, in *Lk 8:4-15*, shows the need to overcome:

- a. **hardness of heart** caused by wrong belief, *Lk 8:5-12*, and lies of satan.
- b. **shallowness of heart** caused by the stones and rocks of the old flesh life, *Lk 8:6,13.*
- c. **distractions of the heart** that choke God's Word, caused by the thorns of the cares, riches and pleasures of this world, *Lk 8:7,14.*

[See also *Mat 13:3-8,18-23, Mk 4:3-20.*]

As we overcome these we shall be good ground for the seed of God's Word and bring forth much fruit, *Lk 8:8,15.*

Examples:a. **Hardness against God's Word,**

After Jesus arose, He revealed Himself to Mary and to two walking in the country. They told His disciples but they believed not, *Mk 16:9-13*. They believed that He was still dead. This was wrong belief and hardness. Jesus then appeared to the eleven and reproved them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, *Mk 16:14*, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He risen. Wrong belief or unbelief is hardness of heart, and stops God's Word growing in us. Hardness is caused by the lies of satan.

Overcome wrong belief, *Jn 8:31,32, Heb 4:12, Ac 17:11*, and hardness.

b. **Shallowness of heart that stops God's Word growing deeply in our lives,** is caused by the sins of the old nature. These sins are the rocks in the soil. When persecution arises because of the Word, as it always does, *Mat 13:21, Ps 105:19*, the seed of the Word dies because it is too shallow and lacks moisture, *Mat 24:9-13*. The carnal Christian has allowed the sins of the flesh to continue, and is living a shallow Christian life, *1Cor 3:1-4*.

I accepted Jesus as my Saviour when I was 11 years old. From 13 to 18 I went to secondary school and became friends with non Christians. My Christian life went down hill as I did wrong things. I was still trying to follow Jesus too. When I was 19 years, at University, during a Christian mission meeting, Jesus appeared to me and said, "If you keep going on this way, your relationship with Me will come to an end." Then He left. Three days later, I lay on the floor face down, and gave my whole life to Jesus. I stopped the sin I was in and put Jesus first. Since then my Christian life has gone up hill. As we continue in God's Word, *Jn 8:31,32*, God shows us His truth, and it is a hammer to smash the rocks of sin in our lives, *Jer 23:29, Ps 119:9,11*.

Overcome the sins of the flesh and let God's Word grow deeply in your life, *Rom 6:6,10,11,14*.

c. **Distractions of the heart that choke the Word,** and stop it bearing fruit, are caused by the cares, riches and pleasures of the world, *Lk 18:7,14*.

A rich, young ruler came to Jesus, *Lk 18:18-25*, seeking to gain eternal life. He was keeping many of the commands of God, *Lk 18:20,21*. Jesus told him to get rid of his wealth, *Lk 18:22*, and become His follower. His love of riches and this world turned him away from Jesus and the Word of eternal life.

Overcome the distractions of this world with its cares, riches and pleasures. Give Jesus first place over all things, and He will enable you to overcome these distractions.

As you overcome hardness, shallowness and distractions, you will be deep, good soil in which the seed of God's Word can grow, *Lk 8:8,15*, and so bring forth fruit unto God, thirty, sixty or one hundred fold.