

Proposition # 4 – Are we living victoriously **over** the world?

Our first three propositions have shown us the need to be delivered **from** the world's control and delivered **from** the wrath of God that is upon this world. We, then, are to remain **in** the world, but not **of** it. We remain **in** the world so that we can take the Gospel **to** the world, that others might also be delivered **from** the world. Confronting Satan's world (kingdom) is going to bring opposition and persecution. Dealing with our own fleshly weaknesses and temptations is going to be difficult and may lead to discouragement. Will we have victory **over** these things?

We are not on the side that is winning. We are on the side that has already won! Christ's resurrection from the dead is a death-blow to Satan's kingdom. It means victory **over the world**. Christ's resurrection also spells a death-blow to the control of sin over our hearts and lives. See Colossians 2:12-15; I Corinthians 2:6-8; John 12:31-33; 16:33; Ephesians 1:15-23; Romans 6:6-14; 8:11-13.

The points of this series are based upon prepositions, to show us the sense of direction and relationship regarding the world, so that we can follow Christ [*from the world; in / not of the world; to the world*]. In speaking of our victory **over** the world, we are going to have to spend time with other words that are not prepositions – "*patience*" / "*endurance*;" "*conquer*;" "*victory*;" and especially the word "*overcome*."

We have a promise that we have already overcome the world by faith in Christ – His cross and the resurrection. (Romans 8:28-39; 16:20; I John 2:12-14; 5:4-5).

We also have a responsibility to be faithful and persevere; to make sure that we overcome the world (Romans 12:1-2, 21; I John 2:15-17; 4:1-6; 5:18-21). See also Matthew 24:3-14; Luke 21:7-19; II Timothy 2:8-13; Revelation 12:10-12.

When the resurrected Christ spoke to John on the isle of Patmos (Revelation chapters 1-3), He gave John seven messages to seven churches in Asia Minor. It would be a good exercise to consider those seven messages. Note every time there is an admonition to "overcome." Consider the following:

Ephesus	Revelation 2:1-7 - lacked love.
Smyrna	Revelation 2:8-11 - suffered persecution.
Pergamos	Revelation 2:12-17 - worldly and tolerant.
Thyatira	Revelation 2:18-29 - corrupt and divided.
Sardis	Revelation 3:1-6 - spiritually dead.
Philadelphia	Revelation 3:7-13 - faithful.
Laodicea	Revelation 3:14-22 - lukewarm (nauseating to Christ).

In Revelation 1:12-20, Christ is portrayed as walking among seven golden candlesticks or lamp stands. He is holding seven stars in his right hand. This is showing us Christ, actively involved among His churches and intimately involved with the pastors of those churches, who are looking after their flocks (Acts 20:16-17,26-31; Hebrews 13:7,17; I Peter 5:1-4).

The message to each church has some common elements:

- A special description of the living Christ: Revelation 2:1,8,12,18; 3:1,7,14.
- A declaration of what Christ knows about that church: Revelation 2:2-4(6),9,13-15, 19-21; 3:1(4),8-10,15-17.
- A call to behold or to remember something; to repent or to be vigilant: Revelation 2:5,10,16, 22-25; 3:2-3,11,18-20.
- A promise for those who **overcome** trials and temptations with a call to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's message to the churches: Revelation 2:7,11,17,26-29; 3:5-6,12-13,21-22.

Thoughts from Psalm 37

Psalm 37:1-2, 7-11 show us the importance of not letting the world overcome us. The world tempts us to develop a fretful, fuming, anxious, restless, angry spirit. Rather we are to reject the worldly temperaments and exercise love, faith and meekness towards the Lord (**Psalm 37:3-7, 11** cp. Romans 12:1-21; Proverbs 22:24-25; Psalm 1:1-3).

Psalm 37:9, 11, 18-19, 22 shows us that by waiting upon the Lord we will overcome this world and inherit a far better world one day (II Peter 3:10-14).

Are you living like an overcomer?

- "...We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (Romans 8:37).
- "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).
- "...He who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6).
- "Faithful is He that calls you who, also will do it" (I Thessalonians 5:24).
- There are "...given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (II Peter 1:4).
- "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).
- "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light...But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts" (Romans 13:12, 14).
- "For you were sometimes darkness, but now are you light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8).