

CHAPTER TWELVE

HOW TO BE AN OVERCOMER

As a new Christian, you have begun an eternal adventure to know and to walk with God. Our God is a good Father. He desires that all of His children walk in victory on the earth. He desires that we grow and develop spiritually so that we overcome the trials and tests that the world, the devil and our own flesh bring against us.

Living a victorious Christian life doesn't mean that we will never face any adversities, but it does mean that through God's help we can overcome every single one! God will always cause us to triumph as we trust Him. As Christians, Jesus has provided everything we need to walk in victory. Through His death and resurrection, He made it possible for us to walk free from all sin, sickness and poverty; however, we have an adversary who wants to rob us of this life of victory. Our enemy wants to stunt our spiritual growth and our influence on others for Christ. Satan will try to depress, oppress and afflict our spirits, minds and bodies to keep us from being effective in our walk with God and in our witness for Christ to others.

As we recognize this spiritual battle and the two opposing kingdoms, as we realize who we are in Christ and our authority over the enemy through Christ, we can truly walk in victory. It is at this point that many new Christians move either forward or backward in their relationship with God. As you study and apply these Scriptures, you can be sure to move ahead with God!

A. REMEMBER, GOD IS ON YOUR SIDE

Is it really God's will for you to walk in victory?

1. John 10:10

What quality of life did Jesus come to bring? _____

Describe the abundant life in your own words. _____

2. 2 Corinthians 2:14

When does God want us to triumph? _____

Define "always" in your own words. _____

3. 1 Corinthians 15:57

What does God give us through Jesus Christ? _____

Describe victory. _____

4. Romans 8:37

Who does God say we are through Christ? _____

Describe someone who is more than a conqueror.

5. 1 John 5:4,5

If we are born of God and believe that Jesus is the Son of God, what are we promised? ____

To overcome the world means what? (For help, look up 1 John 2:15,16.)

6. Psalm 34:19

Does God promise us that we will never face any difficulty? _____

What does God promise to do for us? _____

7. Philippians 4:13

What does God say you can do through Christ's strength? _____

8. Romans 5:17

What are we to do in life? _____

Describe someone who reigns in life. _____

9. Luke 1:37

Is there anything that is impossible with God? _____

10. Philippians 4:19

What will God do for you? _____

11. 3 John 2

What is God's will for us according to this verse? _____

God desires us to be prosperous in all three areas of life — in our spirit, soul and body.

Chapter 3 discussed Jesus, our Redeemer. He redeemed us from the curse of the law which included poverty, sickness and eternal death. It is God's will for His children to walk in prosperity and to be healthy in mind and body.

Are you convinced that God's will for you is to walk in victory? It would be of great spiritual benefit for you to write these verses of Scripture on index cards and read them aloud every morning. Insert your name into each verse and as you meditate on them you will begin to see yourself the same way God already sees you. Remember, God is on your side.

B. RECOGNIZE THERE ARE TWO KINGDOMS

The Bible teaches that there are two kingdoms. These two invisible kingdoms are opposed to one another. Each kingdom has a king, as well as subjects, a governmental system and a strategy. It will help you as you learn to spiritually discern these kingdoms.

1. Colossians 1:13

What power was over you before you received Jesus as Lord? _____

2. Ephesians 2:1-3

Before you became a Christian, whose power and kingdom were you under? _____

3. John 3:3

Who can see the kingdom of God? _____

Those who are born again will not only see the kingdom of God in life after death, but they will also see the kingdom of God with the eyes of their spirit in this life.

In what ways can you identify that the eyes of your spirit have been opened to spiritual

things that you were blind to previously? _____

4. Romans 14:17

What three characteristics describe the kingdom of God? _____

5. Luke 17:20,21

The kingdom of God is not visible to our outward eyes but is located where? _____

6. John 10:10

We can see the kings of two kingdoms described in this verse.

Describe Jesus' will as King _____

Describe Satan's will as king _____

This chart can help us recognize the operation of both kingdoms.

