

Revelation #34

Resurrection Sunday, April 9, 2023

Series Title: The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Behold I Am Coming Soon

Today's Message: When Christ is Everything!; Revelation 12:11

Revelation 12:11 is still the future to us living today. But, when John received the revelation 2,000 years ago he saw the victory already won; the wording of Revelation 12:11 is in the past tense. So, why use this verse for our Resurrection Sunday message? What Gospel value is there for us today?

I will tell you.

These suffering saints, yet future to us— these suffering saints teach us how to be overcomers. They don't teach us how to overcome because they discovered a secret or spiritual tongue with which to speak. They don't teach us how to overcome because they learned how to drive out demons, or bind and rebuke Satan. No! The devil is too strong and too smart for our *methods* and *schemes*. They don't teach us to overcome through our own personal power.¹

How did they overcome Satan? They overcame by God's work! Let me say that again! They overcame by God's work! And that, my friends, is how we will be counted as overcomers— that is how we **are** victorious over Satan in our day— because of God's work. Let me clarify.

First, the Bible teaches us that "salvation comes from the Lord (Jonah 2:9)." Here is Revelation 12:11 we're told that "they overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb." That's God's Lamb! In John 1:29, we hear John the Baptist point in the direction of Jesus as He walked nearby and say, "Behold, the *Lamb of God* who takes away the sin of the world." And then in 1:36, again he says, "Behold the Lamb of God!" This Lamb whose blood was shed was God's Lamb! —Salvation comes from the Lord— that is God's work!

Then, the Bible teaches us that God's true disciples bear witness to the truth about Jesus Christ. Again, in Revelation 12:11 we are told that future believers will overcome Satan "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." This testimony is weighty. The testimony is dependent not upon the quality of the individual giving testimony, but on the quality and impeccability of the One, Jesus Christ— His person and work! Testimony concerns God's redemptive work through the person and work of Jesus Christ!

Thirdly, the Revelation tells us that these overcomers have, as a result of their deep convictions of faith, they do not hold to their love of this life, in this world, so much as to shrink back from death. And that kind of motivation to lose your life for the sake of Jesus Christ well up from what God has worked in through the word of God planted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is the New Birth! That, too, is the work of God!

¹ That paragraph was influenced by John MacArthur's comment on 12:11.

Revelation 12:11 provides the key to not only how future Tribulation saints, consisting mainly of believing Jewish people (Romans 11:26-27), will be victorious over Satan, but also how you and I can be victorious over him in our day! The key is threefold: They overcame by the blood of the Lamb. Second, by the word of their testimony. And third, they did not love their lives so much as to shrink back from death.

I. They overcame [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb

A. There is an enemy

1. There is an enemy, a foe, an adversary to overcome
 - a) Satan
2. There is a satanic tactic aimed at destroying faith
 - a) Revelation 12:10– accusations of condemnation for sin leveled continually against believers.
 - (1) Satan is able to accuse believers continually because we sin continually!
 - (a) 1 Jn. 1:8 say, “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”
3. There is a satanic strategy aimed at ultimately discrediting the perfect righteousness of Christ!
 - a) The ultimate accusation of Satan, which is often whispered in the ear of the Christian, is that the righteousness of Christ is insufficient as our covering before holy God. (That some sins are unforgivable.) But,
 - (1) “God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the *righteousness of God*.” 2 Cor. 5:21
 - (a) “*Righteousness of God*” [that is, we would be made acceptable to Him and placed in a right relationship with Him by His gracious lovingkindness.] Amplified Bible
 - (b) Every accusation of the wicked one against a sinning believer is intended to discredit the fitness of Christ to save to the uttermost!

B. There is a certain victory over Satan for the believer

1. “The blood of the Lamb”
 - a) His blood is all-sufficient to cleanse us from **all** the unrighteousness wrought by our sins!
 - (1) Our works (efforts) to prove our worthiness are powerless to produce even one glimmer of righteousness!

(2) Hebrews 9:12 tells us so: “He did not enter (the heavenly tabernacle, Heb. 9:11) by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.”

(a) For all who have received His work on their behalf by faith

C. The Totality of the victory assured us through the blood of the Lamb

1. When a person appeals to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, **His very work on the cross** takes into account all our sins: past, present, and future sins!
2. Our sin only affects our *fellowship* with God, not our standing as one who has been justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ!
 - a) See 1 John 1:9: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”
 - b) Romans 8:1, “There is *now no* condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”
 - (1) Not ever, no never!
3. His blood is **all sufficient** to cover **all our sins**
 - a) Romans 4:7-8 declares, “Blessed is the man whose lawless deeds have been forgiven and whose sins are **covered**. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never take into account.”

