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The Pathway Into The Overcomer's Walk

Betty Miller



Overcoming Life Series



WORKBOOK

Pathway Into the Overcomer's Walk Workbook

by

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Overcoming Life Series

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Overcoming Life Series:

Pathway Into the Overcomer's Walk Workbook

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Personal Introduction

A lack of education will not hinder anyone from taking this course, and a doctor's degree will not help. However, one requirement that is necessary for this course to benefit the student is a total commitment to God. The Holy Spirit is our teacher, and we can learn if we come to God as little children. Being hungry to know God is a necessary prerequisite in order for this course to be of help.

If any of us are to receive truth, we must seek God, who is truth, with our whole hearts. We must seek Jesus first, then the knowledge of His Word will be revealed to us. Therefore, we want to emphasize once again the need to become as "a little child" in our approach to learning God's Word (Matt. 18:1-4; Jer. 29:13).

We need to come humbly before God, asking Him to remove any "know-it-all" attitudes, in order to be teachable. By laying down everything we thought we knew, we give God a chance to correct things we have believed that were wrong. Then we can begin to live the overcoming lives that God intended for His children to experience.

This course, the Overcoming Life Series, is made up of nine books and workbooks taken from our first published book, How To Overcome Through the Christ Unlimited. That book, given to us under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, covers most of the basic things a Christian needs to know to get started on a victorious, overcoming walk with the Lord.

We have purposely kept this course simple for the average Christian who needs help in understanding how to study the Word and how to sort out principles and concepts when he, or she, reads the Bible; however, it also is for the seminary student. In addition, it is designed for students who desire to use it as a correspondence course. They can learn from it, even if they are totally alone and without a human teacher. The Holy Spirit always is there to teach us as we study about His Word.

On the other hand, groups with a teacher, or moderator, also can use this course to advantage. Our prayer is that, however this course is taken, each student will complete it a different person and be conformed more into the image of Christ our Lord.

Bud and Betty Miller

Pathway Into the Overcomer's Walk Workbook

Section One

“Principles of the Overcoming Life”

Pathway Into the Overcomer's Walk Workbook
Section One: "Principles of the Overcoming Life"
Expository Introduction

[Author's Note: This is the final workbook in the Overcoming Life Series, which includes nine books and workbooks. Lessons also have supplementary material. Answers are provided at the end of each workbook and do not have to be the exact wording in many cases. The student simply needs to make sure that he, or she, has caught the concept or principle from the Word of God.)

Although not all Christians are overcomers, God's love for them is still steadfast. God wants us to overcome the enemy for our sakes. However, His highest desire is for all of His children to be overcomers. The reason why many Christians do not come into the maturity of the overcoming life is that they have never learned how to overcome.

In this lesson, we will look at some principles of the overcoming life, such as "Who is an overcomer?" Also, we will find out how to become one.

1. An overcomer is one who escapes the judgment of God, according to the Apostle Paul. So, if we overcome in this life, we will not face God's judgment.

God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

Romans 3:4

2. An overcomer is one who has overcome the temptations of this world.

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

James 1: 2-4

This does not mean that the Christian is to give in to temptation but rather overcome it. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that no temptation would befall us that God had not already made a way out of. We must simply set our wills to obey Him and trust Him to show us the way to overcome.

3. An overcomer is one who has learned to overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:21). Jesus taught not to return evil with evil (Matt. 5:44). To retaliate creates a vicious cycle of destruction.
4. An overcomer is one who has learned to overcome the devil (1 John 2:14). This victory over Satan is gained through the use of the Word of God which abides in the victorious believer. Mental assent to the Word is insufficient for victory.

And they overcame him (the devil) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Revelation 12:11

Through the blood of Jesus, we belong to God, and the devil no longer has rights to us. The word of our testimony means that, as we testify to the faithfulness of God's Word, it shall bring us our needed answers. (God's Word is recorded in the Old and New Testaments, and it is this "testament" or "testimony" that brings our victory.) Finally, we overcome Satan because we love not our own lives to the death. We prefer death to sinning against the Lord or to denying Him; and through Him, we have no fear of death.

5. An overcomer is one who has overcome the spirit of antichrist and the evil spirits in the world (1 John 4:4). We are to discern spiritual manifestations to be certain they are of God. We do this through comparing them to Scripture. For example, if a person hears a voice telling him to do something contrary to the Bible, he can be positive that voice is not God. A vision of something negative happening to a person or his family does not mean it is God's will for that person. Either it is a warning to pray against it and watch out for that event, or it is from the enemy to cause fear and get the person in agreement with the enemy's plan.

Working Out One's Salvation

Entering into the overcoming life is actually the process of working out one's salvation (Phil. 2:12). The Greek word for salvation (SOTERIA) means "deliverance, health, safety, welfare, prosperity, preservation, and aid," which is the overcoming life.¹

There are certain requirements for overcoming. First, we must be willing to suffer for Jesus (2 Tim. 2:12), which does not mean to

suffer with sickness or sinful, negative things. These we are to resist. Of course, in the resisting of these things, it causes us to suffer at times. Instead, this refers to such things as being willing to go the second mile, being willing to pray or minister to the needs of others whenever the Holy Spirit leads no matter how it inconveniences us, and suffering persecution if need be for the Word's sake (Matthew 5:11,44).

Second, we must each have an overwhelming desire to do the will of God. This leads to the accomplishment of His will (Heb. 10:35,36). However, do not be discouraged if the desired result is not instantly forthcoming. It takes faith and patience and eventually they will produce the desired results.

Third, we must have the determination to finish whatever race is set before us (Phil. 3:14,15; 2 Tim. 4:7,8). Many Christians desire to finish the race — but desire alone is not enough. We must set our wills and be determined not to give up or be pulled off our goals. Paul had to fight the forces of darkness to keep his faith. We must do likewise.

Fourth, we must forsake all for the Kingdom of God (Luke 14:33). We cannot hold anything in this life above the will of God. We will never be overcomers until we forsake all for the sake of the Kingdom.

Fifth, we must wholeheartedly dedicate all of ourselves and all that we have to God. We must love Him with all our hearts and give everything to Him.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.

Matthew 22:37,38

Sixth, we must minister to others by being a servant to all (Matt. 20:25-28). The way up in the Kingdom of God is down.

When Paul wrote for the Philippians to “work out their salvation,” he meant for them to work at becoming overcomers.

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Philippians 2:12

In that verse, Paul was not talking about doing good works, for good works do not save us. We are saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-10). Good works are the result of a changed heart and life following salvation through faith.

But there is a difference between initial salvation and completed salvation. Initial salvation occurs the moment we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior. “Working out our salvation” is an ongoing process that lasts from initial conversion until we reach Heaven.

When we give our hearts to Jesus and our spirits are made new, we are saved from the penalty of sin. As we remain filled with the Holy Spirit, we are daily being saved from the power of sin. We have victory over sin as we walk in the Spirit, and eventually, we

will be saved from the very presence of sin and evil when we enter the presence of God.

However, man has a responsibility in the plan of salvation. The first responsibility is that each person must receive the free gift of being adopted into the Kingdom (John 3:16; Rom. 6:23) in order to be born again. When the Bible speaks of believing in the Son in order to receive salvation, it means more than simply agreeing with that statement. The Greek word for believe means “to cling to, to rely on, and to adhere to.”²

Man must walk in faith in God to be kept by His power (1 Pet. 1:3-5). We attain Heaven by staying in faith, which requires maintaining fellowship with the Lord. Satan's attacks are designed to cause us to lose our faith (Heb. 10:38,39), because faith is the connecting cord from us to God. Because of His love, God does everything He can to keep us in Him.

But if we refuse to yield to the Holy Spirit's continual efforts to hold us, then God reluctantly will let us go. He will not override the right to choose which He created within mankind. Christians can fall away and thereby lose their first estate. In the Parable of the Seed and the Sower, there were those who had received the Word but then they fell away (Luke 8:12,13).

If someone continues to purposely sin, there is nothing more God can do. He already has made the one sacrifice necessary to absolve sin (Heb. 10:26). The sinning Christian must come back to God through the only available door, the sacrifice of Christ. Those who no longer abide in Christ are rejected (John 15:1-6; Rom. 11:20-23).

God does not choose for anyone to suffer destruction, but if they freely choose that path, He will not prevent it. If we continue in sin and deny Him, the end of our paths will be destruction (1 Cor. 3:17; 2 Timothy 2:12).

Christians who follow Jesus, hearing His voice, are the ones who have the assurance of salvation (John 10:27,28). These verses in John do not give assurance to those who have strayed away from His voice. Only those who hear His voice and obey cannot be plucked out of His hand. The end of our faith, then, is salvation (1 Peter 1:6-9).

Two Extremes to Avoid

Regarding salvation, there are two extremes Christians need to avoid: taking salvation too lightly or being so insecure that they open the door to being tormented by fear from the enemy over the thought of losing their salvation every time they sin.

Taking salvation too lightly is a real danger in our society today. Some people have the attitude that they can still live any way they please after accepting Jesus as Savior. This can lead them into various snares that are difficult to escape. The salvation of mankind cost Jesus His life and should never be taken lightly. God warns against returning to the world after being saved (2 Peter 2:20-22).

The other extreme is to walk in constant fear of losing salvation or of committing the unpardonable sin. Some people fear they have lost their salvation every time they say something they ought not or inadvertently sin. Yet, we can see from the Bible that

God has been patient and merciful with His children for thousands of years.

God's promise for those who follow Him is that He will never leave nor forsake them (Heb. 13:5b). In fact, that scripture translation in The Amplified Bible really gives every believer great security.

...For He (God) Himself has said, I will not in any way fail you nor give you up nor leave you without support. (I will) not, (I will) not, (I will) not in any degree leave you helpless, nor forsake nor let (you) down, (relax My hold on you). Assuredly not!

We do not rely upon feelings for the assurance of His presence but upon the promise in His Word that He is with us. God has kept believers as His children in spite of their sins, as He did David when he committed adultery and murder. The reason God did so was that, as soon as David's sins were brought to his conscience, he repented. That is why God could maintain a relationship with David. Fellowship is broken by sins, but not relationship — unless the sin is against the Holy Spirit or indulged in voluntarily and without repentance until it amounts to sinning against the Holy Spirit.

There are two sins that can keep us from eternal life with God. The first is rejecting Christ as personal Savior. Every human being is born into sin, and only receiving Christ can save us. All unbelievers will live eternally, but not with God. They will spend eternity in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:15).

The second sin is blaspheming the Holy Spirit. This is sometimes called the “unpardonable” sin by Christians and the “sin unto death” (Matt. 12:31,32; 1 John 5:16) in other places in Scripture. “Blaspheming the Holy Spirit” does not mean sinners who take Jesus’ name in vain. Since the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, is the power and presence of God, one would have to first know His power and presence to blaspheme against Him.

Only those who have known the Holy Spirit can commit the unpardonable sin. This can only be committed by those who:

- *Have been fully enlightened
- *Have been baptized in the Holy Spirit
- *Are knowledgeable in the Word of God
- *Have experienced the power of the Holy Spirit

Those who have committed the unpardonable sin will have no remorse in their hearts, because Satan will have been formed in them. Therefore, Christians who fear they have committed this sin can know for certain that they have not. Otherwise, they would not be concerned about it! If they are still trusting and believing in God (1 John 5:13; 1 Pet. 1:3-5), they may need to repent for something, but they have not blasphemed against the Holy Spirit. Probably, they are under an attack of fear or condemnation by the enemy.

The key to walking in the overcoming life and completing one’s salvation is to be willing and obedient, which can only be done by choice (Isa. 1:19).

We choose to serve God, and then ask Him for the power to do it.

We cannot serve God out of our own strengths; however, with the power of God within us, we can have victory.

We either walk with God and continue to have more of the nature of Jesus formed in us each day, or we will walk with the devil and have more of his nature formed in us. The choice is up to each Christian to make.

When we come to the place where we truly are “born of God” and not just “born again,” we will cease sinning and keep ourselves from the wicked one (1 John 3:8,9). Paul is our model in the Bible of an overcomer. See **Philippians 3:17**; **1 Corinthians 4:15,16**; and **1 John 2:5,6**. We will never fall from grace in God if we keep the “ifs” outlined in the Word (1 Pet. 1:3-10).

We will, as overcomers, receive our inheritances from God and not be blotted out of His Book of Life (**Rev. 3:5,6**). However, to be overcomers, we must press on and receive all that God offers so we may rule and reign with Christ (**1 Tim. 1:19**). (Also, read **Luke 9:62** and **Revelation 21:7**).

Endnotes

¹Vine, W.E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (Old Tappan: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1981), Vol. 3, p. 316.

²Vine's, Vol. 1, pp. 116,117.

Lesson for Section One

[Author's Note: All Scripture references that answer these questions have been given. Please do not look at the answer pages until the questions have been answered. This is an expository lesson to help you learn.]

