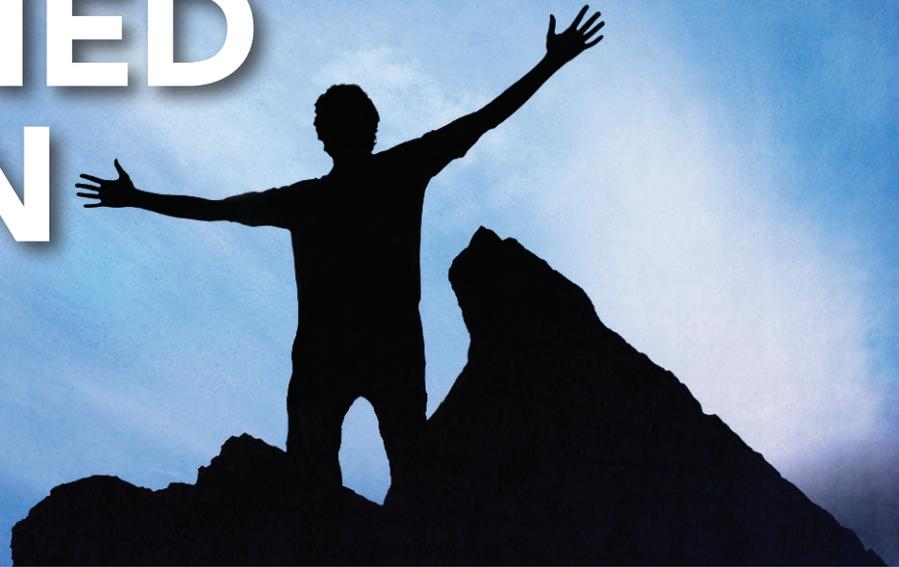


CALLED TO FIGHT, BUT DESTINED TO WIN



Rev. Dr. Raymond W. Boca
BISHOP'S DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4-5).

The believer, one who is truly born of God, lives a double life. Like an immigrant living in a foreign nation, the believer lives on earth but his or her citizenship is in heaven. He or she will appear different, act different, and have a different mindset than the culture because he or she is a stranger in a foreign land. This is the life of a believer: living as a stranger anticipating a reunion in our homeland with family.

The claim, "he that is born of God overcome the world." was an incredible claim when one considers what the world was like to the original readers of this letter. Roman Caesars ruled the known western world, and theirs was the only

earthly kingdom in power, besides the invisible kingdom of God. There was no middle-of-the-road position allowed, either Jesus was Lord or Caesar was Lord. John asks, "Who is he that overcomes?" and he answers that it is the person who has faith, who believes in Jesus Christ.

John tells us that those who have been born of God have overcome the world. The world according to Paul is evil (Galatians 1:4) and full of wise men, scholars, and philosophers who are fools according to the ways of heaven (1 Corinthians 1:18-30). John writes later in the epistle that this world is dangerous (1 John 5:19). But believers have overcome the world.

The claim, "he that is born of God overcome the world." was an incredible claim when one considers what the world was like to the original readers of this letter. Roman Caesars ruled the known western world, and theirs was the only earthly kingdom in power, besides the invisible kingdom of God. There was no middle-of-the-road position allowed, either Jesus was Lord or Caesar was Lord. John asks, "Who is he that overcomes?" and he answers that it is the person who has faith, who believes in Jesus Christ.

There are three specific things that the

Christian has been instructed to overcome: the world, the flesh and the devil. In each case, we have been equipped with the tools to do just that. James informs us, that when we submit ourselves to God, and resist the devil, he will flee from us. Paul lists the weapons of spiritual warfare, which we will need to overcome this spiritual enemy in Ephesians 6: 10-18. But it is John who explains what it means to overcome the world. Whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world – even our faith!!

It is our faith that overcomes the world. But faith must have an object... and the object of our faith is Jesus Christ. It is our faith in the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus that gains victory over the world. It is trusting in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ Jesus our Saviour, for the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting, that overcomes the world.

It is our identification with Christ and His finished work by FAITH, that causes us to be overcomers. Indeed, Jesus Himself said, *"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."* Jesus lived a perfect life and died a sacrificial death, and all who trust in Him are identified with HIM, and His victory.

We are identified with His life. We are identified with His death and we are identified with His victory over sin, death and the world. Because the Lord Jesus has overcome the world, all who trust in His name have also overcome the world by association with HIM.

John uses the word "overcome" three times, letting us know that there is a real conflict going on, a real battle being fought. Certainly, there is an invisible, unseen war raging between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. John wrote these words to inform us, the children of God, that everything necessary for victory has already been given to us. Do we believe it? Do we live that way?

The Scriptures have established that the just shall live by his faith (Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38). The meaning is, if the just must survive the battles of life, faith is

not negotiable. But it may surprise you to also *know that faith does not prevent battles.* Some people say, "I do not have faith; that is why I am always confronted." No! Faith does not prevent confrontations; it only gives the power to persistently overcome confrontations and dwell in the arena of conflict.

No one overcomes without fighting. So, anyone who is not ready for a fight is not ready for victory. Paul says in 1 Timothy 6:12 *"fight the good fight of faith."* The fight of faith is nothing but the confrontation of conviction; it is the enemy trying to challenge what you believe. That is why I stated earlier, *faith does not prevent battles or confrontations;* it only guarantees victory in the face of battle. So, we are *called to fight but destined to win.*

For a challenge or confrontation to arise against you is not an evidence of lack of faith; it is bowing for defeat that is the evidence of lack of faith. Beloved, you may be facing a battle in your life right now, but I decree, that battle is over! Arise in victory by the weapon of faith, in the Name of Jesus Christ. Remember this: **"We are called to fight but destined to win."** SHALOM!

Faith