



## Overcome

Life presents \_\_\_\_\_ challenges to our Christian lives. Can we overcome them? Today, we're exploring the challenge and the rewards to overcoming life's \_\_\_\_\_. We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The word of God opens a \_\_\_\_\_ so that we can see ourselves as we truly are. It warns us of dangers, gives us promises, rebukes our weaknesses, and strengthens our \_\_\_\_\_. The inspired word of God is profitable for \_\_\_\_\_, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. It gives us everything we need to know spiritually how to live \_\_\_\_\_ lives and how to have eternal life.

In the book of Revelation, the Lord Jesus addresses the \_\_\_\_\_ churches of Asia. Some of these congregations were holding \_\_\_\_\_ and doing well, while others were in spiritual danger. Some of these congregations had in the same assembly people who held fast to the Lord worshiping with others who were deep in \_\_\_\_\_. Some were facing \_\_\_\_\_ persecution, while others were challenged by evil or indifference. This sounds similar to churches in our \_\_\_\_\_ day. Some are healthy, some are dead, some are holding to the truth, and some are in great error.

The Lord speaks to these seven churches with \_\_\_\_\_. He is indeed Lord, and every \_\_\_\_\_ is accountable to Him. When churches fail to \_\_\_\_\_ Him, He calls them to wake up and remember, remember what the Lord did for them on the cross and how He saved them. Some churches simply need to \_\_\_\_\_ of their sin and lawless ways. Some need to start loving the Lord again, because they have \_\_\_\_\_ to love or need Him. Whatever challenge they face, they could either fall away, losing their place as a church; or they could overcome the challenge and be the kind of congregation that God \_\_\_\_\_. The Lord knocked at the door of the people in Laodicea, and He will knock at our door. Will we let Him in or turn Him away? My friend, let Him in!

### **Our reading today comes from the book of Revelation 2:1-6.**

Let's pray. "O, Father help us to love You, to serve You, and to stay close to You, and to live with You always in love and in service. In Jesus' name, Amen."

The book of Revelation makes \_\_\_\_\_ seven times to those who overcome in chapters 2 and 3. These seven churches \_\_\_\_\_ in their attitudes, their devotion, and their behavior. Churches are made up of \_\_\_\_\_. Each person addressed was assembled with one of these seven congregations. Each church member faces a challenge to remain \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord. Congregations today \_\_\_\_\_ in many ways, and some today are very much like some of these seven churches. We may face different challenges, but the challenge to \_\_\_\_\_ and to be what God would have us to be remains with us all. Some have doctrinal challenges, some face social challenges, some have moral challenges, some have lost their first love, and some simply have stopped caring. You aren't the first one to \_\_\_\_\_ these challenges, and you can overcome just as many of them did.

The Lord Jesus told the church at Ephesus, "I know your \_\_\_\_\_ and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they're not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have \_\_\_\_\_ for My name's sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have \_\_\_\_\_ your first

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**Longer quotations may not appear in the Study Sheet, but can be read in the accompanying transcript.**

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love.” Though they were doctrinally strong and persevered in their faith, they had lost the strong love they had in earlier days. Many Christians today face this same challenge to \_\_\_\_\_ their love for God strong and alive. They may have taken their \_\_\_\_\_ off of the love found in Christ’s sacrifice on the cross.

They needed to remember and to \_\_\_\_\_. The Lord said in Revelation 2:5, “Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the \_\_\_\_\_ you did at first; or else I’m coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent.” Yes, a loss of love means this whole church can \_\_\_\_\_ its place with God. Jesus gave them hope and an opportunity to \_\_\_\_\_. The Lord said in verse seven, “To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.”

The Lord prepared the church at Smyrna for the \_\_\_\_\_ that would come upon them. The city of Smyrna was loyal to Rome and its emperor. The church was \_\_\_\_\_ in its possessions but \_\_\_\_\_ with God. They faced slander and imprisonment from their enemies, from both the Jews and the Romans. The Lord said, “Do not \_\_\_\_\_ what you’re about to suffer. Behold the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be \_\_\_\_\_, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the \_\_\_\_\_ of life” (Revelation 2:9-10). He promises, “He who overcomes shall not be \_\_\_\_\_ by the second death.” The second death means that one will be \_\_\_\_\_ into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:14). The one who stays \_\_\_\_\_ need not fear the lake of fire. He will have a crown of life and \_\_\_\_\_ eternally with the Lord.