	GOD'S KINGDOM	SATAN'S KINGDOM
Type	kingdom of Light	kingdom of darkness
King	Jesus	Satan
Residents	born-again believers	all unbelievers
Quality of life	abundance	lack
Servants	angels	demons
Atmosphere	love, peace, joy, patience, kindness, gentle, faith, self-control	hatred, fear, strife, confusion, death, doubt, unbelief, pride, jealousy, selfish ambition

For further study: John 8:12; Revelation 17:14; John 8:44; Hebrews 1:13,14; Ephesians 6:12; Galatians 5:19-23

C. REALIZE YOUR AUTHORITY OVER SATAN AND HIS KINGDOM

By now you have noticed that you have an enemy. Satan, called the devil, is the adversary of

the Christian. Satan's main goal is to blind the minds of unbelievers so that they do not receive Jesus as their Lord. Once a person has confessed Jesus as his Lord, Satan's next goal is to paralyze the effectiveness of that Christian's witness by seeking to destroy his faith and causing him to doubt the validity of his own salvation, the Bible, or any facet of his faith.

Since the very beginning, Satan has been trying to become a god. When the true and only God Almighty — our Father — cast Satan out of heaven to the earth, Satan began trying to destroy God's creation — man — to get back at God. However, there was one Man Satan could not destroy through sin and that Man was Jesus Christ! Jesus totally defeated Satan and has given us the legal right to His victory through His name.

Satan and Jesus are archenemies. It is not surprising that Satan is our adversary. We need not be afraid of Satan, but we do need to be aware of his devices so that we take authority, in the name of Jesus, over any of his attacks.

1. Discern Satan and his schemes

a. Ephesians 6:12

Recognize that you are in an invisible wrestling match; but remember, Satan is a defeated foe. Jesus Christ, in His death, burial and resurrection, overcame and defeated Satan. The fight that the Christian is called upon to fight is the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12).

Our opponent seeks to rob us of our faith in God's Word. How is our opponent, Satan, and his kingdom, described in this verse? _____

Who are we not wrestling against? _____

b. 1 Peter 5:8

What is your adversary seeking to do? _____

c. John 10:10

What is Satan's threefold strategy? _____

d. 2 Corinthians 2:11

Satan can't take advantage of us as we are _____

You can always recognize Satan at work, because his devices are identical to his character. In the following chart, match the correct verses with Satan's revealed character.

_____ John 8:44 (first part of verse)	a. thief
_____ John 10:10	b. murderer
_____ John 8:44 (second part of verse)	c. liar
_____ Revelation 12:10	d. devourer
_____ 1 Peter 5:8	e. accuser
_____ 2 Corinthians 11:14	f. oppressor
_____ Acts 10:38	g. angel of light
_____ Mark 4:15	h. faith sifter
_____ Luke 22:31	i. Word stealer

Whenever you see or experience any of these attacks, you can know that Satan is behind them because that is what he seeks to do.

As a believer, you have power over the devil through the name of Jesus, and through the Word of God you can stop every attack. Let's look at how Jesus defeated the devil and the authority Jesus has given us, as believers.

2. Understand that Jesus defeated the devil

Satan is a defeated foe. When Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, He totally defeated the devil.

a. 1 John 3:8

What was Jesus' main purpose in coming to earth? _____

b. Colossians 2:15

What did Jesus do to Satan and his host? _____

c. Ephesians 1:20-22

Where is Jesus seated now? _____

3. Recognize your authority over the devil

Jesus has granted you a position of authority over the devil. For example, in a secular job when you are in a position of authority you have the right to grant privileges to those who are under your authority. You can send one of your employees to represent you in a meeting or to speak for you in certain situations. You can send someone on an assignment, in your name, to act as your representative. By granting someone this right, you are giving him or her authority to act as you would act, to speak on your behalf and to represent you properly.

In a real sense, everyone your representative contacts or speaks with knows that you are the one who will be responsible for fulfilling any promises he makes. Everyone knows that your representative could not possibly fulfill the promises he or she makes in your name; but they expect you, the one in authority, to make the promises good!