I. Principles of the Overcoming Life

A. An overcomer is _____ his salvation.

Reference: Philippians 2:12

1. Overcomers escape the _____ of God.

Reference: Romans 3:4

2. Overcomers resist the temptations of this _____.

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

John 16:33

3. Overcomers return _____ with good.

Reference: Romans 12:21

4. Overcomers have defeated the _____.

I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men,

because ye are strong and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

1 John 2:14

5. Overcomers have resisted the spirit of _____
overcoming every evil spirit.

And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of anti-christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

1 John 4:3,4

6. Overcomers gain victory over the devil through the _____ of Jesus and through God's Word, which is the _____ of the saints and they love not their lives unto the _____.

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Revelation 12:11

B. There are _____ each overcomer must meet.

1. We must be willing to _____ with Christ.

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.

2 Timothy 2:12

2. We must be _____ to win the race.

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

Philippians 3:14,15

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

2 Timothy 4:7,8

3. We must have an overwhelming _____ to do the will of God. That gives us the confidence to win.

4. Christians need _____ to gain the promise.

Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

Hebrews 10:35,36

5. We must totally _____ all for the Kingdom of God.

So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:33

6. We must _____ God with our whole beings.

Reference: Matthew 22:37

7. We must _____ to others as a servant of all.

But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Matthew 20:25-28

C. Entering into the overcoming life actually is the process of working out your _____.

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Philippians 2:12

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Matthew 10:28

1. Name some of the definitions of the Greek word for salvation: _____
2. From these definitions, we can see that salvation is the _____ life.
3. However, we are not saved by good _____, but by grace through faith.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Ephesians 2:8-10

- a. We should understand the difference between _____ salvation, a one-time experience, and _____ salvation, which is a process.
- b. We are saved from the _____ of sin when we are born again.
- c. We are being saved from the _____ of sin when we remain filled with the Holy Spirit.
- d. We will be saved from the very _____ of sin when we enter into the _____ of the Lord.

II. Man's Responsibility and God's Responsibility

A. Man has a responsibility in salvation: to _____
God's free gift.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:23

1. Man must walk in _____ in God to remain kept by His power.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 Peter 1:3-5

2. Man must _____ the Word of God which is truth and depart from sin, as faith without works is dead.

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

James 2:17

- B. Man may err in his responsibility, but there are no _____
_____ in God's carrying out His responsibility.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:
And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish,
neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

John 10:27,28

- C. There are two extremes Christians should avoid in regard to salvation. What are they?

1. We should not take our salvation too _____, thinking we can still live unto self.
2. We should not walk in constant _____ for fear of losing salvation.

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

1 Corinthians 10:12

. . . I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Hebrews 13:5

III. The Key to Our Completion of Salvation

A. We must desire to be willing and _____.

If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.

Isaiah 1:19

1. God does not want anyone to be _____, but if they _____ that path He will not prevent it.

If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

1 Corinthians 3:17

In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.

2 Thessalonians 1:8,9

2. Satan's plan is to hinder our walk with God and destroy our _____.

References: Hebrews 10:38,39, 11:6;

Romans 14:23

B. Christians can _____ and thus lose, or forfeit, their first estate.

Reference: Matthew 8:11,12

Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

Luke 8:12,13

1. Christians maintain eternal life with God by possessing a _____ union with Jesus.

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

1 John 5:11,12

2. Christians can be rejected because of _____ and their rejection of Christ.

References: John 15:1-6;

Romans 11:20-23

C. The end (ultimate goal) of our faith is _____.

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

1 Peter 1:6-9

IV. Two Sins That Result in the Loss of Salvation

- A. Of the two sins that can cost any human being eternal life with God, the first is _____ of Jesus as Savior and involves unbelievers.
- B. The second sin involves believers and is called _____ against the _____.

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

Matthew 12:31,32

1. Scripture also calls blasphemy against the Holy Spirit “the sin _____.

If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

1 John 5:16

2. Christians also call blasphemy against the Holy Spirit the _____ sin.
3. Since the third Person of the Trinity is the power and presence of God, one would have to _____ His power and presence in order to blaspheme against Him; therefore, we say this second sin can only be committed by Christians.

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Hebrews 6:4-6

4. So we see that the sin of blaspheming against the Holy Spirit can be committed only by those who:
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.

Hebrews 10:26

5. The sure sign that someone has committed this sin is a total lack of _____ in his heart for Satan will have been formed in him.

Reference: Acts 5:1-11 (Ananias and Sapphira)

Luke 22:3 (Judas)

6. Therefore, Christians who are concerned about committing this sin can be certain this fear is from _____, as they would feel no conviction if they really had blasphemed the Holy Ghost.

V. The Believer's Security

A. Christians can have security as believers, if they truly _____ and have _____ in God.

Reference: Romans 10:8-10

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

1 John 5:13

1. If we desire to be kept by God, no man or demon can _____ us away.

Reference: 1 Peter 1:3-5

I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

John 10:28

2. We must believe God is able to present us _____ before His presence.

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

Jude 24

B. As Christians, we either walk with God and progressively have the image of Jesus _____ in us, or we continue to walk with the devil with more of his evil _____ being formed in us. The choice is ours.

Reference: Romans 12:2

My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.

Galatians 4:19

C. When we come to the place where we truly are _____ of God and not just _____, we will cease sinning and keep ourselves from the wicked one.

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

1 John 3:8,9

1. _____ is an example of an overcomer in the New Testament.

References: Philippians 3:14-17; 1 Corinthians 4:15,16;11:1;

1 John 2:5,6

2. We will be overcomers who never fall from our estates in God, if we keep the conditional _____ outlined in God's Word.

Reference: 2 Peter 1:3-10

3. The overcomer will receive his inheritance from God and not be _____ out of the book of life.

Reference: Revelation 3:5,6

4. Christians should press on to receive all that God offers, so that we may rule and _____ with Him in His Kingdom.

Reference: Revelation 5:10

For if by one man's offence, death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:17

And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Luke 9:62

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Revelation 21:7

Overcoming Life Memory Verses

The overcoming life memory verses for this lesson are:

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded.

Philippians 3:14

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

2 Timothy 4:7,8

Review Outline, Section One

[Author's Note: The review outline is taken from the book, Pathway Into the Overcomer's Walk, not from the expository introduction, although some material may overlap.]

I. The Path of the Overcomer

A. The path of the overcomer was walked first by Jesus.

1. It is the way of obedience (Ephesians 6:5-8).

a. We must be obedient to God, because we are servants of those whom we obey (Romans 6:16).

b. We should also be obedient to earthly authority set over us as was Jesus (Hebrews 5:8, 13:7,17).

1) Christians should be excellent workers as their disciplined lives should be reflected in their jobs or careers (Colossians 3:22-24).

2) Employers, on the other hand, should treat their workers as they would desire to be treated (Col. 4:1).

c. We are to obey our superiors as long as they do not contradict, add to, or circumvent God's laws. We are not to be under bondage to men's rules that would cause us to disobey God (Acts 5:29; 1 Cor. 7:22-24). However, if we must disobey men's laws, we should do so respectfully and not spitefully.

d. Nor are we to be under bondage to the "letter of the law," religious rigidity that ignores God's mercy, as Jesus warned the Pharisees (Mark 7:13).

- e. Also, we are not to fall back into sin, thereby being entangled again in bondage to sin (Galatians 5:1).
 2. It is the path of "His will," not ours. If Jesus did this, how much more should we (Matthew 26:39; John 5:30).
 3. It is the path of sacrifice and suffering, or giving up self (2 Timothy 2:12).
 4. It is the path of servanthood. We have kingly privileges, but we are to exercise them out of a servant's heart.
 - a. Jesus washed His disciples' feet (John 13:5-14); and also cooked a meal for them (John 21:9-13).
 - b. Those who would be great in the Kingdom must have the hearts of servants (Matthew 20:25-28).
- B. There are different levels in the Kingdom of God.
1. Some enjoy greater rewards according to their works. (See Section Two, Expository Introduction.)
 - a. All Christians are equal in regard to receiving salvation; it is offered to all as a gift. (Acts 10:34; Romans 6:23).
 - b. However, all Christians who leave all to follow Christ and totally commit to Him not only receive eternal life with Christ, but an hundredfold blessing in houses and brethren in this life. (Mark 10:30).
 2. We must never excuse lack of self-discipline in the name of Christian "freedom." This is the level of carnality, as the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 3:1-3).
 3. Overcomers in the seven churches to which Jesus sent words through the Apostle John were given different promises of rewards, and they also are for us. (Rev. 2,3).

II. Christians Who Sin

- A. Christians can choose to be lost, as sinners can choose to be saved (Luke 8:12,13).
1. God has no pleasure in those who start the Christian walk and draw back (Hebrews 10:38,39).
 2. Losing one's salvation is not an instantaneous happening.
 - a. Wilfully sinning after one is saved is a dangerous thing (Hebrews 10:26).
 - b. Christians can walk in disobedience or rebellion for short periods of time and be covered by God's mercy (1 John 1:9).
 - c. Eventually, however, if they continue, a line will be crossed with no way back (1 Cor. 3:17; 2 Timothy 2:12).
 3. The only time one cannot return to God in repentance to be forgiven is if he has committed the "unpardonable sin" (Hebrews 6:4-6).
 - a. This sin is blaspheming the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:31,32).
 - b. It also is called "the sin unto death" (1 John 5:16).
- B. Christians can walk in two extremes concerning this matter.
1. Some take Jesus' sacrifice too lightly and end up taking advantage of God's mercy and grace (Romans 6:1,2).
 2. Others walk in torment because of fear of having committed the unpardonable sin. This is one of Satan's favorite weapons against God's children (Romans 8:15).

- a. A person who has committed the unpardonable sin will have no desire to return to God, because Satan will have been formed in him.
 - b. Fear is not of God (2 Timothy 1:7).
 3. God has said that, if we abide in Jesus and His Word abides in us, that we cannot be taken out of His hand (John 10:28, 15:10; Jude 24).
- C. If we have the divine nature manifested in us, we will never fall (2 Peter 1:3-10) but be overcomers.
1. If we walk in the light, Jesus' blood cleanses us from all sin. If we remain in Him, we shall continue in Him. (1 John 1:7, 2:24).

Review Outline Quiz, Section One

1. Who was the first man to walk the path of the overcomer?

2. The path of the overcomer is the way of _____.
3. Overcomers are to obey earthly authority, yet not be under the _____ of men's rules.
4. Salvation is a free _____; rewards are based on _____.
5. Lack of self-discipline is not to be confused with our _____ in the Lord.
6. There is a sin that has no _____.
7. Willfully sinning after one is saved is _____.
8. The "sin unto death" is _____ against the Holy Spirit.
9. There are two extremes concerning this sin into which Christians can fall. What are they?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
10. What is our security against sinning?

Pathway Into the Overcomer's Walk Workbook

Section Two

“The Goal of the Overcoming Life”

Pathway Into the Overcomer's Walk Workbook
Section Two: "The Goal of the Overcoming Life"
Expository Introduction

[Author's Note: This is the final workbook in the Overcoming Life Series, which includes nine books and workbooks. Lessons also have supplementary material. Answers are provided at the end of each workbook and do not have to be the exact wording in many cases. The student simply needs to make sure that he, or she, has caught the concept or principle from the Word of God.]

This is the second of three lessons covering the study of the pathway into the Christian's overcoming walk. In this lesson, we will study the goal of the overcoming life, which is to be conformed to the image of Jesus and changed from conforming to the world.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Romans 8:29

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 12:2

When Paul wrote about God's "predestined" plan, he did not mean that we have no choices concerning our destinies. That does

not mean that some are chosen to be saved and some chosen by God to go to Hell, as a few denominations teach. Rather, it means God's perfect plan for those who choose Jesus as Savior is for them to also be like Jesus. We are predestined to be like Him, if we choose that destiny. Not everyone responds to that call any more than everyone responds to the call of salvation.

Paul meant that God has set a standard (a predestined goal) in front of us, something we can work toward. We can aim toward that goal. God's plan for His Church was set in place by Jesus to bring Christians to the place of maturity in Christ. He provided the five-fold ministry, pastors, teachers, evangelists, prophets, and apostles, to make this possible.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-13

God's goal for man is predestined or unchangeable; however, man's choice to pursue that goal is not. We are given the right to choose how far we will pursue God's desired workings in our lives by allowing Him to change, or perfect us into His image.

The Bible says we are to be made perfect (Matt. 5:48). In the

Greek, perfect means “a fitting, or preparing fully, or maturing.” The root word for perfecting means “a process leading to consummation.”¹ The only way we can be perfect is to be like our Master, the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 6:40; 1 John 2:5,6). Being like Him includes going through trials and learning obedience, just as He did (Hebrews 5:8).

Walking in His steps requires our letting God defend us and not trying to defend ourselves (1 Peter 2:21,22). With His standard before us, we can get rid of sin in our lives, not excuse or repress it. The overcomer's goal of perfection is to be sought in this life, not in the distant future in Heaven. There will not be anything to be overcome there. Everything in Heaven already is perfect.

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on into perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.

Hebrews 6:1

Through faith and patience, we can reach perfection, or completion, which is full maturity in Christ (James 1:4). The elementary principles talked about in Hebrews 6:1,2 with which we begin the Christian life are not the end of maturity, but only a foundation. Working out one's salvation, or being perfected, means not having to establish the basics in one's heart over and over again.