The Lord saw a mixed group at Pergamum, the place where Satan’s \_\_\_\_\_ is. Some held fast to their faith and didn’t \_\_\_\_\_ their faith in the Lord. He even mentions Antipas, who died bearing \_\_\_\_\_ to his faith. But the Lord Jesus had a few things against the church at Pergamum, because they allowed someone to \_\_\_\_\_ them they could eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. Some also held the \_\_\_\_\_ views of the Nicolaitans, who like Balaam may have felt they could compromise with the pagans in public and could be sexually free. Jesus told them to \_\_\_\_\_ or He would come against them with the sword of His mouth. The challenge to remain \_\_\_\_\_ from sin and from the teaching of the world is great even in our day. Jesus promised, “To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden \_\_\_\_\_, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it” (Revelation 2:17). God would give them the manna they needed. The white stone probably meant God regarded them as acquitted of sin.

The Lord Jesus knew the \_\_\_\_\_ of the church at Thyatira, just as He knows our works today. The Lord knew Thyatira’s works, their love, their faith, their \_\_\_\_\_, and their patient endurance. Unlike Ephesus, their \_\_\_\_\_ works exceeded their first. But the Lord had much against them, because they \_\_\_\_\_ Jezebel, who called herself a prophetess. She taught and seduced the servants of God to \_\_\_\_\_ sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. The Lord gave her time to repent, but she \_\_\_\_\_ to repent of her sexual immorality. To hear some speak today, there’s no such thing as sexual immorality; but the Lord demands that we live \_\_\_\_\_ lives.

The Lord said He would \_\_\_\_\_ those who commit adultery with great tribulation. Unless they repent, He will strike her children, so that all the churches will know that He is the One who searches the mind and heart and will give to each one what his works \_\_\_\_\_. Others at Thyatira did not hold to her teaching, what some call the deep things of Satan. He told them to hold \_\_\_\_\_ what you have until I come. He promised, “And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My \_\_\_\_\_ until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father; and will give him the morning star” (Revelation 2:26-28). Notice these promises are to the person who \_\_\_\_\_ faithful to the end.

The Lord Jesus knew about Sardis. Sardis had the reputation of being \_\_\_\_\_, but they were \_\_\_\_\_. They needed to \_\_\_\_\_ up and to strengthen what remains and is about to die. I fear many congregations today are much like Sardis. The Lord had not found their works \_\_\_\_\_ in the sight of God. He told them to \_\_\_\_\_ what you received and heard; keep it and repent. If they would not wake up, Jesus said He would come against them like a \_\_\_\_\_ in the night. In spite of this, a few people had not soiled their garments, and they will \_\_\_\_\_ with the Lord in white, for they are worthy. Jesus promised, “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will \_\_\_\_\_ his name before My Father, and before His angels” (Revelation 3:6).

The Lord also knew the \_\_\_\_\_ of the church at Philadelphia. He set before them an open \_\_\_\_\_, which no one could shut. They had little \_\_\_\_\_ but had kept His word and had not denied His name. He promised to make the synagogue of Satan \_\_\_\_\_ down before your feet. They will \_\_\_\_\_ that the Lord Jesus loved the church at Philadelphia. Because of their love and faith, the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ to keep them from the hour of trial. He urged them to hold fast to what you \_\_\_\_\_, so that no one may seize their crown. He promised, that “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the \_\_\_\_\_ of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name” (Revelation 3:12). Those who \_\_\_\_\_ to the Lord are loved and live with Him forever.

