

As a Christian, I either overcome or I am overcome

Did I overcome today? Am I overcoming right now? What hinges on my overcoming?

Rev 2:7 (Jesus) **He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches; To him that overcomes I will give to eat of the tree of life...**

Rev 3:5-6 **He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches** (to each Christian, like me).

Rev 2:11 **He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches He that overcomes shall not be hurt by the second (eternal) death.**

These and many other scriptures attach enormous importance to whether or not I am an overcomer. According to Strong's Concordance the word translated "overcome" in these verses comes from the Greek word "Nikao". This word means: To subdue, to conquer, to overcome, to prevail, to get the victory. Nikao itself comes from the root Greek word "Nike" which means: Conquest or victory, as in this verse:

I John 5:4 **For whatever is born of God overcomes (Nikao) the world: and this is the victory (Nike) that overcomes the world - our faith** (in what is born of God).

Notice it does not say "whoever" is born of God overcomes the world, but it does say "whatever" is born of God overcomes the world. In other words just by being born again does not automatically mean that I will overcome. There must continue to be more of God's words born in me, as I believe them with my heart, for it is my faith in those words that overcomes. But first let's consider what it is that I am to overcome.

Overcome what?

- Overcome my own natural human desires that always want to be indulged, my constant need for the praise of others or the sympathy of others to feed my self-pity, or overcome my tendency to live life by natural sight and human reason rather than by faith from God – in short, to overcome my own flesh.
- Overcome the opinions, thoughts, teachings, traditions and words of other people when they are at odds with the truth; to be free from the need to have the approval of others rather than the approval of God; to be at peace and in forgiveness toward others even if they are not at peace with me – In short, to overcome the world
- Overcome the questioning, challenging, lying, fear and doubt laden thoughts constantly fired at me by the unseen realm of wicked spirits, spirits that always anonymously seek to oppose my knowing or doing the will of God – In short, to

overcome the devil and his demons.

Rev 2:26-29 (Jesus speaking) **To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations—** NIV

[Rev 20:6 ...They...shall reign with Him a thousand years.] ...He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Rev 3:12 **Him that overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and ...I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem...**

Coupled with the verses on page one, look at all the blessings that Jesus links to the one who overcomes. The one who gets the victory in the conflict with their flesh, the world and the devil. Let's consider what form this conflict takes:

In what way will my flesh, the world and the devil try to overcome me?

The conflict is always a thought life conflict isn't it? In other words different thoughts, many of which are very powerful and some of which are too powerful for me to stand against, vie to have control of my will. Let's consider the following scripture verses:

2 Cor 10:4-5 **For the weapons of our warfare** (this is all about conflict) **are not carnal** (none of my natural human abilities can win this conflict) **but mighty through God** (only God's spiritual weapons in me can win) **to the pulling down of strongholds** (these are thoughts, patterns of thought that have had a strong hold over me) **casting down imaginations, arguments, reasonings** (all of these are thoughts needing to be cast down, no longer able to influence me) **and every other high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God** (casting down any other head thoughts that contradict truth) **bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ** (If a thought is itself taken captive, whether from my flesh, the world or the devil, it cannot then capture me – this is what overcoming means).

Have I overcome some thoughts today, even since I began to study these truths on overcoming? Let's consider what kind of thoughts constantly need to be overcome:

What kind of thoughts need to be overcome?

Offense and unforgiving thoughts. Anger thoughts. Envy thoughts.
Selfish thoughts. Pride, independence from God, thoughts. Fear, worry thoughts.

Lustful, craving, must have it thoughts. Feminist woman and Macho man thoughts. Disbelieving God, doubt thoughts. Disobedience to God thoughts. Lying thoughts. Religious tradition thoughts. Blaming God thoughts. Lazy, un-diligent thoughts. Self praising or self-pitying thoughts. Reasoning and presumption thoughts. What happens if I don't receive from God His ability to overcome all these thoughts?

Those thoughts I don't overcome, I will be overcome by

II Pet 2:19 **While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage** (a slave to the thought that I didn't overcome).