D. Practically, what do we do to stand against our enemy, Satan, or the devil?

1. Put on the helmet of salvation (Eph. 6:17; 1 Thess. 5:8)! What does this mean?
 - a) Just like these tribulation saints, we overcome as we continually preach the Gospel, standing on the “unshakeable foundation of all spiritual victory,” which is Christ’s purchase of our eternal redemption through the shedding of His blood on the cross! (MacArthur)

II. And [they overcame him] by the word of their testimony

- A. In the context of Revelation 12, the believing Jewish people overcame Satan by speaking out loud their faith in Jesus as the true Messiah!
 1. As we will see later, this testimony truly insults the satanic *messiah*, the Beast, and leads to the death of all who refuse to worship the image of the Beast (Rev.13).
- B. We overcome Satan by standing, in faith, on the Word of God.
 1. This means that we confess Jesus Christ as Lord!
 - a) Romans 10:8-10: “...’The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,’ that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God

raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.”

- (1) If the enemy of your soul can intimidate you into silence, and you are fearful to confess faith in Jesus Christ, you have given ground to the evil one and are in danger of being overrun with all kinds of sinful desires.

2. We overcome by **knowing and applying** the Word of God daily in our lives.

- a) Think of the practical teaching of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 6

(1) Read Ephesians 6:10-18

- (a) The belt of Truth: 1 John 1:7: The blood of Christ **cleanses** us of **all sins**.
- (b) The breastplate of righteousness: John 15:10: obey the commandments of Jesus and abide in fellowship with Him
- (c) Be at the ready with the gospel of peace: Romans 1:16: The constant reminder of the power of the gospel to save completely; saved to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25)
- (d) The Shield of faith: Eph. 6:16: Extinguish the lies, taunts and attacks of our adversary. Stand on the Word.
- (e) The helmet of salvation: Romans 12:2: be transformed by the renewal of your mind; and Eph. 4:23: think right.
- (f) The Sword of the Spirit: Eph.6:17: apply the Word in all life situations; Heb. 4:12: It sniffs out ungodly thinking.
- (g) Pray in the Spirit: Romans 8:26-27: Trusting, dependence; informed by the Word of God.

- (2) Each of these emphasize our need to know and apply the Word of God to our lives. This will enable you to stand fearlessly against the devil, with hope seated on God and His faithfulness!

C. We stand in faith on the testimony of Jesus

1. Even when its hard

- a) When feelings pull us toward a sense of weariness

- (1) “Come unto Me, you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

- b) When fear taunts you to quit

- (1) “Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.” 1 Cor. 16:13

- c) When tested with trials of all kinds
 - (1) "Count it pure joy, my brothers, when you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance." James 1:2-3

III. And they overcame him because "they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death."

- A. This describes the attitude of these tribulation Jewish believers
 - 1. When death came calling they remained steadfast in their allegiance to Christ.
 - a) They weren't afraid of Death.
 - (1) Dying for Christ was a testimony of the Truth and Power of Christ.
- B. It describes where their love was anchored. "They did not love their lives so much."
 - 1. Love here is *agape* love. They did not compromise to keep it!
- C. Paul encourages us. He had a grasp on the reality of the *seat/ source* of the Christian life.
 - 1. Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."
 - 2. Philippians 1:20b-21: "...Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."
 - 3. Acts 20:24a: "But I do not count my life of any value nor as precious to myself..."
 - a) !!This is, I think, the spirit of what John saw in these Tribulation saints.
- D. Paul reminds each of us the reality of what being saved means for the Christian:
 - 1. Colossians 3:3: "For **you have died**, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
 - a) SAVED! SAFE! SECURE!
 - 2. Colossians 3:4: "When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory!"
- E. Satan is seeking to defeat Christians today by occupying your mind with "self-love", "self-care"; "self-fulfillment". Temptations come at us with lightning fast speed. But list to Peter as he wisely counsels us how we can overcome:
 - 1. "Be **self-controlled** and **alert**. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. **Resist** him, **standing firm** in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."

IV. Application

- A. How well do you know the Gospel? Will you apply yourself to growing in the grace and knowledge of God that you may know Him better?

- B. How much do you love your life? Will you pray asking the Lord to give you a willingness to live sacrificially for Him rather than for yourself? What attitudes must you put to death?