Paul is a New Testament example of a believer who overcame unto perfection. Toward the end of his life, he could say, “Follow

me as I follow Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1, 4:15,16). He also wrote to pay attention to — and observe as examples — those who walked as he himself did (Philippians 3:17).

Of course, no man is totally sinless. Only Jesus was perfect in the English definition of perfect, which is "without a flaw or blemish." He is the only truly perfect man who ever lived. But we can reach the place of being free of deliberate, intentional sin, making us "perfect" in regard to the meaning of the original word in the Greek which is "mature." We can be mature with God's work of sanctification completed in us.

Overcomers Cease From Sinning

One who has become an overcomer will cease from sinning. John wrote that someone "born of God" does not commit sin.

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

1 John 3:8-10

When we are born again, the incorruptible seed of Christ is placed within our hearts (1 Pet. 1:23). As that seed is watered in each of us through faith and obedience to the Word of God, it will produce the character of Christ in our lives. Eventually, we can come to the place of maturity where we are “born of God.”

Being “born of God” is different than being “born again” in this respect:

Born again is the beginning of the life in Christ while “born of God” is the fullness of God — being made into the Fatherhood of God. It is God’s full maturity being manifest in this life.

We begin as children, but God desires that we become a joint heir with him and reign in this life (Romans 8:17-19; Romans 5:17).

When we are “born of God,” we reach a place in Christ where we cannot lose our salvation, because we have become like Him and have His manifest nature. At this point, we cannot commit the unpardonable sin of renouncing the Lord Jesus. When one reaches this point of maturity, he can no longer lose his salvation.

Up to that point of maturity, however, someone could lose his salvation by choosing against Jesus and continually refusing to walk on with God. Choosing one’s own way or the way of the world allows Satan to be formed within us and not Jesus. Whether we realize it or not, Jesus or Satan is being formed within us every day by our choices.

The Word of God is full of many “ifs” regarding salvation. There are conditions, not for receiving but for maintaining our salvation. These “conditions” involve choices on our part to follow God or Satan. There are no conditions that we have to meet in order to

earn salvation. The gift of Jesus is free and born out of the love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for mankind. The problem is the will of man, not the will of God. Jesus Himself discussed this seeming contradiction of a free gift, yet with conditions. His words were recorded by John.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. ...If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

John 15:1,2,6

The Apostle Paul, the great theologian and teacher of God's principles, character or nature, and ways, also dealt with this problem: how to keep choosing Jesus every day once we are born again.

For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. ...Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

Romans 8:13,14; 11:22

It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.

2 Timothy 2:11,12

Some of the other New Testament writers also explained that there are “ifs” involved in staying saved.

For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end. ...Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

Hebrews 3:14, 4:1

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Hebrews 10:26,27

The many scriptures which speak of eternal assurance of salvation, if read in context, clearly are speaking of those who have reached the maturity of being born of God. Christ has been formed within such believers to the degree that they can no longer fall away.

How To Overcome Sin

We are to be holy and blameless before Him (Eph. 1:4). Some may say, "Well, doesn't the Bible say we all are going to sin a little?"

John did write that no one can say he is without sin; however, he was dealing with the fallen human nature and how a Christian can deal with it. The way to perfection is to choose against the flesh, to repent immediately when we know we have sinned, not to deny the sin.

John was saying that no one should say, "I am perfect because I am born again. I can't sin." That is denial, not truth.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.

1 John 1:6

John was talking to hypocrites, or those who refuse to admit the truth about themselves. He went on to explain this.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned,

we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

1 John 1:6-10

As Christians, John was saying, it is better not to accept sin as a normal part of our lives, but also we cannot deny that we have sinned or that we may sin. Again, we need to clearly understand that good works, good deeds, or good behavior is an outgrowth of working out our salvation, not the means by which we have salvation.

God has ordained that we are to walk in good works (Eph. 2:6-10).

There are five ways in which we overcome sin and become perfected:

1. We must “bridle” our tongues and learn not to offend against God or our fellowmen with our tongues (James 3:2).

2. We must receive God's power (John 1:12,13). Human nature will never overcome this world or the devil. We must overcome through the Spirit within us according to our choices. We cannot overcome by our own strengths but through His power.

3. We must do God's will. We must be willing and obedient in order to overcome (Isa. 1:19). We must have number two before we can do number three. We must have God's power to do His will.

4. We must keep His works until the end of our lives (Rev. 2:26-29). Too many Christians have started off in the right direction but then dropped out when they encountered difficulties in their

walk with God. Overcoming requires effort on our part. God challenges us to endure to the end if we want to be overcomers. "Drop-outs" do not win the race (1 Corinthians 9:24).

5. We must be rooted and grounded in His love and in His Word to achieve the goal of being filled with all of the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:17-21).

Overcomers will have a higher rank in Heaven than nominal Christians, as we mentioned in Section One (Matt. 5:19). Some Christians do not deny Christ, yet they never progress any farther than the initial stage of being born again and remaining a babe. Then there are others who overcome unto mature sonship, walking in the path Jesus walked here on earth, following His example.

As joint heirs with Christ, we are to walk in His power taking authority over the works of the enemy. The earth is still suffering because the Church, throughout the past 1,900 years, has not sufficiently exercised its authority and been salt and light to the world (Matt. 5:13,14). Too few Christians have fulfilled God's purposes in any generation after the first three centuries. Yet the Bible tells us there is a generation right before His return that will do this (Eph. 5:27). There is to be a generation of overcomers who will lead others into the fulfillment of God's plans, and God will reward them because of their commitment.

Rewards for Overcomers

The rewards overcomers will have from Jesus are found listed

in the second and third chapters of **The Revelation of Jesus Christ** to the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos. Jesus dictated letters for John to send to seven churches in Asia Minor. Seven is the Bible number that denotes completeness, or the entirety of something. These seven churches then, in addition to whatever prophetic significance they have, actually stand for whole Body of Christ. Within the Church, there are seven types of churches or Christians that exist in any age. We can see the things all of us have to overcome in those letters, and we can see our rewards for “overcoming.”

The rewards include:

*Eating of the Tree of Life, which produces divine life in this earth (**Revelation 2:7**)

*Not being hurt by the “second death,” which is escaping hell and having power over death (**Revelation 2:11**)

*Eating of the hidden manna, or having an enlightened understanding of the truths hidden in God and His Word (**Rev. 2:17**)

*Ruling with power over the nations (**Revelation 2:26,27**)

(Overcomers' prayers can change the course of nations.)

The phrase, “ruling with a rod of iron,” does not mean a hard, harsh rule but to rule with all power and authority. Ruling and reigning in Jesus always is done with love and compassion, taking authority over the works of the devil that affect men and nations.

The world systems are doomed for failure, just as they have been down through the ages. Only, at some future time, they will be ended once and for all when Christ returns to rule all the

nations. If we cannot rule our own lives, families, or churches now, how can we rule over nations when Jesus establishes God's system on earth? He is looking for overcomers who, first of all, have overcome their carnal natures, the world, and the devil. "Ruling over the nations" will include teaching humanity the ways of the Lord.

The other rewards for overcomers listed in Revelation are:

*Being clothed in white, which is symbolic of purity with the guarantee of never losing their salvation (Revelation 3:5)

*Being made a pillar in God's temple with His name written on them (this is speaking of a solid foundation in God's Word that gives the overcomer the same authority and power Jesus exercised in the earth) (Revelation 3:12)

*Sitting with Jesus on His throne (this gives the overcomer power and dominion over the works of the devil) (Revelation 3:21)

The authority given to the overcomers in this earth is for taking dominion over the devil. It is not meant to be used to "lord it" over other people.

Overcomers must be willing to give up everything in order to receive everything (Luke 14:33; John 12:25,26; Rev. 21:7).

We must give up our own visions, our plans, our purposes, and our lives in exchange for God's vision, plan, and purpose. Our own ways are hindering or hurting us until we get rid of them. That which we receive in return from God is beneficial to us. We are encouraged to press toward the "mark" (the end of the race) for the "prize of the high calling in Christ" (Philippians 3:14,15; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

This “high calling” is being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ — the goal of the overcomer. It requires diligent effort and patience to reach that goal. (In Section Three, we will look at some of the things that hinder the overcoming walk.) God has great plans in the future for overcomers of His Kingdom.

Future Plans for Overcomers

There are many endtime teachings and scenarios present in the Church today. Many of these are in conflict with one another. For that reason, Christians should not base their fellowship with one another on a like belief about prophetic events, but only on a relationship in Jesus. We can love and appreciate our brethren even if we do not agree totally with their doctrines. We must “try” or “prove” the different teachings we hear. Many of these teachings are based on verses taken out of context all through the Bible and strung together as if they made up a connected whole.

Overcomers learn to test endtime doctrines, according to the Bible and the Holy Spirit.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

1 John 4:1

For example, one endtime doctrine involves “the rapture” (a coined word for the catching away of God’s people at His Second Coming.) Actually, the word “rapture” is not even found in the Bible.

However, the event they are referring to is “the catching away of the saints” from the world into the spirit at the Second Coming of Christ (1 Thess 4:15-18). Actually the proper term for this overall event is “the resurrection”. One aspect of this doctrine that is not universally agreed upon is the “timing” of the catching away of the saints to meet the Lord.

Let's look at what each group believes about the timing of the “rapture” and the resurrection. The three main “rapture” theories are as follows:

1. The Pre-Tribulation Rapture, which is supposed to occur at the beginning of the Great Tribulation. The Great Tribulation is thought to be the last seven years before Jesus comes again to set up His millennial (a thousand years) Kingdom.

2. The Mid-Tribulation Rapture, which is supposed to occur three and a half years into the Great Tribulation. During the last three and one-half years of the Great Tribulation, the wrath of God is expected to be executed on sinners. Then Jesus is supposed to return.

3. The Post-Tribulation Rapture, which is to occur at the end of the Great Tribulation period (regardless of length), at which time Jesus not only “raptures” the saints (or catches them up) but begins His millennial reign.

The third group (post-tribulationists) believes Scripture shows Christ's return is only one event, while the other two groups believe Christ will return to first catch away His saints, then after the tribulation He will come again (making this a third coming) with His saints to set up His Kingdom at the beginning of the millennium. The third group believes when Jesus returns, the saints who are

living and dead are “caught up” to meet Him in transformed bodies (1 Thess. 4:16,17), and Jesus sets up the Kingdom on earth physically as well as spiritually (Matt. 6:10). All of this takes place at one time, they believe.

In addition, there are wide differences on many other aspects of the endtime; however, a discussion of those is not necessary in a lesson on the overcoming life. The one aspect that is agreed upon before Jesus' return is that there will be great tribulation.

In fact, Jesus told the disciples that in this life, we will have tribulation (Matt. 24:29-31). Whether that “tribulation” has meant active persecution in addition to ordinary trials and troubles has depended on what generation and what country in which a Christian has lived. If we live in the final generation before the end of time, there certainly will be much world-wide tribulation involving active persecution of Christians.

The Greek word translated tribulation means “affliction.”² One who is determined to be an overcomer should know these things:

*No tribulation can separate us from the love of God (Rom. 8:35).

*We go through much tribulation or pressure to enter the Kingdom of God (Acts 14:22).

*Tribulation, in the form of persecution, comes because the world and Satan hates the Word of God (Matt. 13:21) and the ones who stand for it and for Jesus.

*Jesus speaks of great tribulation just prior to His return (Matt. 24:21-31).

*The ones who come out of the last great tribulation victorious

are the endtime overcomers among God's people (Rev. 7:13-17).

So our focus should not be on when Jesus is coming back but upon preparation for His coming (Matthew 24:36-44, 25:13).

A close reading of Matthew 24:29-31, 1 Corinthians 15:51,52, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Revelation 10:7, and Revelation 12:15 not only pinpoints the timing of Christ's return (when the last trump is sounded) but also when this occurs (after the tribulation period). These verses also pinpoint when the catching away (the "rapture") will occur along with the dead in Christ being raised (the resurrection). Scripture teaches a second coming of Christ, not a "second" and "third" coming as taught by pre-tribulationists.

Overcomers know they can endure tribulation with good cheer because Jesus has already overcome the world (John 16:33). He has the solution for every problem or tribulation we may encounter.

Jesus came the first time as the Lamb to be slain as an eternal, once-and-for-all sacrifice for mankind's sins (Heb. 9:12). He will come the second time as the Lion of Judah, judge and ruler of the earth (Matt. 24:30; Rev. 5:5). Before the Flood, there was much violence in the land and wickedness in the thinking of men. Jesus said that in the time of His second coming, things would be as they were in the times of Noah (Matt. 24:37,38). Today, we can look just at the United States and see the same violence and wickedness, the same eating, drinking, and being merry. The only safe place is in Jesus Christ. He is our "Ark of Safety".

When Christ returns, the Millennium begins; this is referred to as a thousand-year period of His reign on earth (although there are also several different teachings about this). However, Revelation 20

specifically mentions a thousand-year period. At this point, the student may want to stop and read this entire chapter.

Overcomers in the Millennium

The New Age movement is looking for the “Age of Aquarius” to begin about the year 2000. They are looking for a “Messiah” to come and usher in this age of peace with equal credibility for all religions, except for those Christians who still believe Jesus is the only Way to God. They believe these people will have to be eliminated for peace to come. This is Satan's counterfeit of God's plan, and as usual, he has brought forth a counterfeit belief that turns the truth around.

