



OVERCOMERS

OVERCOMERS - PART 15

We are almost at the end of looking at the 7 churches and unpacking the aspects of each church and what each church needed to do in relation to the words of Jesus Himself. What's awesome is that throughout each of the letters there are amazing promises to all those who heed His words and take them to heart, living the life of the one who overcomes.

Let's unpack the Philadelphian church who just like the church of Smyrna had nothing to repent of, but were given an amazing promise by Jesus if they overcame.

Revelation 3:7-13 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: 'I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

In verse 8 we see Jesus say that He knows their deeds. He knows their deeds and He knows their deeds were done in the sight of God. Unlike the church of Sardis whose deeds God also knew, and made them aware that although they looked the part they certainly were not the part.

There is nothing but praise coming forth from Jesus for these people. He knows that they have kept His word and not denied His name. He knows they have kept the word of His perseverance and because of this He will keep them from the hour of testing, which will come upon the entire world and everyone on it.

God will not let His faithful church who are alive in these days go through the final outpouring of His wrath which are the seven plagues that come upon the earth. He will spare His church this final outpouring, while those not of His will, will suffer greatly at this time.

Jesus encourages this church to continue to hold fast to what they have so no one will be able to take their crown. The crown here is given as a result of winning a prize. One being victorious in the games. We know we are in a race and that all those who finish the race and overcome will be given a victor's crown.



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The amazing thing is that this church received the crown by promise in the Spirit, because they were living victorious lives in Him already by faith.

We see this same dimension being testified to in Hebrew 11:13 and 2 Timothy 4:7-8

Hebrews 11:13 All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

2 Timothy 4:7-8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Let's now look at verse 12. I am not sure the promise gets any better than this for the people of God who overcome the flesh, the world and the god of this world, Satan.

He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

How profound that the Creator of everything invites us into this depth of life in Him and the roles we can play in His future kingdom, the new Heaven and Earth, if we are found to be these overcomers. This overcomer's lifestyle is not an automatic reality but it is one which is outworked within us and through us in partnership with the Holy Spirit.

This is exactly what Paul meant when he said we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling - Philippians 2:12.

The last verse in this passage is probably the most important of all the verses, and not just in this message to this church but in all the letters to all the churches. Let's look at this pattern which wraps up each letter.

V. 13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Are you spiritually hearing what is being prophesied through these letters? Faith, which is a conviction of things unseen, comes from hearing the Word of Jesus Christ, and we know the righteous are to live by faith in Jesus Christ. In other words, faith knows and sees and receives the unseen eternal realm, living from and for it. This is what is required if we are to be these overcomers and receive all these promises.



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QUESTIONS

1. What is the Spirit revealing to you through the letter to the Church at Philadelphia about being an overcomer and what an overcoming life being lived out looks like?
2. What is your response to Jesus saying, 'I know your deeds'? Why is that your response?
3. What is it that Jesus is asking them to hold fast to and how will that stop anyone from taking their crown?
4. Why is it so important that we have an ear to hear what the Spirit says to the churches?
5. How will having an ear to hear what the Spirit says to the churches enable us to be overcomers?