The Lord also knew about the \_\_\_\_\_ church at Laodicea. They weren't hot or cold but had become indifferent to God. They didn't \_\_\_\_\_; they could take up a cross or leave it. So offensive were they to the Lord that the Lord wanted to \_\_\_\_\_ them out of His mouth. They were saying, “I'm rich, I've prospered, and I need nothing.” You know, people today sometimes feel that they have \_\_\_\_\_ they need and really don't need God. The church then didn't \_\_\_\_\_ that they were in God's sight “wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.” People today are just as wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked; but they don't know it. He counseled the church at Laodicea to \_\_\_\_\_ gold refined by fire from Him, so they could really be rich in the things of God. To buy white garments from Him, so that they won't be ashamed of their \_\_\_\_\_ nakedness. Buy salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may \_\_\_\_\_ spiritually. While they had physical blessings, they lacked a warm, loving relationship with the \_\_\_\_\_. You may not be close to the Lord either. My friend, we all need the Lord; and nothing else, nothing else will do.

The Lord Jesus said, “Those whom I love, I \_\_\_\_\_ and discipline, so be zealous and repent. (Those at Laodicea) Behold, I stand at the door and \_\_\_\_\_. And if anybody \_\_\_\_\_ my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:19-20). Jesus loves and wants fellowship even with those who don't \_\_\_\_\_ Him. Friend, He wants fellowship with you. He promised, “He who overcomes, I will \_\_\_\_\_ to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (verse 21).

Friend, are you overcoming the challenges of your \_\_\_\_\_ or failing to overcome? Are you remembering and holding fast to the Lord's \_\_\_\_\_, or are you casting aside His words to do your own thing? Do you love Him deeply, or have you \_\_\_\_\_ your first love? Are you tolerating sinful things, or do you need to \_\_\_\_\_ of the sinful ways so prevalent that are in our world? Are you alive or are you dead spiritually?

Many people who were once faithful and practicing Christians have \_\_\_\_\_ indifferent to the Lord and to His church. They live according to their \_\_\_\_\_ rules and do as they please. They've forgotten the \_\_\_\_\_ and they have forgotten what the Lord did for them. The Lord is not blind or naive. He

knows and will reward or punish each person according to what he or she \_\_\_\_\_. You may tolerate evil beliefs or \_\_\_\_\_ ways, but the Lord won't tolerate them. He will give us \_\_\_\_\_ to repent of our lawless ways; but when people \_\_\_\_\_ to repent, there comes a time when His patience ends. Sin will harden your \_\_\_\_\_ and cause you to fall away in unbelief. In the end you will be lost.

The Lord loves those who love Him and \_\_\_\_\_ His commandments. He seeks to make a \_\_\_\_\_ in our lives. The Lord Jesus said, "If anyone loves me, he will \_\_\_\_\_ my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not \_\_\_\_\_ my words. And the word that you \_\_\_\_\_ is not mine but the Fathers who sent me" (John 14:23-24). The Lord wants to love you and for you to love Him. That's why He's knocking at your door, hoping you will \_\_\_\_\_ the door. He won't barge in; you \_\_\_\_\_ open it for Him. No matter what your heart or life has been in the past, you can repent and \_\_\_\_\_ opening the door of your mind and your heart and let the Lord come in.

Can you hear the Lord knocking at your door? Can you hear His words calling you? Will you open the door or leave it closed? Will you turn to Him?

To each of the seven churches of Asia, the Lord Jesus said, "The one who has an ear, let him \_\_\_\_\_ what the Spirit says to the churches." Listening to what the Spirit says in the word of God is still just as important \_\_\_\_\_ as it was in the first century. The Spirit didn't speak these words to the people of the world, but to people who were \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord's church. They knew about the grace and love of the cross; and they knew of the second coming and Judgment Day. They needed \_\_\_\_\_, however, that the Lord knew what was going on in their lives.

The words "wake up" appear twice in this chapter, "remember" appears twice, "faithful" appears three times, "hold fast" appears three times, and "repent" appears eight times. The Lord Jesus was trying to get the churches to wake up, to remember, to repent, to be faithful and to hold fast to Him. What the Lord Jesus said to these seven churches is just what we too \_\_\_\_\_ to hear as well. As a Christian, you may need to repent, confess your sins, and pray to God to forgive you. First John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

By "Christian," I mean one who has obeyed the gospel according to the teaching of the Scripture. To obey the gospel, believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, repent of evil and turn to the Lord, confess Jesus as the Christ, and be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Baptism into Christ is an immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ. When you're baptized, God washes away your sins and gives you newness of life (Roman 6:3-7, and Acts 22:16).