The Bible says the wicked, those who do not believe Jesus is the only Way to God, are the ones who must be removed (Matt. 13:41-49, 25:31-36). The wicked dead will also be resurrected for Judgment (Rev. 20:12,13). At that time, they will be confined to the lake of fire with their master, Satan, in order for God's true peace to reign forever (Revelation 20:15).

During the Millennium, overcomers will rule and reign with Christ. We have looked at scriptures to that effect earlier in this workbook. Every Christian will rule in some degree, but overcomers will rule and reign in a greater capacity. The Church has been looking for Christ's return ever since He left (Acts 1:11), although there always have been those who scoffed at the idea (2 Peter 3:3-8), especially after so many years went by.

However, there is no time with God, so when God says “shortly,” it may not seem short from the viewpoint of one living within time. But in the context of forever, or eternity, or even the amount of time since Creation (2,000 years) can be “shortly” to God. I believe that just as God rested on the seventh day of creation, the earth will be at peace and undergoing full restoration during the seventh millennium of time on this planet. The earth was affected by the fall of Adam and Eve, as well as mankind (Rom. 8:22), but at Jesus’ return:

*Satan will be bound and the earth restored to its perfection with thorns and briars gone (Isa. 32:13-15). Even the wilderness will blossom as a rose (Isaiah 35:1,2).

*The Holy Spirit will be poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28; Isa. 32:15; Ezekiel 39:29).

*The knowledge of the glory of the Lord will fill the earth (Hab. 2:14), and there will be unprecedented peace and prosperity (Mic. 4:1-8).

*Nations will no longer make war against one another (Isa. 2:4; Psalm 46:9).

*The earth will produce abundantly (Amos 9:13-15) and become a place of singing and rejoicing (Isaiah 14:7).

*Animal nature will be changed (Isa. 11:6-9) so that animals are at peace with man and with each other. They will no longer eat meat and will be free from fear.

After the Millennium, even with the example of the peace, prosperity, and blessings of Christ’s reign, some will follow Satan

when he is released for one last attempt to seduce mankind. After a final battle will come the final Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15), then Satan and his followers, human, angelic, or demonic, will be cast forever into the lake of fire. Then God will create an entirely new heaven and earth (Isa. 65:17; Revelation 21:1-4).

Endnotes

¹Vine's, Vol. 3, p. 175.

²Ibid, Vol. 4, p. 155.

Lesson for Section Two

[Author's Note: All Scripture references that answer these questions have been given. Please do not look at the answer pages until the questions have been answered.]

I. The Goal of the Overcoming Life

A. We are to be conformed to the image of _____.

Reference: Romans 8:29,30

1. This means being filled with the _____ of God.

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Ephesians 3:17-19

2. This also means being made _____.

Reference: Ephesians 4:13-15

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Matthew 5:48

B. Give some of the definitions for the Greek word translated perfect in those verses in Ephesians.

1. In addition to being our Standard, Jesus also was our _____ through His life on earth.

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.

1 Peter 2:21,22

2. The love of God is _____ in those who keep His Word.

Reference: 1 John 2:5,6

C. The standard, or goal that we are to reach is in Heaven.

True _____ False _____

References: James 1:4; Hebrews 6:1; 2 Corinthians 13:9,11

The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

Luke 6:40

II. A New Testament Overcomer

- A. A New Testament example of a man who overcame and was perfect is _____.

Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:1

For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

1 Corinthians 4:15,16

Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

Philippians 3:17

1. Those who work out salvation as this apostle did will cease _____.

Reference: 1 John 3:8-10

2. They will be _____ and _____ before God.

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Ephesians 1:4

B. Our New Testament example encouraged us to _____
on toward the prize awarded those who achieve the high
calling in Christ.

Reference: **Philippians 3:14,15**

1. Is working toward holiness or sanctification “good works”
that earn salvation for us? _____

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of
yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man
should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ
Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that
we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:8-10

2. Being “born again” is a gift of God; being “born of God” is a
matter of day by day _____ accomplished
through the power of the Holy Spirit.

...Choose you this day whom ye will serve...but as for me and
my house, we will serve the Lord.

Joshua 24:15

C. To become perfect, one must _____ sin.

1. The first step toward perfection is to learn to bridle the
_____.

Reference: **James 3:2**

2. Also, we must receive God's _____ and do His _____.

Reference: Ephesians 5:26

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:12,13

3. We also must keep God's _____ to the end.

And he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.

Revelation 2:26

4. Also, we must give heed to God's love and be _____ and _____ in His Word.

Reference: Ephesians 3:17-21

III. The Rewards of Overcomers

[Students should open their Bibles to Revelation, chapters 2 and 3, for this portion of the lesson.]

A. Overcomers will have a greater _____ in Heaven than nominal Christians.

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:19

1. Overcomers gain rank by being willing to be _____ of others, as Jesus was, which is opposite to the world.

Reference: **Matthew 20:26,27**

2. Overcomers will be _____ with Jesus.

Reference: **Romans 8:14-19**

B. Overcomers will be given _____ by Jesus.

References: **Matthew 16:27; Revelation 2,3**

1. Overcomers will eat of the _____ of _____.

Reference: **Revelation 2:7**

2. Overcomers will not be hurt by the _____
_____.

Reference: **Revelation 2:11**

3. Overcomers will:

a. Eat of the _____ manna.

b. Also, they will be given _____ stones.

c. These stones will have _____
written on them.

Reference: **Revelation 2:17**

4. Overcomers will be given power over the _____
and rule and reign with Christ.

Reference: **Revelation 2:26,27**

5. Overcomers will be clothed in _____
and rule and reign with Christ.

Reference: **Revelation 3:5**

6. Overcomers will be made _____ in the temple of
God and receive Jesus' new _____.

Reference: **Revelation 3:12**

7. Overcomers will sit with Christ _____.

Reference: **Revelation 3:21**

C. In order to gain _____ of these rewards, overcomers
must give up _____.

References: **Luke 14:33; John 12:25,26; Revelation 21:7**

IV. Overcomers in the Millennium

A. Our attitudes toward the endtime should not be on _____
Jesus is to return, but on being _____.

Reference: **Matthew 24:36-39**

Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour
wherein the Son of man cometh.

Matthew 25:13

1. The word _____ is not in the Bible; however, it is
used to refer to the "catching away" of God's saints at the
Second Coming of Christ.

2. There are many endtime doctrines concerning the prophetic events of Christ's _____.

3. There are _____ major beliefs concerning the "Great Tribulation" and the timing of Christ's second coming and the catching away of the saints. They are:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

B. Christ's first coming was as the _____; His second will be as the _____.

References: **John 1:29,36; Revelation 5:6; Revelation 5:5**

1. How long have Christians been looking for the Second Coming? _____

2. Peter wrote that some would _____ at the idea of Christ's delayed coming, as if its delay from man's viewpoint proved it false.

Reference: **2 Peter 3:3**

C. The Millennium (from the Latin word mille meaning "a thousand") is discussed in the Bible in what chapter? _____

1. The Millennium is the long-awaited _____ for the earth.

a. Satan will be _____.

Reference: **Revelation 20:1-4**

b. Wicked men are _____ from the earth.

Reference: **Matthew 13:41-43**

c. The earth will _____ abundantly.

Reference: Amos 9:13-15

2. Other conditions in that period which will be changed are that nations will not _____ any more.

References: Isaiah 2:4; 32:17-18; Psalm 46:9

a. Also the nature of _____ will be changed.

Reference: Isaiah 11: 6-9

b. The wilderness will _____ like a _____.

Reference: Isaiah 35:1,2

c. The Holy Spirit will be poured out on _____ and the _____ of the Lord will fill the earth.

Reference: Joel 2:28; Isaiah 32:15; Ezekiel 39:29;

Habakkuk 2:14

D. Overcomers will _____ and _____ with Christ during this period.

References: Revelation 5:9,10, 20:4-6

1. At the end of the Millennium, there will be an opportunity for Christians to continue to become overcomers, because Satan will be _____ to tempt those on earth one last time.

Reference: Revelation 20:7-15

2. After the Millennium, overcomers will _____ all things while Satan and his followers are cast forever into the _____ of _____.

Reference: Revelation 21:7; 20:10

3. God will create a new _____ and _____.

Reference: Isaiah 65:17; Revelation 21:4-7

Overcoming Life Memory Verses

The suggested overcoming life memory verses for this lesson are:

For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

2 Corinthians 4:16,18

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Revelation 21:7

Review Outline, Section Two

[Author's Note: The review outline is taken from the book, Pathway Into the Overcomer's Walk, not from the expository introduction, although some material may overlap.]

I. Facts About Overcomers

A. The goal of overcomers is to be conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29).

1. Overcomers have been made perfect, because Christ has been formed in them so that they are born of God (Matt. 5:48; 1 John 2:5,6, 3:9).

2. Jesus is the first to have walked the path of the overcomer, but the Apostle Paul is also a very good example to follow (Philippians 3:17; 1 Corinthians 11:1).

a. We can come to the place Paul attained by following the steps of Jesus (1 Peter 2:21,22).

b. Paul walked in "fatherhood" to the saints, which mean she walked in spiritual maturity (1 Corinthians 4:15,16).

B. Characteristics of overcomers are these:

1. Overcomers want only to do the will of God and will not willfully and knowingly sin (1 John 3:8,9; Hebrews 10:26,35-39).

2. Overcomers have the love of God perfected in them by keeping His Word (1 John 2:5,6; Ephesians 5:25b-27).

3. Overcomers have kept all of the "ifs" that go with God's promises.

- a. There are no conditions for being born again except receiving Jesus as our salvation which is a gift of God (Romans 6:23, 10:9, 10).
 - b. There are conditions for “working out one’s salvation,” or allowing God to finish the good work He has begun in a Christian (1 John 1:7, 2:24, and many other scriptures. This is discussed in Section One).
4. Overcomers are willing and obedient (Isaiah. 1:19; Job 36:11; 1 Peter 1:14-16).
 5. Overcomers never turn back once they “put their hands to the plough” (Luke 9:62).
 6. Overcomers never put away faith or a good conscience so do not “shipwreck” (1 Tim. 1:19), as Paul said some had done in his day.

II. Rewards of Overcomers

- A. God does not love overcomers more than other Christians; however, there are special privileges, authority, and rewards given to overcomers.
 1. All those born again will have eternal life with God (John 3:15, 16).
 2. However, overcomers will have more authority (Matt. 5:19, 25:23).
 3. Overcomers gain more rewards because of their earthly works (2 Timothy 4:7, 8; Matthew 16:27).
 4. Overcomers will be joint-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:14-17).

B. Most of the rewards Jesus promised overcomers are listed in **Revelation 2,3**. Some of these are:

1. To eat of the tree of life (**Revelation 2:7**)
2. Not to be hurt by the “second death”
 - a. The “second death” is to be cast into the lake of fire (**Revelation 2:11, 20:6**).
 - b. All human beings will live eternally; the question is where will they live — in eternal life with God (**John 17:3**), or in eternal punishment with Satan (**Matt. 25:46; Romans 2:7-11**).
3. To eat of the hidden manna and receive a new name in a white stone (**Revelation 2:17**)
4. To rule and reign with Christ with power over the nations (**Revelation 2:26**)
5. To be clothed in white robes (**Revelation 3:5**)
6. To be made pillars in the temple of God (**Revelation 3:12**)
7. To sit with Christ on His throne (**Revelation 3:21**)

C. To win these rewards, Christians must overcome (**Revelation 12:11**):

1. By the word of their testimonies (concerning Jesus and His Word)
2. Through His blood (being born again and justified by His sacrifice)
3. By being willing to give up their lives to live the life God wishes for them and, sometimes, literally to be willing to die for the Word's sake

III. The Future of Overcomers

A. Jesus' Second Coming marks the beginning of a period of time called "the Millennium" (Revelation 20).

1. He will return for a Church that is holy and consecrated to Him (Ephesians 5:27).

2. The last overcomers will have come through "the Great Tribulation" to be at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9).

a. God first removes the evil ones (tares) in a final harvest (Matt. 13:24-30; Rev. 14:17-43), then the wheat (God's children) is gathered.

b. Judgment begins at the house of God when those who look like Christians but are not are removed (1 Pet. 4:17).

B. Overcomers will rule and reign with Jesus during this period of time (Revelation 20:4).

1. Overcomers are like the five wise virgins in the Parable of Ten Virgins (Matt. 25:1-13). They keep the oil of the Holy Spirit fresh in their lives.

2. Overcomers are those who have first gained authority over themselves, thus proving they are capable of ruling and reigning over others (Proverbs 16:32).

