

HIS VICTORY IS OUR VICTORY

- A. Introduction: John 16:33—The night before Jesus was crucified, at what we call the Last Supper, He told His apostles to be of good cheer because He has overcome the world. We are examining what Jesus meant by His statement, as part of a larger discussion about how God gives us peace of mind through His Word.
1. The Last Supper was actually a Passover Meal, an annual celebration held by the Jewish people to commemorate their deliverance from Egyptian slavery by God’s power. Ex 12:1-13:10
 - a. The Old Testament refers to what God did for Israel as redemption which means deliverance from bondage. Israel’s deliverance was a real event, but it also pictures what Jesus came to do—deliver men from bondage to sin, corruption, and death. Ex 6:6; Ex 15:13
 1. Matt 26:26-28—At the Last Supper, Jesus applied the main elements of the Passover Meal to Himself (unleavened bread and wine to Himself), telling His apostles that His blood would be shed for the remission or wiping out of sin.
 2. Jesus, through His death and resurrection, was about to fulfill what the original Passover pointed to—redemption from sin and deliverance from its penalty and power.
 - b. Jesus’ apostles believed that He was the promised Messiah of Israel who was going to bring an end to sin, usher in righteousness and establish God’s Kingdom on earth. Dan 9:24-25; Jer 31:31-34;
 1. But before that night was over, Jesus was arrested and sentenced to death, and all the apostles were scattered in fear. The next day Jesus died a grueling death by crucifixion.
 2. Their world was about to be upended, and Jesus’ statement about overcoming the world was meant to give His apostles peace of mind in the face of these horrific events.
 - c. Over the next three days (from that night to resurrection morning) Jesus (God Incarnate) demonstrated in a mighty way (to them and to us) what it means that He has overcome the world.
 1. Almighty God took a wicked event perpetrated by evil men (the crucifixion of the innocent Son of God) and used it for tremendous good. Luke 22:3; Acts 2:23; Heb 2:14-15
 2. Through His death, burial, and resurrection Jesus broke the power of death over mankind, bringing deliverance from sin, corruption, and death to all who believe on Him.
 2. We have more to say tonight about what it means that Jesus has overcome the world, as well as how this reality affects our lives in this difficult world.
- B. Although the men at the table with Jesus that night didn’t realize it at the time, He was about to fulfill the purpose for which He came to this world. Let’s back up and restate the big picture or overall plan of God.
1. Almighty God created men and women to become His sons and daughters through faith in Christ, and He created the earth to be a home for Himself and His family. Eph 1:4-5; Isa 45:18
 - a. When Adam, the first man, sinned, because he was the head of the human race, his sin affected the race resident in him. Men became sinners by nature—fallen creatures who express their nature through sinful actions. Sin disqualified mankind from our created purpose. Rom 3:23; Eph 2:3; etc.
 1. Gen 2:17—God warned Adam that disobedience would bring death to the world. Through his actions, both the family and the family home were infused with a curse of corruption and death.
 2. Rom 5:12—(Adam’s) sin spread death throughout all the world, so that everything began to grow old and die, for all sinned (TLB).
 - b. God did not create anything to die—not men and women, not animals, not plants. Death is present in the human race, and the earth itself, because of sin. Jesus came to this world to abolish death and bring life and immortality to light through the gospel (the good news of His death and resurrection).
 1. II Tim 1:9—It is God who saved us and chose us to live a holy life. He did this not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan long before the world began—to show his love and kindness to us through Christ Jesus (NLT).