In the same way, Jesus Christ is in a position of authority as the King and Lord of the universe. He has the right to grant authority to anyone He wishes. Jesus has granted authority to every believer. He has given every believer the right to use His name. Jesus has given us "the power of attorney" to use His name to defeat the devil. As we exercise our authority through God's Word and in the name of Jesus, Jesus is responsible to make His promises good.

a. Mark 16:17

Jesus gave us authority in His name. What did He tell us to do in His name concerning the devil and demons? _____

Who has authority to cast out devils? _____

b. Luke 10:18,19

Jesus gave us power to overcome what? _____

c. 1 John 4:4

God lives inside of you. What does this verse say about God inside of you and the devil in the world? _____

d. Ephesians 2:6

We saw earlier that Jesus has been raised up far above all the power of the enemy (Eph. 1:20-22). Where does this Scripture say we have been raised and seated? _____

Does this mean that we are seated above all the power of the enemy in Jesus' name? _____

4. Be familiar with your spiritual weapons

a. James 4:7

What two things are we told to do? _____

What will the devil do? _____

b. 1 Peter 5:8-10

What are we told to do? _____

What will God do? (v. 10.) _____

c. Matthew 4:1-11

What three words did Jesus use to resist the devil? _____

What did Jesus quote after He said "It is written"? _____

5. Know how to exercise your authority over the enemy

God has given us real weapons with which we can fight the good fight of faith and enforce the enemy's defeat in our lives. Our weapons are tested and guaranteed to overcome Satan. God has not left us helpless; He has given us weapons in order to fight the good fight of faith.

a. 2 Corinthians 10:4,5

What type of weapons do we have? _____

What do our weapons do?

_____ strongholds

_____ imaginations

_____ thoughts

We can see from this passage that much of our enemy's attack is aimed against our minds: in thoughts, imaginations and, eventually, strongholds. It is important that we spend time thinking upon God's Word and do not allow the devil any foothold in our thought life.

b. Hebrews 4:12

What is sharper than any two-edged sword? _____

How can we use this against the devil? _____

c. Revelation 12:11

How do we overcome and enforce Satan's defeat in our lives? _____

d. Luke 10:17

In Whose name is the devil subject to us? _____

Always remember that the weapons that God has given you are mighty! Remember to quote the Word of God, claim the blood of Jesus, use the name of Jesus and speak words of faith to overcome all the wiles of the devil!

D. PERSONAL APPLICATION

Perhaps you are undergoing a spiritual attack at this time. Is there an area of your life where the enemy has been harassing you, trying to discourage you or planting seeds of doubt and fear? Jesus has provided you with the power to be victorious over the enemy.

It is God's will for you **always** to triumph in Christ. He has given you mighty spiritual weapons which will always give you the victory as you use them in faith. As one preacher expressed it, "Being a Christian does not guarantee you a life lived on flowery beds of ease,

but being a Christian does give you the promise of power to overcome every test and trial."

Take a moment to look at section A of this chapter: "Remember, God Is on Your Side." Any time you face a spiritual battle, meditate upon the Scriptures which promise you victory in Christ. As you mix your faith with God's Word, you will experience the victorious Christian life.

Act on these truths and you will experience victory.

1. Draw near to God. If there is any sin in your life or anything that is displeasing to God, repent of it and tell God you intend to turn around and follow after Him.
2. Speak to the particular situation in the name of Jesus and command Satan and all of his demons to stop in their maneuvers against you.

For example: "In the name of Jesus, I command you, Satan, and all of your demons to stop in all of your maneuvers against me in the area(s) of _____. List the specific area(s), i.e., finances, guilt, temptation, sickness, etc.

3. Look up Scriptures that relate to your situation. Begin to meditate on those verses and speak them with authority as Jesus did: "It is written...." The Word of God is your offensive sword. Use it regularly to halt and dismantle the devil's attacks.

E. GROUP EXERCISE

As a group, look at Ephesians 6:10-18 and discuss the spiritual armor that God has given us. What is it? What is its purpose? How can we put it on? Look at verse 18 and consider this:

Perhaps you, or others in the group, have been facing trials and tests and or attacks of fear from the enemy. As a group, take time to pray for one another. Use your weapons to stand against the devil.