C. During the Millennium:

1. Overcomers will rejoice in God's new plans for them (Rev. 21:1-5).

2. Overcomers will inherit all things and be sons of God (Rev. 21:7).

Review Outline Quiz, Section Two

1. What is the goal of overcomers?

2. What must all Christians do to receive the promises of God?

3. What are the “conditions” for being born again?

4. Does God love overcomers more than nominal Christians?

5. Where do we find most of the rewards for overcomers listed in the Bible?

6. Name at least two of these:

7. What is the second death?

8. What does the term “rapture” refer to?

9. To be an overcomer, what is the first area that must be brought under authority?

10. What do the overcomers do during the Millennium?

Pathway Into the Overcomer's Walk Workbook

Section Three

“Hindrances to the Overcoming Life”

Pathway Into the Overcomer's Walk Workbook
Section Three: "Hindrances to the Overcoming Life"
Expository Introduction

{Author's Note: This is the final workbook in the Overcoming Life Series, which includes nine books and workbooks. Lessons also have supplementary material. Answers are provided at the end of each workbook and do not have to be the exact wording in many cases. The student simply needs to make sure that he, or she, has caught the concept or principle from the Word of God.)

Two major hindrances to walking as an overcomer involve money (or material possessions) and the desires of the physical man. Either of these areas can gain ascendancy in a Christian's life and become a stumbling block to righteousness.

If a Christian sets his heart on becoming an overcomer, he will be tested in the area of finances and the flesh. We know that God wants us to prosper spirit, soul, and body (1 Thess. 5:23). However, if the focus becomes prosperity rather than Jesus and the will of God, we will not overcome and prosperity will vanish.

We prosper in the physical realm as we learn to prosper in our souls (minds, wills, and emotions), according to 3 John 1:2. For example, many physical ailments originate with soul problems, such as bitterness or fear. If we have lust, greed, or resentment in our hearts, it can prevent us from walking in the prosperity of good health. Overcomers should reflect in their lifestyles examples of balanced lives that display moderation (Philippians 4:5).

True prosperity involves more than financial blessings. It means walking in love, joy, and peace. True prosperity involves the whole person: spirit, soul, and body.

Wrong attitudes toward money have been the cause of failure in many marriages, also of ministries. Anyone in the ministry should not be there because of any monetary rewards that may result, but simply because of obedience to God. A church, a ministry, or even a paycheck in the business world is not our source. The Source of all provisions for Christians is God the Father.

There are many warnings in the New Testament concerning the wrong attitude toward money. Jesus told the disciples it was easier for a camel to get through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 19:23,24). That is because one who gets to Heaven must be willing to give up everything of earth, and wealthy people often find it very difficult to be willing to give up their wealth.

Look at the example of the rich young ruler who asked Jesus how to gain eternal life. When Jesus told him that if he wanted to be perfect to go and give everything he had to the poor, he went away sadly because he had great possessions (Matt. 19:16-22). Jesus wanted the young man to be willing to give up all of his wealth. He knew the young man's heart was bound up in his money, not in God. We do not always have to give up everything; but, overcomers must be willing to do this if God asks it. We must trust God to take care of us, as He said He would (Matthew 6:25-34; Philippians 4:19).

Jesus said riches are deceitful and choke out the Word of God.

He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

Matthew 13:22

The rich were told by Paul not to be proud nor trust in money instead of God (1 Timothy 6:17).

Overcomers and Riches

Paul also wrote that the love of money is the root of all evil (1 Tim. 6:10). Notice that he did not say money is the root of evil, but the love of it. Money in itself is an inanimate object that can be used for good or evil. The wickedness is in the attitudes of men toward money, not in money itself.

An overcomer will keep all of God's financial principles, which we will discuss here:

1. Give the tithe, which is holy unto the Lord (Lev. 27:30). Tithe means "ten percent" (Lev. 27:32) and dates back to the time of Abraham (Gen. 14:20). Therefore, the tithe preceded the giving of the Old Testament law, so it was not "done away with because it was under the Law," as some teach. Actually, under the New Covenant, God is to get 100 percent of everything we are or own (Mark 12:30)!

Since God owns everything, He obviously does not need our money. However, He wants us to tithe for our good and for the good of our brothers and sisters in Him. Giving the tithe is an act of faith showing the Lord that the other 90 percent also is under His stewardship, because it all belongs to Him.

Even the Levites, the priests, were required to give a tithe of the offerings of the people (Num. 18:26). Ministers and ministries should follow this same example today. Whatever we give as offerings above the tithe becomes “seed” planted in the Kingdom. Our attitudes about giving are as important as our attitudes about money. We are to give cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:6-12). We are told that whatever “measure” we use to give is the measure with which we will reap a harvest (Luke 6:38).

If we withhold our tithes, our lives come under a curse, because we are robbing God as well as being disobedient (Mal. 3:7-12). On the other hand, as we give the tithe to the Lord, He promises to rebuke the devourer and bless us (Malachi 3:11).

2. Give to the poor.

An overcomer who is blessed with wealth over and above his needs will put it to work for the Lord. He will lay up treasures in Heaven where there are no thieves, no rust, and no moths to destroy (Matt. 6:19,21). He will give of his abundance to others. Giving to the poor was taken for granted by those of Jesus' day (John 13:29; Galatians 2:10).

God promised that there would be no lack for those who give to the poor (Psalm 41:1-3; Prov. 28:27). However, a person should not

give to others for show or at the expense of his own family (Matt. 15:5,6). Not to provide for one's own household is to be worse than an infidel (1 Timothy 5:8).

3. Give up everything to follow Jesus, if called on to do so.

The rich, young ruler is an example not to follow. Abraham, however, is a good example of someone who was blessed because of his willingness to leave everything at God's call (Heb. 11:8-10). Those who give up everything for Christ are promised a hundred-fold return (Mark 10:28-31).

This hundred-fold return pertains to the law of sowing and reaping. As we give 100 percent of ourselves to God and leave all to serve Him, we will reap a hundred-fold in people — brothers, sisters, and so forth. It can pertain to a house or money, if that is what we need to get the Gospel out. However, this verse is not necessarily talking about that, but more about souls gained for the Kingdom as a result of our following God. Part of our "treasure" in Heaven will be the people who are there because of our witnessing to them. Such souls are an overcomer's greatest reward (Prov. 11:30).

An overcomer is one who has learned to be content whether he has a lot or a little, as long as he is in the center of God's will (Phil. 4:11-13). Paul had learned to be content regardless of his circumstances, because he knew God would meet his needs. The enemy tries to make Christians discontent, feeling as if they do not have enough or always wanting more.

An overcomer does not desire riches simply to possess things or to be rich; but rather, his main desire is to be like Jesus. The true

heart cry of every believer should be “God, make me like Jesus,” not, “God give me more money.” There may be times when we do need to pray for money or for certain needs to be met, as Jesus said in the Lord's Prayer: Give us this day our daily bread (Matt. 6:11).

An overcomer can say, like David, ...I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness (Ps. 17:15). That will be the cry of an overcomer's heart.

Jesus said no one can serve two masters, and the two He mentioned were God and “Mammon,” which stands for the wealth and possessions of this world (Matt. 6:24). One entrapped by the love of money actually is serving Satan.

On the other hand, poverty is not of God. Jesus and His disciples had enough given to them that they needed a treasurer, who was Judas. If they had been poverty-stricken, why would they have needed a treasurer? Actually, the Bible tells us there was so much that Judas stole from it (John 12:6). Judas did not care about the poor but was a thief, John wrote. Jesus was always giving to the poor and going about doing good (Acts 10:38).

How To Keep God's Financial Principles

Under the Old Covenant, poverty was a curse (Deut. 28:15-42) and abundance was part of the blessings of God (Deut. 28:1-15). His people were to be “the head and not the tail” if they were willing and obedient. As we have a better covenant with better promises (Heb. 8:6), it should be obvious that poverty is even more of a

curse to us. In the Kingdom of God, the needs of those who lack are to be met by the giving of those who have plenty (2 Cor. 8:14,15).

Attitudes and actions that enable us to keep God's financial principles include:

*Paying our bills on time (Proverbs 3:27,28; Romans 13:8)

If we have difficulty paying a bill, we should make payment arrangements with the creditor rather than ignore the bill.

*Staying out of debt as much as possible

Those who borrow are servants to those who lend to them, the Bible says in Proverbs 22:7. We want to be totally free to serve the Lord any place and at any time. Being in "bondage" to someone or some lending institution can cause us not to be able to go and serve God because of our huge financial responsibilities.

An overcomer also must get rid of any resentment concerning past financial dealings (Matt 6:14,15). We must forgive anyone who has wronged us or never paid money owed to us. If we forgive, God will pay us back one way or another.

*Not being lazy or slothful and doing the best work we can

If we are lazy or we do poor work, we will not be prosperous (Prov. 12:24). There are many verses in Proverbs that deal with what happens to a "sluggard" or a lazy person (Prov. 13:4, 21:25). God worked six days in creating the earth and rested only one, a good example for us. Paul wrote that those who did not work should not eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10-12).

On the other hand, a person can sin by making a job or career the focus of his life, so that he goes to the other extreme and

becomes a “workaholic.” It is important to have that weekly day of rest and avoid giving too much time and energy to work while neglecting God and family.

*Not falling into the pit of lusting after things of this world

Seeking the pleasures of this world will choke out God's Word in our lives (Luke 8:14). Lusting after material things and spending foolishly will quickly exhaust one's funds (Proverbs 21:17).

Nor should we hoard material possessions or save money out of fear (James 5:1-3). There is a difference between being thrifty and being fearful. It is certainly scriptural to have a savings account, if we are saving for positive reasons (Prov. 30:25). Hoarding means that one's security is based on having enough provisions saved up. As overcomers, our security must be in God.

Gambling or “get-quick-rich” schemes are out of bounds for Christians (Prov. 28:20-22). Both of these “short-cuts” to wealth usually end up impoverishing those who try them.

*Overcoming any tendency to deceitfulness in money matters

When Ananias and Sapphira attempted to deceive the apostles over the sale of some land, Peter told the couple they had lied to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-11), not him. And it cost them their lives.

*Allowing our hearts to be cleansed of any greed, covetousness, or envy concerning money and possessions

Overcomers must realize that life is not measured by possessions (Luke 12:15) and that greed is a pitfall from Satan (Prov. 19:1, 20:17). Always, we are to refuse bribes (Prov. 15:27).

Concerning covetousness, Paul wrote the Corinthians not to even eat with a brother caught up in coveting (1 Cor. 5:11). The sin

of covetousness was important enough to be included in the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:17). Covetousness is one of the basic underlying principles that can corrupt our relationships with God and with each other. It is one of the surest ways to incur God's displeasure.

Our attitudes and dealings with money and possessions are spiritual principles that govern natural things. We are told to love the Lord with all our hearts (Matt. 22:37), and to seek first the Kingdom of God. Then all these other things will be added, or given, to us. The spiritual man always should have priority over the natural man.

That does not mean, however, that natural things should be neglected.

Taking Care of the Temple of God

The first area of hindrance for the overcomer involves things of the soul, such as setting one's mind or emotions on this world's goods. The second involves things of the body. The spiritual man always should have priority over the physical man. However, this does not mean the body should be neglected. The Bible says our bodies are temples of God (1 Cor. 6:19,20). Accordingly, they should be treated with respect so we can glorify God in them. As with everything concerning man, there are two extremes in dealing with the body.

1. One is over-emphasis on the body.

This means to overindulge in pleasures of the flesh, pamper the body, or treat the body as if it were the real person. Our bodies

are only “suits of clothes,” “houses,” or “tabernacles,” as the Apostle Paul said, in which we live while we are in the natural realm.

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

2 Corinthians 5:1-4

God wants us to take care of our bodies in order to live long lives and serve His Kingdom purposes on earth.

2. The other extreme is to abuse the body, neglect it, or despise it. The body can be abused through overeating, drinking, using addictive substances, overworking, not getting enough sleep or exercise, or over exercising.

Paul talked about “keeping the body under” (1 Cor. 9:27), in other words, not letting his body be the boss as much as he talked about taking care of the body. For example, committing adultery is not just a sin against the laws of God but against the temple of God, the body (1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:15-20).

Overeating is the sin of gluttony, and if any nation ever had this “strongman” over it, the United States does. In Third World nations,

Satan attacks with lack: poverty and famine. In the United States, the enemy attacks from the other extreme: lust. In this country, lust for food and possessions runs rampant. To overcome gluttony in any area of life, it must be dealt with in the spiritual realm first. A person must be totally committed to the Lord Jesus Christ.

After that commitment, the Christian can obtain deliverance if it is needed. There are many good churches or ministers who operate in deliverance ministries in this country. After things in the spiritual realm have been taken care of, the next step in overcoming sins of the flesh involves the soulish realm. One's lifestyle must be changed to one of discipline. When the spirit and soul are taken care of, the physical man will line up.

Dealing with the soul simply means putting to the cross those things that are not good for the body and living according to the way of the Lord. The only real answer for problems of overweight or underweight is through God. Millions of books have been published on the subject of the diets and eating habits of Americans. Yet most experts readily admit that few of them work on an extended or permanent basis.

The only thing all of the experts agree on that really works is to eat healthy foods in small portions, which requires discipline. However, "crash" diets, or any other kind of diet, are not an answer to the problem of gluttony. Americans eat too often and too much, according to the biblical pattern and the way the rest of the world eats.

When the Israelites were in the wilderness, God supplied manna twice a day, and Elijah was fed twice a day by the ravens. Both of

these examples show that two meals a day are enough. Most of the rest of the world eats one or two meals a day, but in this country, we think we have to have three.