2. II Tim 1:10—[It is that purpose and grace] which He now has made know and fully disclosed and made real [to us] through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, Who annulled death and made it of no effect, and brought life and immortality—that is, immunity from eternal death—to light through the Gospel (Amp).
2. There is more to death than death of the physical body. There is another death—separation from God who is life. Humans can be physically alive but dead spiritually, or cut off from God. Eph 2:1; Eph 4:18
 - a. No one ceases to exist when their body ceases to live. They (the man or woman on the inside) pass into another dimension (either Heaven or Hell). If you are separated from God through sin in this life, when your body dies, you will live forever in that condition—eternally dead or cut off from the life in God.
 - b. Jesus went to the Cross to remedy both spiritual and physical death. By dying and paying the price for sin on the Cross, Jesus opened the way for dead men to receive life.
 1. When we believe on Jesus we receive spiritual life (the life in God Himself) through new birth and union with Christ and the life in Him. John 1:12-13; John 3:3-5; I John 5:1; etc.
 2. We receive physical life through resurrection of the physical body (made incorruptible and immortal) in connection with Jesus' second coming. Phil 3:20-21; I Cor 15:52-53
3. Jesus' resurrection is a stunning demonstration of the fact that power of death has been broken. At the Cross, Jesus joined us in death to bring us out of death by breaking its hold on mankind. Heb 2:14-15
 - a. His resurrection is proof that our bodies will come out of the grave. Jesus is called the firstfruits of those who have died (I Cor 15:20). Firstfruits was a cultural reference.
 1. First fruits was a cultural reference. The first of the annual harvest was offered to the Lord as an acknowledgement that it belonged to Him and that the rest of the harvest will come in.
 2. I Cor 15:21-23—Just as death came into the world through a man, Adam, now resurrection from the dead has begun through another man, Christ...Christ was raised first; then when Christ comes back, all his people will be raised (NLT).
 - b. But, there is more to it. When we believe on Jesus in this life we receive (in our innermost being) the same life, the same power, that reanimated and raised up the dead body of Jesus.
 1. The apostle Paul prayed for believers that we would: [know and understand] what is the immeasurable and unlimited and surpassing greatness of His power in and for us who believe as demonstrated in the working of His mighty strength...(the same power) which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead (Eph 1:19-20, Amp).
 2. This life and power transforms us inwardly from sinners into holy, righteous sons and daughters of God. God, by His life and Spirit is in us now to strengthen us and empower us to live and walk in a way that is pleasing to Him, as He works in us by His Spirit to make us increasingly Christlike in character. (Lessons for another day)
- C. Let's go back to the Last Supper. The men sitting with Jesus at the Passover table did not yet know the information we've covered. But Jesus was preparing them to receive it after His resurrection—I have told you these things before they happen so that you will believe when they do happen (John 14:29, NLT).
 1. John 14:15-18—Jesus assured His apostles that although He leaving them, He would not leave them helpless. The Father and He would send the Holy Spirit. He has been with you but will soon be in you.
 - a. John 14:19-20—In just a little while the world will not see me again, but you will. For I will live again, and you will, too. When I am raised to life again, you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you (NLT); you will know that I am in union with my Father and you are in union with me and I am in union with you (Williams).
 - b. Jesus was preparing them for the fact that after His resurrection they would be united to the life in Him. Christianity is more than a moral code or a set of beliefs—although it has both. Christianity

is a living, organic union with the life and Spirit of God through faith in Christ.

- c. Through the sacrifice of Himself on the Cross Jesus opened the way for God, by His Spirit, to indwell men and make them His sons and daughters through new birth, and then work in them (us) to restore them (us) to all that they (we) were meant to be before sin damaged the family.
 2. Luke 24:36-43—Three days later, on resurrection day, Jesus went to see His apostles, who were hiding in fear. When He appeared to them, they thought He was a spirit. So, He held out his hands for them to touch and showed them His feet and His side. Then Jesus asked for something to eat.
 - a. Luke 24:44-48—When Jesus finished eating, He explained the events of the past three days by reminding them that everything written about Him in Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms (their name for the Old Testament) had to come to pass.
 - b. Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures and commissioned them (as eyewitnesses) to take the message of repentance and remission of sins to the world beginning at Jerusalem.
 1. John’s gospel gives an additional detail about this meeting. John 20:19-23—As the Father as sent me, so I sent you. Then Jesus breathed on them and said: Receive the Holy Spirit.
 2. Just as God the Father breathed into Adam’s body the breath of life in the first creation and he was made alive (Gen 2:7), Jesus breathed on His apostles and they too were made alive, born of God in a new creation through impartation of His life and Spirit. I John 5:1; II Cor 5:17-18; etc.
 3. Jesus is the first man to come out of death, the first of a head of men and women over whom death has lost its power. This new creation is not something that never existed. It is the old made new (*kainos*, new in quality and superior in character), restored to our created purpose.
 - c. Before we move on we need to quickly clear up two possible misunderstandings in this passage.
 1. Jesus did not give His apostles power to forgive sins. Jesus told them that if people repent and believe on Him and what He has done, they can assure them that their sins are remitted.
 2. This is a separate incident from the Day of Pentecost fifty days later when the Holy Spirit filled all the disciples as they were gathered together (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8; Acts 2:1-4). The Book of Acts describes two separate encounters with the Holy Spirit—being born of the Spirit and then being filled with the Spirit. (Lessons for another day).
 3. Acts 1:1-3—Over the next forty days Jesus appeared to His apostles a number of times and continued to instruct them about what He had done. We do not have a detailed description of what He said to them. We get our information about what they learned from Him in the epistles they wrote.
 - a. We get much information from Paul’s epistles. Jesus appeared to Paul three years after the resurrection and he was converted. In subsequent appearances, Jesus personally taught Paul the message he proclaimed throughout the Roman world. Acts 26:16; Gal 1:11-12
 - b. Paul was given a clear revelation of what union with Christ means for believers. Among other things, through union with Jesus we share in what He did when He conquered death.
 1. Eph 2:5-6—(God) gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead...For he raised us from the death along with Christ, and we are seated with him in the heavenly realms—all because we are one with Christ Jesus (NLT).
 2. Through His resurrection victory Jesus demonstrated that He is greater than every opposing force in a world that is currently in opposition to God. And, through union with Him, we have been made overcomers or conquerors.
- D. Possibly you are thinking: That’s wonderful that Jesus has overcome the world. But, what does this mean for me? What does this look like in the real world? How is this fact an encouragement for me?
1. Much of the contemporary preaching we’re exposed to gives sincere Christians the idea that now that we are Christians we won’t have any more problems. Or if we do, they’ll be minor and quickly rectified.
 - a. This can’t be the case because of what Jesus said in the first part of His statement at the Last Supper:

In the world you will have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer—take courage, be confident, certain, undaunted—for I have overcome the world.—I have deprived it of the power to harm, have conquered it for you (John 16:33, Amp).

- b. There is no such thing as a problem free, trouble free life in this fallen world. But, through His resurrection victory, Jesus has deprived this world of power to *permanently* harm us.
 1. Just Almighty God reversed the wicked plot to crucify the Son of God and used it for great good, He will do the same for us. Even death can't stop His power.
 2. Every pain, hardship, loss, and injustice is temporary and subject to change by His power—either in this life or the life to come. There is no such thing as an impossible or irreversible situation in the hands of Almighty God. He has overcome the world.
- c. Jesus has overcome death in all its forms. Every problem and pain in this world is ultimately a consequence of sin—not necessarily your personal sin, but Adam's sin that brought death to the world. Rom 5:12
 1. All of life's hardships are lesser forms of death. Through the Cross Jesus abolished death in all its forms. And we are being progressively delivered from every form of death.
 2. Rom 5:10—For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, it is much more [certain], now that we are reconciled, that we shall be saved [daily delivered from sin's dominion] through His [resurrection] life (Amp).
2. Rom 8:35-39—The apostle Paul experienced much hardship and suffering as he preached the good news of Jesus' resurrection throughout the Roman world. Yet his view of it was: In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.
 - a. In context the “things” he referred to include trouble, calamity, persecution, hunger, cold, and threat of death. In the original Greek language, more than conquerors, in the Greek the idea of gaining a decisive, overwhelming victory. In all these things means in the midst of.
 - b. What did this look like in Paul's life? When he was imprisoned by the Roman government and facing the possibility of execution, notice how he viewed his circumstances
 1. Phil 4:13—I have strength for all things in Christ Who empowers me—I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me (Amp).
 2. Phil 1:12-18—He rejoiced over the fact that God was bringing good out of bad. Because of his imprisonment the gospel was being preached throughout Caesar's palace guard.
 3. Phil 1:19—I am well assured and indeed know that through your prayers and a bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, this will turn out for my preservation [for the spiritual health and welfare of my own soul and avail toward the saving work of the Gospel] (Amp).
3. Note that Paul made reference to God's love three times in Rom 8:35-39, stating that God's love has made us victors in every circumstance, and that nothing can separate us from God's love.
 - a. Rom 8:37—Yet even in the midst of all these things, we triumph over them all for God has made us to be more than conquerors, and his demonstrated love is our glorious victory over everything(TPT).
 - b. God, motivated by love, devised a plan to make us sons and daughters. His love met our greatest need (salvation from sin) and opened the way back to Him. His love has given us a future that will outlast and surpass this life in ways we can't even imagine. Eph 1:4-5; I John 4:9-10; Rom 8:18; etc.
 - c. Jesus has overcome sin and its consequences (death in all its forms) and you are united to Him in that victory. You are a conqueror—not because you can stop life's troubles—but because life's troubles can't stop God's ultimate plan and purpose from coming to pass in your life.

E. Conclusion: None of this information makes life any less painful. But when you know that this troubled life is temporary and that the end result will be well worth it, it gives you hope and peace of mind in the midst of it. That's why Jesus tells us to be of good cheer in the face of life's hardships. More next week!