

## OVERCOMING

What does it mean to overcome; is it better than failing, getting by, or surviving? To overcome opposition is certainly not failing; it is more that getting by or surviving; and is possibly more or at least different from winning. **In 1 John, the question of “Who overcomes the world?” is answered as “he who believes that Jesus is the son of God”.**

When I think of this word, the immediate thought is often of the 1960's and the black population's plight for racial equity. The familiar verse, “We'll shall overcome” comes to mind as the anthem or creed for this group who may have equated themselves in early time periods to the Hebrews in Egypt. At the core of this movement was one man's belief that love, not violence, would be essential to the effort to overcome oppression, segregation, and racism.

Nonviolence is the answer to the crucial political and moral questions of our time; the need for mankind to overcome oppression and violence without resorting to oppression and violence. Mankind must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression, and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love.

- Martin Luther King Jr., *December 11, 1964*

In the book of Revelation, the Church at Ephesus is instructed: “To him who overcomes, I (Jesus) will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God”. Other promises relating to overcoming also occur in this chapter and book:

- He who overcomes will not be hurt by a second death
- To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna
- To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations
- He who overcomes will be dressed in white
- He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of God
- To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne just as I (Jesus) overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne
- He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son

The last promise for those that the overcome, taken from chapter 21, continues by differentiating those who do not overcome: the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars.

To overcome is more than getting by, than getting through, than getting on, or than getting over; **it is having faith in the one who has already defeated the evil of this world and has gone to prepare a place for us in eternity.**

In a

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