Some people's stomachs have become their gods, as Paul wrote (Phil. 3:19). Tradition plays more of a part in eating patterns in the United States than the Word of God does. We should eat according to the Word of God, not according to man's traditions (Colossians 2:8).

Biblical Dietary Principles

The Bible gives a list of meats that may be eaten with God's approval (Lev. 11:1-23,44-47). Those that God approves are called "clean," while those He knew would not be good for man to eat are called "unclean." The signs people were to use to distinguish these two groups were these:

*All animals that have cloven hooves and who chew cuds are clean. Some animals with cloven hooves do not chew cuds, (like swine), and are not called "clean." Camels and rabbits do not have cloven hooves, for example. Beef, deer, elk, and antelope are "clean" animals.

Many Christians believe these dietary laws were for Old Testament believers; therefore, they are not for us today. God made the human body and all of the animals. He also gave us instructions what to eat and what not to eat. We listen to dieticians, scientists, and doctors about what to eat, although they all have different opinions. Why not listen to God and His Word in this area? Some

even ban all meat from their diets. These vegetarians are groups with strict dietary laws that do not conform to the Bible.

Again, we see two extremes — eat any creature or eat no meat at all. Neither is biblical. Extremes are one of the devil's favorite tactics. If he cannot get us to actually sin, he tries to pull us to one side or the other of God's balance.

There are religious beliefs which eliminate meat from the diet, and there are New Age teachings that also eliminate meat. In addition to diet, many New Agers are intense promoters of "animal rights." This group does not eat meat because they believe animal life is as "sacred" as human life. In fact, perhaps more so, because these same people are for abortion rights. Radical environmentalists tell us red meat today is not healthy for us even though the Bible tells us otherwise.

Swine and most of the other animals, sea creatures, and insects called "unclean" have been found to be scavengers, God's natural garbage-disposal units. No one would get indignant if they were told not to eat garbage, yet many are very upset when told that pork is full of parasites and very bad for you.

In other parts of the world, different cultures eat mice, buzzards, lizards, or other creatures that Americans have no problem not eating. Yet, we eat things that are just as unclean. Some sea creatures classified unclean are catfish, oysters, clams, crabs, shrimp, and lobsters. Today, these creatures that clean up the ocean floors, lakes, and rivers also are eating radioactive material and other pollutants. Many of today's cancers and other diseases probably stem from diets filled with unclean creatures.

Only the Creator of the universe knows all of the principles and laws by which everything is made and works together. Particularly in the Old Testament, He revealed to His people those things they needed to know to prosper and live in health.

The New Testament interprets and reveals what was meant in the Old. It does not replace it or contradict it. Principles covering the physical realm were not done away with at Calvary. We still have to live in earthly bodies. Dietary laws were not given to procure eternal life, but to preserve and bless us in this life. In Heaven, we will need no dietary laws. Here, we certainly do!

The Pharisees accused Jesus of trying to do away with the Law, and He said specifically that He did not come to do away with the Law but to fulfill it (Matt. 5:17). In fact, He said not a period or the crossing of a "t" would be done away with in the Law (Matt. 5:18; Luke 16:17). Many other laws, such as those concerning conservation and being good stewards over the land also have been ignored today to our hurt.

The best thing we can do to maintain our bodies properly is to seek out God's health principles and follow them, then trust the Holy Spirit to guide us in those areas not spelled out in Scripture. When we observe God's laws, we reap beneficial results. When we abuse them, we suffer. Proverbs 26:2 says, "The curse causeless shall not come." Why are we cursed with so much sickness in this nation? It is because we have disregarded the laws of God.

The bottom line concerning our diets should be to ask God, "Am I bringing glory to You by the way I eat and drink?"

If we are not bringing Him glory, then we bring shame, hurt, and

grief to the One who died for us.

Peter's Vision of Clean and Unclean Animals

The major place in the New Testament used as “proof” by those who say the dietary laws no longer apply to us today is Acts 10:9-18. The Apostle Peter had a spiritual vision of spiritual things, and it should not be applied to natural things.

At that time, the Jewish people thought all non-Jews (Gentiles, or “people without God”), were “unclean.” They even called them “dogs” (Matt. 15:26,27). Under the New Covenant, anyone who receives Jesus has been cleansed, but apparently the apostles had not yet seen this. God was getting ready to send them to Gentiles, so He gave Peter a vision that would be very clear in spiritual terms. It had nothing to do with natural dietary habits. He showed Peter “clean” animals and “unclean” animals and told him that nothing God had made was to be considered “unclean.” However, God was referring to people, not animals. In the interpretation of Peter's vision, we find the Lord saying that Gentiles previously despised and looked down upon were not to be considered that way any longer (Acts 10:28,34,35).

At first Peter did not understand and meditated on the vision. Almost immediately, however, he was called to go to the home of some Gentiles and preach about Jesus. At that point, the meaning of the vision was clear to him. Without the vision, Peter more than likely would have turned down the invitation and missed God. So

the Lord showed Peter that through the blood of Jesus there is no man who is unclean as through Christ God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:28-34).

Peter had no problem seeing that the vision referred to spiritual matters and the prejudice of the Jews. Today, however, we apparently have many who do not see this as clearly as Peter did. They still think it applies to what we eat, not to who we are. Those of us once considered “unclean” now are called “clean” because of Jesus.

Another scripture used to bolster the idea that it does not matter under the New Covenant what we eat is Matthew 15:1,2,10-20. Jesus and His disciples were criticized by the Pharisees for eating without washing their hands, a dietary tradition. Jesus told them that it is not what goes into a man that pollutes him but what comes out. Jesus meant that the words that come out of our mouths defile us much more than anything we could eat.

Something Paul wrote to Timothy also is sometimes used to “prove” that we can eat anything we choose. However, Paul was saying something different.

For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with Thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

1 Timothy 4:4,5

The word sanctify means “to set apart.” Therefore, Paul was

saying that everything we eat should be set apart by the Word of God and prayer. In praying over our food, which does have many pollutants and additives in it today, we should have faith that “nothing shall by any means hurt us” (Mark 16:18). This sanctifies it by prayer. To sanctify it by the Word of God, we must go to the Word and see what God said about the food we eat. If He said it is sanctified (clean), we can eat it; if He said it cannot be eaten, it is unsanctified or unclean.

There is one kind of circumstance when a higher law of God can override the dietary principles. That is when a believer is served at someone else's house or on the mission field with something that ordinarily he would not eat. When we eat with those who do not understand the dietary laws, we must eat what is set before us (Luke 10:8). We should then eat according to the greatest and highest law of all: love.

When we have a choice of what we can or cannot eat, we should eat those things that are good for us according to God's Word. When we do not have a choice, we simply bless the food and do not make an issue of it. Dietary principles are to prolong earthly life and are not spiritual sins, if disobeyed, unless one deliberately keeps choosing to eat things over and over that are not good for them. For example, those overweight people who continue to eat an abundance of sweets will soon pay the consequences.

I believe one reason many people do not receive healings is because they will not change their diets. If God healed them, it would not be long before they were back in the same condition.

Everyone should seek God personally as to what is good for their bodies' particular needs. Eat those things which are natural, things that are still fairly much the way God created them, such as: whole grains, corn, dairy products, honey, fruits, olives, and vegetables of all kinds. Any of these things are good, and if they can be obtained organically grown, they are much better. Anything that can be eaten raw (after being washed very carefully) is better than cooked food. A believer desiring to take care of the body should exercise in moderation, eat a minimum of salt or sugar, and stay away from caffeine. White sugar is not a food, but an unnatural chemical.

Also, the Bible says we are not to eat anything that will cause our brother to stumble (**Rom. 14:20,21,23**). For example, if we are eating in another's home with people who do not believe in eating any meat, then we should not request or eat meat at that time for their sakes, no matter what we believe (**1 Cor. 9:19-22**). However, we should never be guilty of partaking of anything that is an abomination to the Lord.

Alcohol and tobacco are two poisonous substances that should not be used, as they create toxins that are not healthy for the body. All addictive substances, including caffeine and nicotine, are substitutes for God's Holy Spirit, who is able through the "new wine" to bring us comfort and joy (**Proverbs 23:29-35; Ephesians 5:18,19**).

Lesson for Section Three

[Author's Note: All Scripture references that answer these questions have been given. Please do not look at the answer pages until the questions have been answered.]

I. The Main Hindrance to an Overcoming Life

A. What is the main hindrance to an overcoming life?

Reference: 1 Timothy 6:10-12

1. The overcomer is promised _____, but his desire is not riches but becoming like _____.

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 John:2

Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.

Proverbs 30:8,9

As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

Psalms 17:15

a. Paul wrote Timothy to tell the rich not to be

_____.

Reference: 1 Timothy 6:17

b. What is the root of all evil, according to Paul?

Reference: 1 Timothy 6:10

2. The overcomer has learned to be _____
whether he is _____ or _____.

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

Philippians 4:11-13

B. The overcomer keeps God's principles of finance and success.

1. The first principle is _____.

a. Who is recorded in the Bible as giving the first tithe?

_____.

Reference: Genesis 14:17-24

b. God told Israel that a tenth of everything was sacred to Him, even to a tenth of the _____ that the Levites received.

And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in

Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.... Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithe.

Numbers 18:21,26

- c. The Old Testament says that ten percent belonged to God; the New Testament says that _____ percent is His.

Reference: Mark 12:30

2. Another principle is _____ to the poor.

He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.

Proverbs 28:27

- a. Our pattern for giving is _____, who gave to the poor and did good deeds.

Reference: John 13:29; Acts 10:38; Mark 10:21.

- b. The overcomer continually _____ of his abundance to others as Jesus did and commanded us to do.

- c. What New Testament writer wrote several times of giving to the poor? _____

Reference: 2 Corinthians 9:6-12

3. The overcomer is willing to _____ to follow Jesus.

References: Luke 18:18-25; Hebrews 11:8-10; Mark 10:28-31

a. By leaving all, we _____ all.

b. The hundred-fold return is not limited to money, but in _____ given to us as the result of our following God.

c. Part of our treasure in Heaven will be the _____ who are there because of our witnesses.

Reference: Matthew 6:19-21; Proverbs 11:30,31

C. God's financial principles include:

1. _____ bills on time

Reference: Romans 13:8; Proverbs 3:27,28

a. Letting go of any _____ in regard to past bad financial dealings and forgiving those involved; also, repenting for our deeds, if necessary.

Reference: Matthew 6:14,15

b. Not being in _____ to those whom you owe

The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

Proverbs 22:7

2. Overcoming _____

The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.

Proverbs 12:24

For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

2 Thessalonians 3:10-12

3. Overcoming _____ desires for the things of the world

References: Proverbs 21:17, 28:22; Luke 8:14

4. _____, the extreme of being thrifty and saving and comes from fear or greed

5. Refusing _____-_____ schemes, of which _____ is one

A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent ...He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

Proverbs 28:20-22

6. Overcoming _____ in money matters

Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.

Proverbs 20:17

7. Overcoming _____

He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.

Proverbs 15:27

8. Overcoming _____

He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not. The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?"

Proverbs 21:26,27

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

Exodus 20:17

But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one no not to eat.

1 Corinthians 5:11

9. Refraining from giving to others while leaving the needs of one's own _____ unmet

Reference: 1 Timothy 5:8; Matthew 15:5,6

10. Being overcommitted to _____ and failing to rest enough

Reference: Matthew 6:33; Exodus 20:9,10

II. A Second Hindrance to the Overcoming Life

A. Too much emphasis on the needs and desires of the _____ man is a major hindrance to the overcoming life.

For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

1 Timothy 4:8

1. The _____ man always should have priority over the physical man, although the body should not be neglected.

a. The body is the _____.

Reference: 1 Corinthians 6:19

b. Paul wrote that he _____ his body under discipline.

Reference: 1 Corinthians 9:27

2. Excess in matters of _____ and drink, work, and play makes an unbalanced life.

All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any (thing). Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. ...Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?

1 Corinthians 6:12,13a,15

a. Overeating is the sin of _____.

Reference: Luke 21:34

And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat. ...For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.

Proverbs 23:2,3,21

b. The end of one whose god is his _____ is destruction, Paul wrote.

Reference: Philippians 3:17-19

c. True _____ comes from the Word of God, not food.

Reference: Luke 4:4

My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

Proverbs 4:20-22

B. God said that some meats are _____, and some are _____.

Reference: **Leviticus 11:1-3,44-47; Deuteronomy 14:3-21**

1. The _____ laws in the Bible were not done away with at Calvary. The three types of Old Testament laws are:

a. _____ laws, which are summed up in the Ten Commandments

Reference: **Exodus 20:1-17**

b. _____ laws listed in Leviticus and Deuteronomy, which include the dietary laws

c. _____ laws or rules listed in Exodus 25-40 and in Leviticus, which involved tabernacle and temple services, priests' duties, and sacrifices

1) These laws are not kept today because they were physical pictures of _____ things that were fulfilled in Jesus. These spiritual ceremonies were types and shadows of the purpose and work of Christ bringing redemption to mankind.

Reference: **Hebrews 9,10**

2) Jesus said He came to _____ the Law, not do away with it.

Reference: **Matthew 5:17**

d. Old Testament laws were not _____, but were amplified in the New Testament to be kept in the _____. More is required of born again children

of God than of those who offered up animal sacrifices in the Old Testament.