Rom 6:16 **Do you not know that...you are that ones slaves whom you obey, whether of sin** (a wrong thought not overcome) **resulting in death** (to God) **or of obedience** (an overcomer) **resulting in righteousness.**

Just one thought, especially if it's a familiar thought, if we yield to it, can literally take us captive as its prisoner, can't it? With possibly untold damage to our lives and the lives of others as a result. So, how do I get free and then continue to stay free?

How do I not be overcome by but rather overcome a thought?

Through Jesus Christ alone – you mean by being born again? No, that while an essential beginning does not automatically mean I will overcome all the enslaving thoughts of my flesh, the world and the devil. Only through spiritual growth, that is, through increasingly learning how to live in Christ and how to let more of Christ live in me, will I be able to overcome thoughts. Why, only through Christ? Because only Christ has already overcome the flesh, the world and the devil, at Calvary!

John 16:33 **These things I have spoken to you, that in me you might have peace In the world you will have trouble** (thoughts): **but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world** (and at the cross, the flesh and Satan too).

How does it work – my overcoming thoughts through Christ alone?

It works entirely by the blood of Christ and by the flesh of Christ. Meaning what?

By Christ's blood. First by the shedding of His physical blood for the remission of my sins, by which if I sin, and I repent and believe in the blood, God will forgive me.

Col 1:14 **In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.**

Second, by His spiritual blood, the Holy Spirit which gives life to Christ's spiritual flesh which is the word of God. Lev 17:11 **For the life of the flesh is in the blood...**

Eph 5:18 **Do not be drunk with (natural) wine...but be filled with the Spirit** (the heavenly wine – symbolized by the natural wine or grape juice that is used in communion, and represents the Holy Spirit, just as the bread represents God’s word).

If I haven’t submitted to the rule of God’s Spirit (He says My yoke is easy and My burden light) I will, whether I know it or not, be under the anonymous rule, through thoughts that I will be made to think are my own, of one or more wicked spirits. And their yoke is hard and their burden is heavy. It is only as I’m submitted to the Holy Spirit of God (blood) that the word of God (flesh) opens up and becomes alive to me.

By Christ’s flesh. That is the dead letter of scripture on the pages of my Bible now speaking to my heart and becoming God’s living word to me. As I eat these words, believe them with my heart or spirit, I am eating the flesh of Jesus Christ and will live.

John 6:56 **He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood lives in Me, and I in him.**

Jer 15:16 **Your words were found, and I ate them, the...rejoicing of my heart;**

Here are examples of the type of God’s living words I must eat in order to overcome:

His word that Christ bore everyone’s sins, in me, to overcome unforgiveness thoughts

His word on His bountiful provision for me, in me, to overcome envy, worry thoughts.

His word on His sheer goodness, in me, to overcome doubt and accusing thoughts.

His word on His unending love for me, in me, to overcome self-trust, self-will thoughts.

His word on His supernatural power, in me, to overcome lust and addiction thoughts.

His word on my bearing fruit, in me, to overcome pre-occupation with self thoughts.

His word on being my healer, in me, to overcome sickness, aging and death thoughts.

Either I overcome though the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ, God’s living word and God’s Holy Spirit, in me, or I will be overcome by an unending stream of thoughts designed to capture my will or soul. When my will is compelled to act on a thought too strong for me, then my will or soul is not saved. When I have been taken captive I am no longer available to God to bear fruit, to win souls or to disciple and help other Christians who may be in captivity to thoughts – because I myself am also a captive.

Rev 21:7 **The one who overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be that one’s God, and that one shall be my child.**

I John 2:14 **...The word of God lives in you, and you have overcome...by His word**

Rev 12:11 **They overcame him (the devil) by the blood of the Lamb (by being led by the Holy Spirit) and by the word (of God in them) that they speak ...**

Do we want to learn how to: **Remain in the liberty by which Christ has made us free and not entangled again with the yoke of bondage** (to thoughts - Gal 5:1)? We absolutely need to, and God, by His Word and Spirit in us, will make us overcomers.