Reference: **Hebrews 10:16**

2. Eating wrongly does not defile us _____ as in the Old Testament; however, it defiles our bodies.

a. As the first overcomer, _____ kept all the Law, moral, physical, and ceremonial.

Reference: **Matthew 3:15**

b. List some of the creatures God called unclean:

Reference: **Leviticus 11**

3. One portion of the New Testament some people try to use to “prove” it is okay to eat pork and other unclean animals today involves a vision that was given to _____.

Reference: **Acts 10:9-18**

a. In the vision, God was interpreting it to say that the _____, were no longer to be treated as “unclean” and outcasts.

b. How do we know the true interpretation of Peter's vision involved people and not animals?

_____.

And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

Acts 10:28

c. Another place in the Bible used by those who do not want to observe the dietary laws is when the Pharisees challenged Jesus' disciples for not _____ their hands before eating. Jesus was talking about spiritual defilement here, not giving instructions about being able to eat anything we want to eat.

And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man: but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. ...Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable. And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught: But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

Matthew 15:10,11,15-18

d. A third verse used by those who teach that we can _____ all kinds of meats today is:

For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

1 Timothy 4:4,5

To sanctify food, we must not only pray or say “grace” over it before we eat it, but we should check the Bible, the Word of God, to see what God sanctifies or calls clean in food for us to eat (See Leviticus 11). It is then edible.

4. Dietary laws were not given for us to obtain _____
_____.

a. Dietary laws were given by God to _____
_____ our lives in this earth to do His will
(Deuteronomy 5:33).

b. We should not be guilty of partaking in anything that is an
_____ to God (Lev. 11:43; Deut. 14:3).

They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord.

Isaiah 66:17

5. However, when we eat with those ignorant of God's laws, should we eat whatever they serve us, or stick to our dietary convictions? _____

Reference: Luke 10:8

a. Nor are we to let our dietary beliefs cause anyone else to
_____.

Reference: Romans 14:20,21,23

b. Whatever we eat or drink should bring _____
to God.

References: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 10:31; 9:24-27

Overcoming Life Memory Verses

The suggested memory verses for this lesson are:

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

Luke 6:38

Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

Review Outline, Section Three

[Author's Note: This outline is based on the book The Pathway Into the Overcomer's Walk, although the information may overlap the material in the expository introduction and the lesson for Section Three of this workbook.]

I. Overcomers and Finances

A. The lifestyles of overcomers will reflect a balance of “neither poverty nor riches” (Proverbs 30:8,9).

1. Overcomers will not “claim” material wealth for the sake of living in luxury or having many possessions, for they know that “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21).

2. Nor will overcomers be living in poverty and lack (Ps. 37:25).

B. Overcomers will have learned to be content with whatever they have as the Apostle Paul was (Philippians 4:11-13).

1. Christians who are poor should count themselves rich in the things that really matter in life (Revelation 2:9).

2. Christians who are rich should count themselves rich only in spiritual things (Jeremiah 9:23,24).

C. Overcomers give to the poor and to the work of the ministry out of their abundance (2 Corinthians 8:14,15).

1. Jesus apparently had plenty because He needed a treasurer (Judas) to carry the moneybag (John 12:6), and He gave to the poor and “went about doing good” (Acts 10:38).

2. The Apostle Paul also stressed giving to the poor and took up collections in one place for the needy to help the needy in another place (2 Corinthians 8:14,15, 9:8-15).

D. Extremes overcomers learn to avoid are:

1. "Religious" thinking that Christianity is rigid and always serious, or that fun and anything pleasurable is evil.
2. Presumptuous beliefs that God owes Christians anything and everything they want.
 - a. When Paul said that everything was "lawful" for him, he meant everything that is in God's will and according to His Word (1 Corinthians 10:23).
 - b. However, because of causing unbelievers or even other Christians to stumble at our freedom, it is not always "expedient" or wise to avail ourselves of all of those things, Paul said were lawful.

E. Overcomers will obey the financial and success principles found in the Bible. These include:

1. Giving tithes and offerings, seeking God prayerfully as to where they should be given (Malachi 3:8-12)
2. Giving to the poor, thus laying up treasure in Heaven and receiving blessings in the earth (Psalm 41:1-3; Matthew 6:19-21)
3. Paying our bills on time and not making any more debts than absolutely necessary (Romans 13:8)
(Debt is not sinful, if the agreed payment terms are met properly. However, the overcomer's goal is to be debt-free.)
4. Supporting one's family (1 Timothy 5:8) by not being slothful nor a "workaholic" (Proverbs 12:24)

5. Not lusting after things of this world (Proverbs 28:22)

II. Overcomers and Health

A. The pathway to overcoming in the area of healing means:

1. Knowing that divine healing is available to us today under the New Covenant and we can attain it by faith

(Isa 53:5; 1 Peter 2:24)

2. Knowing when to believe God for healing and when to believe for healing through the medical system

a. Faith can move mountains (Matthew 17:20,21:21,22), but faith for healing can be hindered in many ways.

1) Generational curses (chains of iniquities) may need to be broken for infirmities (curses) to be healed (Proverbs 26:2).

2) Roots of bitterness (Hebrews 12:15) may need to be repented of and pulled out. Unforgiveness hinders many promises being fulfilled (Matthew 5:23,24), even when faith may be steadfast.

3) Words can hinder healing (James 3:1-11).

b. Healing may be as simple as changing one's diet or one's lifestyle and behavior.

c. If divine healing does not manifest in a reasonable period of time, seek God about medicine or surgery. It is better to live in order to work for God than to die trying to "prove" faith.

B. The pathway to overcoming in the area of walking in divine health means keeping God's dietary laws and walking in faith.

1. A balanced life includes a good diet, enough exercise and work, and enough fun and rest. There is a right time for everything (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8).
2. Many sicknesses that plague mankind stem from unhealthy eating habits.
 - a. God's dietary rules and regulations are not spiritual laws for us today and have nothing to do with obtaining eternal life with Him.
 - b. These laws, however, are still in operation in the physical realm, because certain natural facts have not changed.
 - 1) Men's bodies work the same as they did in Old Testament times.
 - 2) The physiology of animals also has not changed; in other words, scavengers created to clean up the earth by eating garbage in Adam's day have not changed in their functions in our day.
3. God said some animals are "clean" and edible for mankind but others are "unclean" (Lev. 11; Deut. 14:3-21). Their flesh is polluted by what they eat and causes sicknesses and diseases in men.
 - a. We should not eat anything that is an abomination to God, such as swine and mice (Isa. 66:17) if we can help it.
 - b. On the other hand, we should not be, or place others in, spiritual bondage to physical laws.
 - 1) If we are visitors somewhere, particularly in foreign cultures, we should eat what is set before us and trust

God to “sanctify” the unclean and protect us from health hazards in order not to offend others and perhaps hinder the Gospel (Matthew 17:27, 18:6).

- 2) Likewise, if people we are visiting or who are visiting us, have a belief against eating something we believe is okay, we should abstain in order to “avoid the appearance of evil” and hinder the Gospel in their eyes (1 Corinthians 8:13).
4. Scripture used to uphold the teaching that God changed His mind about what was clean and unclean includes:
 - a. Jesus’ comments to the Pharisees about ceremonial washing when He said that what comes out of the heart pollutes a person, not what goes into the mouth (Matt. 15:10-20).
 - b. Peter’s vision of the clean and unclean animals in Acts 10:9-18.
 - c. Paul’s word to Timothy that every creature is good and not to be refused if received with Thanksgiving which means it is sanctified by the Word and prayer (1 Tim. 4:4,5).
5. These examples of spiritual principles are wrongly interpreted when applied to natural things.
 - a. Jesus was talking about religious traditions, not about cleanliness in Matthew 15.
 - b. God showed Peter the interpretation to his vision, and it was not to consider Gentiles “unclean” any longer (Acts 10:28,34,35).

- c. This refers to situations such as considered in 3b above where one must choose between strict dietary laws and offending “one of the little ones” (Matt. 18:6). Also, Paul meant every creature is good that God has previously called good in His Word.
- C. We should eat as many “live” foods and fresh fruits and vegetables as possible opposed to “dead” foods (processed, over-cooked, or highly refined). Two extremes that should be avoided are:
1. Letting the gathering or preparing of food take up an exorbitant amount of time is unbalanced.
 2. Grabbing fast food or snacks most of the time is the other extreme.
- D. Whatever we eat or drink should be done to the glory of God, not out of gluttony or lust (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Review Outline Quiz, Section Three

1. Name the key characteristic about the lifestyles of overcomers.

2. How should Christians handle being poor? (One can be “poor” and not be poverty-stricken or in lack.)

3. How should overcomers handle having an abundance?

4. What are the two extremes to avoid in finances?

5. Name the first principle of God's laws on finance and success.

6. Should a Christian ever go to a doctor?

7. What is the pathway to living in divine health?

8. What is the difference between foods that are alive and those classed as dead?

9. Are all animals considered “clean” by God today and fit for His children to eat?

10. What should be our motive in eating and drinking?

What You Need to Know About Christ Unlimited Ministries

Purpose and Vision

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew 28:19, 20

CHRIST UNLIMITED is not “another denomination,” sect, or just a separate group. It is an arm of the Body of Christ — the Church of Jesus Christ, which has been called to strengthen the Body at large. We also believe we have been called to help establish the Kingdom of God in the earth.

CHRIST UNLIMITED is open to help and work with all Bible-believing Christians regardless of their church or denominational affiliations and committed to helping wherever possible in evangelistic and teaching outreaches.

CHRIST UNLIMITED believes that time is running out and the Gospel has not been preached to every creature. Many nations have not heard the Gospel, and in many places, doors for evangelism are closing. We believe it is time all Christians cooperated with the Lord in breaking down denominational walls for a united front line against the kingdom of darkness and in setting up the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

CHRIST UNLIMITED provides such tools as to enable the saints of God to establish the Kingdom of God in the earth. We encourage groups of prayer warriors who will pray, fast, and intercede for the nations. This, we believe, is weapon number one. We teach believers how to overcome through spiritual warfare and through knowing how to use their authority in Christ Jesus through the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Christians need to know how to bring down the forces of darkness in their own lives and in the lives of those to whom they minister. We provide such tools as Bibles, literature, **CHRIST UNLIMITED** books, and downloadable audio and video. We promote the Gospel going forth via any means of communication, including radio and video, the INTERNET, and literature. We promote teaching seminars, Bible schools, and correspondence courses, all aimed at winning souls to Christ and building the Body of Christ into maturity.

Bud and Betty Miller serve the Lord together as founders of the multi-vision ministry outreach, **CHRIST UNLIMITED**. The outreaches of this ministry have stemmed from a tremendous desire to see the Word of God taught in its balanced entirety. The Millers are firm believers in prayer and, through prayer, have seen many released from the bondages of fear, failure, and defeat.

The Millers have a world-wide vision for spreading the full-gospel message and teaching God's Word. Bud not only preaches and pastors a church, but is director of **CHRIST UNLIMITED PUBLISHING**, an outreach dedicated to publishing God's Word in many languages. His experience, openness to the Holy Spirit, and down-to-earth expression of God's love have blessed many. God has endowed Betty with a rare gift of teaching that makes her a practical and effective "handmaiden of the Lord." Both Bud and Betty have hearts turned toward evangelism and missions, desiring to tell everyone of God's wonderful love. Their anointed teaching comes across with simplicity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The outreaches of **CHRIST UNLIMITED** are in obedience to the words of our Lord in Mark 16:15: Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. This mandate from the Lord presents a challenge to our generation as an estimated 25 percent of the world's population still have not heard the Good News of Jesus Christ.¹

CHRIST UNLIMITED MINISTRIES also is dedicated to teaching God's Word. Hosea 4:6 says: My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Many Christians are leading defeated lives simply because they do not know God's Word in its fullest.

CHRIST UNLIMITED MINISTRIES has provided literature for those who desire to know God's Word in a greater way. The main thrust of the teaching and literature is directed at "How to be an overcomer." In the endtimes, we must be prepared to overcome the onslaughts of Satan. Many Christians are suffering needlessly, because they do not know how to overcome sickness, depression, divorce, fear, and financial failure. Christ Unlimited Ministries provides answers for troubled families as well as trains workers for service.

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

John 7:16,17

Inspiration of Scriptures: We believe that the Holy Bible is the written Word of the Living God. We believe it was inspired by the Holy Spirit and recorded by holy men of old. It is infallible in content and a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction which is truth without any mixture of error. The Bible reveals the principles by which God will judge us and reveals His great plan of salvation. It will remain eternally. We believe the Bible is the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried. Therefore, we believe this Word should go into all the world and should be given first place in every believer's life (2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 4:12; 1 Pet. 1:23-25; and 2 Pet. 1:19-21).

God: We believe in one God revealed in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost...making up the blessed Trinity (Matt. 3:16,17; 1 John 5:6,7).

Man: We believe that man, in his natural state, is a sinner —lost, undone, without hope, and without God (Rom. 3:19-23; Gal. 3:22; Eph. 2:1,2,12).

Salvation: We believe the terms of salvation are repentance toward God for sin and a personal, heartfelt faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This will result in a new birth. Salvation is possible only through God's grace, not by our works. Works are simply the fruit of salvation (Acts 3:19,20; Rom. 4:1-5, 5:1; Eph. 2:8-10).

Body of Christ: We believe the Body of Christ is made up of all who have been born again regardless of denominational differences. We believe in the spirit of unity, while allowing for variety in individual ministries as to their work, calling, and location as directed by the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:34,35; 1 Cor. 12:12-31).

Blood Atonement: We believe in the saving power of the blood of Jesus and His imputed righteousness (Acts 4:12; Rom. 4:1-9, 5:1-11; Eph. 1:3-14).

Bodily Resurrection: We believe in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ (Luke 24:39-43; John 20:24-29).

Ascension: We believe that Christ Jesus ascended to the Father and is presently engaged in building a place for us in Heaven and interceding for the saints (John 14:2,3; Rom. 8:34).

Second Coming: We believe in the visible, bodily return of Christ Jesus to this earth, to meet His Church (Bride) and to judge the world (Acts 1:10,11; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; James 5:8; Rev. 1:7).

Ordinances: We believe that the two ordinances of the Body of Christ are water baptism and the Lord's Supper (Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:24-26).

Heaven and Hell: We believe Scripture clearly sets forth the doctrines of eternal punishment for the lost and eternal bliss and service for the saved — a literal hell for the unsaved and heaven for the saved (Matt. 25:34,41,46; Luke 16:19-31; John 14:1-3; Rev. 20:11-15).

Holy Spirit: We believe the Holy Spirit to be the third person of the Trinity whose purpose in the redemption of man is to convict of sin, regenerate the repentant believer, guide the believer into all truth, indwell all believers, and give gifts to those He wills that they may minister as Christ would to men. We believe that the manifestations of the Holy Spirit recorded in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 will operate through present-day Christians who yield to Jesus (Luke 11:13; John 7:37-39, 14:16,17, 16:7-14; Acts 2:1-18).

We believe the baptism in the Holy Spirit, with the evidence of speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, is for all believers as promised by John the Baptist (Matt. 3:11), Jesus (Acts 1:4-8), and Peter (Acts 2:38-41). The fulfillment of this promise was witnessed by early disciples of Christ (Acts 2:4, 10:44-47, 19:1-6) and operates in many present-day disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Divine Healing: We believe God has used doctors, medicines, and other natural means of healing; however, we believe divine healing is provided for believers in the atonement made by Jesus' blood shed on the cross (Isa. 53:5; 1 Pet. 2:24). We believe divine healing may be appropriated by the laying on of hands by the elders (James 5:14-16), by the prayer of an anointed person gifted by the Holy Spirit for healing the sick (1 Cor. 12:9), or by a direct act of receiving this provision by faith (Mark 11:23,24)

MINISTRY FINANCING

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 6:33

We want to share with readers the instructions the Lord gave us in regard to financing this ministry. As this is the Holy Spirit's work, we are to let Him speak to the hearts of people as to what and how much He wants them to give. Quite simply, we are to share the vision He has given us and trust Him to provide for all that we need. We believe the Lord pays for the things He orders, and if He does not order something, we do not want to engage in it. Pray with us that we will stay close to the Lord, and that, in seeking His righteousness, we will be able to hear His instructions clearly as to what He desires us to do. If we do that, we know we shall never lack of the things needed to do His work.

CHRIST UNLIMITED MINISTRIES, INC. is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, non-profit church established locally in the Dewey Arizona, area.

¹Barrett, David B. Cosmos, Chaos, and Gospel (Birmingham: New Hope Publishers, 1987), p. 75.

FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

This book is taken from a course of Bible studies called the Overcoming Life Series. The entire series is a virtual "spiritual tool chest," as it covers a multitude of subjects every Christian faces in his walk with God. It also answers questions that many believers have concerning the current move of God. These are dealt with in a balanced approach and in the light of the Scripture. God's people are not to live frustrated, defeated lives, but rather they are to be victorious overcomers! Other books available with their companion workbooks are:

PROVE ALL THINGS – Christ warned that great deception would be one of the signs of the end times. In this book, instruction is given on how to recognize false prophets and teachings. Clear Scriptural guidelines are given on discerning the Spirit of truth versus the spirit of error. The book deals with how to judge without being judgmental.

THE TRUE GOD – This is a teaching on the character of God, explaining why God does certain things, and why it is against His nature to do other things. It differentiates between the things for which God is responsible and the things for which the devil is responsible. Our responsibility as Christians destined to overcome is made clear so that we can live victorious lives.

THE WILL OF GOD – This lesson teaches us not only how to know the will of God in our personal lives, family, ministry and finances, but also brings understanding as to why God allows sin, sickness and suffering in the world. As overcomers, Christians are not to suffer under many of the things we have accepted as normal.

KEYS TO THE KINGDOM – Instruction on how to gain authority in God's Kingdom through prayer is the topic of this book. Many principles and methods of prayer are covered, such as praying in the Spirit, fasting and prayer, travailing prayer, praise, intercession and spiritual warfare.

EXPOSING SATAN'S DEVICES – This book is a powerful expose' of Satan's tricks, tactics and lies. Cult and Occultic methods and groups are listed so Christians can detect their activity. Demon activity is discussed and deliverance and casting out demons is dealt with in detail. Satan's kingdom is uncovered and the Christian is taught to overcome through spiritual discernment and warfare.

HEALING OF THE SPIRIT, SOUL AND BODY – This book teaches how to overcome emotional problems, as well as physical ones, and how to receive divine healing. It also teaches how to renew the carnal mind and walk in the spirit of life, thereby overcoming depression, loneliness and fear.

NEITHER MALE NOR FEMALE – What is the woman's role in the church and home? Who is a woman's spiritual head and covering? Does God call women to the five-fold ministry? What does God's Word say about divorce, celibacy and choosing a marriage partner? These and other woman related topics are Scripturally examined.

EXTREMES OR BALANCE? – Many Christians have hurt the cause of Christ through "out-of-balance" teachings and demonstrations. This book shows how to avoid those areas. It also deals wisely with the excesses and extremes in the body of Christ.

THE PATHWAY INTO THE OVERCOMER'S WALK – This book contains answers to the questions an overcomer faces as he presses toward the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. How can we be conformed to the image of Christ? How does the Holy Spirit work with the overcomers in the end times? What are the overcomer's rewards?

Please visit our website for information on how to order the entire "Overcoming Life Series." Our site is also an excellent source for additional Bible resources.

www.BibleResources.org

Pathway Into the Overcomer's Walk Workbook
Answers to Lessons and Quizzes

Answers to Lesson, Section One

I. Principles of the Overcoming Life

A. Working out

1. Judgment
2. World
3. Evil
4. Wicked one
5. Anti-Christ
6. Blood, testimony, death

B. Requirements

1. Suffer
2. Determined
3. Desire, determination
4. Determination, or patience, or confidence
5. Forsake or leave
6. Love
7. Minister

C. Salvation

1. Any of these: deliverance, help, prosperity, safety, welfare, aid, preservation
2. Overcoming
3. Works
 - a. Initial; completed
 - b. Penalty
 - c. Power
 - d. Presence, presence

II. Man's Responsibility and God's Responsibility

A. Receive

1. Faith
2. Obey

B. Flaws, errors

- C
1. Lightly
 2. Insecurity

III. The Key to Our Completion of Salvation

A. Obedient

1. Destroyed; choose (or follow)
2. Faith

B. Fall away

1. Living
2. Unbelief

C. Salvation

IV. Two Sins That Result in the Loss of Salvation

A. Rejection

B. Blasphemy, Holy Spirit

1. Unto death
2. Unpardonable
3. Experience
4. a. Are enlightened
b. Baptized in the Spirit
c. Know well the Word of God
d. Have experienced the power of the Holy Spirit
5. Remorse, or repentance
6. Satan, or the devil, or the enemy

V. The Believer's Security

A. Trust, believe, confess, and faith

1. Snatch, pluck
2. Faultless, or blameless

B. Formed, nature

C. Born, born again

1. Paul
2. "Ifs" or instructions
3. Blotted
4. Reign

Answers to Review Outline Quiz, Section One

1. Jesus
2. Salvation
3. Bondage
4. Gift; works
5. Freedom, or liberty
6. Forgiveness
7. Dangerous
8. Blasphemy
- 9a. Taking their own responsibilities too lightly
- b. Walking in constant fear of losing salvation
10. Abiding in Jesus and having God's Word abide in us

Answers to Lesson, Section Two

I. The Goal of the Overcoming Life

- A. Jesus, or Christ
 - 1. Fullness
 - 2. Perfect
- B. Any of these: mature, complete, fulfilled, fully grown, finished
 - 1. Example
 - 2. Perfected
- C. False

II. A New Testament Overcomer

- A. Paul
 - 1. Sinning
 - 2. Holy and without blame or blameless
- B. Press
 - 1. No
 - 2. Choices
- C. Forsake, resist, overcome
 - 1. Tongue
 - 2. Word, or God's Son, the Living Word; will
 - 3. Works
 - 4. Rooted; grounded

III. The Rewards of Overcomers

- A. Rank, Place, Position, Reward
 - 1. Servants
 - 2. Joint heirs
- B. Rewards
 - 1. Tree; life
 - 2. Second death
 - 3a. Hidden
 - 3b. White
 - 3c. New names
 - 4. Nations
 - 5. White robes
 - 6. Pillars, name
 - 7. On His throne
- C. All, or everything, all or everything

IV. Overcomers in the Millennium

- A. When, ready
 - 1. "Rapture"
 - 2. Return or second coming

3. Three
 - a. Pre-tribulation rapture
 - b. Mid-tribulation rapture
 - c. Post-tribulation rapture
- B. Lamb of God; Lion of Judah
 1. Since He returned to Heaven from Galilee
 2. Scoff
- C. Revelation 20
 1. Period of restoration or rest
 - a. Bound
 - b. Removed
 - c. Produce
 2. War
 - a. Animals
 - b. Blossom, rose
 - c. All flesh, glory
- D. Rule, reign
 1. Released or loosed
 2. Inherit; lake of fire
 3. Heaven; earth

Answers to Review Outline Quiz, Section Two

1. To be conformed to the image of Christ
2. Keep all of the "ifs" or conditions that go with the promises
3. Simply to receive Jesus as Savior in faith
4. No
5. Revelation 2 and 3
6. Any of the following is correct:
 - *To eat of the tree of life
 - *To not be hurt of the second death
 - *To eat of the hidden manna
 - *To receive a new name in a white stone
 - *To rule and reign with Him with power over the nations
 - *To wear a white robe and have one's name not blotted out of the Book of Life
 - *To become a pillar in the Temple of God with God's name on them
 - *To sit with Jesus on His throne
7. To be cast into the lake of fire
8. The "catching away" of Christians at the second coming of Christ
9. Self
10. Overcomers rule and reign on earth with Jesus

Answers to Lesson, Section Three

I. The Main Hindrance to an Overcoming Life

- A. Money, or wealth, or riches
 - 1. Prosperity; Jesus
 - a. High-minded
 - b. The love of money
 - 2. Content; abased; abounds
- B. 1. Tithing
 - a. Abraham
 - b. Tithe
 - c. 100
- 2. Giving
 - a. Jesus
 - b. Gives
 - c. Paul
- 3. Leave all
 - a. Gain
 - b. Souls, blessings
 - c. People
- C. 1. Paying
 - a. Resentment, unforgiveness
 - b. Bondage
- 2. Slothfulness, or laziness
- 3. Lustful, evil
- 4. Hoarding
- 5. Get-rich-quick; gambling
- 6. Deceitfulness
- 7. Greed
- 8. Covetousness
- 9. Family
- 10. Work

II. A Second Hindrance to the Overcoming Life

- A. Physical
 - 1. Spiritual
 - a. Temple of God
 - b. Kept
 - 2. Meats, or food
 - a. Gluttony
 - b. Belly
 - c. Life or health
- B. Clean; unclean
 - 1. Dietary

- a. Moral
- b. Physical
- c. Ceremonial
 - 1) Spiritual
 - 2) Fulfill
- d. Abolished, or done away with; heart
- 2. Spiritually
 - a. Jesus
 - b. Swine, rabbits, camels, eagles, ravens, vultures, sea creatures that do not have fins and scales
- 3. Peter
 - a. Gentiles
 - b. Because God showed Peter so in Acts 10:28
 - c. Washing
 - d. Eat
- 4. Eternal life, or salvation
 - a. Prolong, or lengthen
 - b. Abomination
- 5. Eat whatever is put before us
 - a. Sin, stumble, or be offended
 - b. Glory

Answers to Review Outline Quiz, Section Three

1. Living a balanced life, or one in moderation
2. Learn to be content with what they have, realizing the true riches in Christ
3. Give to God and to others
4. Thinking Christians can have no pleasure in life; thinking Christians can do and have anything they want
5. To tithe
6. Yes, when they have a witness from the Holy Spirit, and when they know that for some reason the healing is not manifesting
7. Maintaining a proper diet and faith in God
8. "Live" foods are raw, or fresh, or in their natural state; "dead" foods are highly refined, overcooked, or processed
9. No
10. To live so the glory of God can be manifested in us.