

ULTIMATE VICTORY

- A. Introduction: John 16:33—We’re examining a statement that Jesus made to His apostles the night before He was crucified: In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer (be encouraged, confident, undaunted) for I have overcome the world. In this lesson we’re going to bring our discussion to a close.
1. This world is not the way God created it to be. However, we can be of good cheer because, through His death on the Cross, Jesus began the process of restoring the world to what He intends it to be.
 - a. Almighty God created men and women to become His sons and daughters through faith in Jesus. And, He made this earth to be a home for Himself and His family. Eph 1:4-5; Isa 45:18
 - b. Both the family and the family home have been damaged by sin, beginning with the first man, Adam. Because of his act of disobedience, human beings became sinners by nature and the earth was infused with a curse of corruption and death. Gen 3:17-19; Rom 5:12; Rom 8:20; etc.
 1. Jesus came to earth the first time to pay for sin and open the way for all who believe on Him to be transformed from sinners into holy, righteous sons and daughters of God. John 1:12-13
 2. Jesus will come again to cleanse the earth of all sin, corruption, and death, establish His visible kingdom here, and restore this planet to a fit forever home for God and His family. Rev 21-22
 - c. Jesus told His apostles: In this world you will have tribulation, trials, distress and frustration (Amp). Why? Because the world isn’t yet fully restored. But, Jesus assured them (and us) that they (and we) can be of good cheer (encouraged, hopeful) because the process of restoration has begun.
 1. Through His resurrection victory Jesus deprived the world of its power to permanently harm us. Life’s hardships may hurt us, but they can’t stop God’s ultimate plan. Life’s troubles can’t deprive us of our future with the Lord on this earth—once it has been renewed and restored.
 2. Living with the awareness that every pain and loss is temporary—and the best is yet to come—makes life’s many challenges easier to face. Life on earth will finally be all that we long for it to be. This perspective it gives us peace of mind. II Cor 4:17-18; Rom 8:18
 2. When Jesus spoke about overcoming the world He was talking to real people with whom He had very close relationship—His twelve apostles. Jesus would soon send these men out to tell the world about His death, and resurrection. The growth of God’s family depended on their initial success.
 - a. As Jesus and His men celebrated that Last Supper meal the night before His crucifixion, the Lord told them many things to help prepare them for the fact that He was soon going to leave them.
 - b. He knew that the men at the table with Him that night were going to face persecution, property loss, and even death in the months and years ahead because of their faith in Him.
 1. But over the next three days, through His death and resurrection, Jesus will demonstrate to them why they could be of good cheer in the midst of it. Jesus’ resurrection will powerfully demonstrate that nothing is bigger than God (not even death). It will show that no matter what comes against His apostles in this life, He can cause to serve His ultimate purpose for a family.
 2. Forces in this wicked world conspired to kill the innocent Son of God. But, Almighty God beat the devil at his own game, and through the death and resurrection of Jesus, brought salvation and restoration to the world. I Cor 2:7-8
 - c. Jesus assured His men: You will have troubles in this world, but I have overcome the world.—I have deprived it of the power to *permanently* harm, have conquered it for you (John 16:33, Amp).
- B. Matt 26:29—As the Last Supper (a Passover meal) was ending Jesus made this statement to His apostles: Mark my words—I will not drink wine again until I drink it new with you in my Father’s Kingdom (NLT).
1. Jesus’ words would have resonated with His men. Jesus was born into a people group (1st century Jews) who knew from the Old Testament prophets that God will one day establish His visible kingdom on earth and restore both man and the earth to pre-sin conditions. Dan 2:44; Dan 7:27; Isa 51:3; Ezek 36:35; etc.

- a. Three years earlier, Jesus had captured His apostles' attention when He began His public ministry with these words: The time has come at last—the kingdom of God has arrived (Mark 1:15, J.B. Phillips). His men were looking for and expecting the kingdom of God to come to earth.
 1. But, the prophets weren't clearly shown that there will be two comings of the Lord separated by two millennia. Nor did they know that the visible kingdom of God on earth would be preceded by an invisible one—the kingdom or reign of God in the hearts of men. Luke 17:20-21
 2. Through His blood that was shed at the Cross, Jesus so thoroughly cleanses all who believe on Him from the guilt of sin, that God can indwell men and women by His life and Spirit, and make them sons and daughters through new birth. John 1:12-13; John 3:3-5; I John 5:1
- b. Over the next few days, the men seated at the table that night will come to believe this, be cleansed of their sin, and become God's sons through the new birth. They will learn that every new birth is an extension of the kingdom or reign of God in the hearts of men as He progressively reclaims His creation from sin, corruption, and death. Luke 24:44-48; John 20:19-23
2. Following His resurrection, Jesus remained on earth forty more days, talking to the apostles about the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3). When Jesus returned to Heaven, the Holy Spirit was poured out on them, and they began to publicly proclaim the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 2:1-40). Note what they preached.
 - a. Peter, in his second recorded sermon preached after Jesus went back to Heaven, told his audience: Turn from your sins (repent) and turn to God so you can be cleansed of your sins (Acts 3:19, NLT).
 1. Then Peter made this statement: For (Jesus) must remain in heaven until the time for the final restoration of all things, as God promised long ago through his prophets (Acts 3:21, NLT).
 2. The word restoration, in the Greek, means recovery—to restore a thing to its former state. It's actually a medical term that means a restoration of perfect health.
 - b. Peter spoke these words at the Temple in Jerusalem. His audience was made up of Jewish people familiar with the Old Testament prophets. Note that Peter made reference to the prophets.
 1. God has been talking about His plan to restore the family and the family home since the beginning. The prophet Moses recorded that as soon as Adam sinned, the Lord promised that the Seed (Jesus) of the woman (Mary) would come to undo the damage done by sin. Gen 3:15
 2. Through the centuries God gave increasing revelation of the plan through the prophets. Daniel the prophet was given a specific timeline as to when the Lord will come to restore the world.
 - A. Daniel was shown specific events that can be tracked through the historical record. His timeline is so specific that it counts down to the day that Jesus came into Jerusalem on what we call Palm Sunday, the week of His crucifixion. Dan 9:24-27
 - B. Explaining the timeline requires a full lesson. The point for this lesson is that as Daniel prophesied when the Lord will come, he stated what the Lord will do—(He will come) to bring an end to sin, to atone for guilt, to bring in everlasting righteousness (v24, NLT).
3. These 1st century men and women knew from the writings of the prophets that the Lord is coming to bring everlasting righteousness to this world. Jesus brought and is bringing righteousness to this world.
 - a. The Greek word used for the righteousness means the character or quality of being right or just. Our English word righteousness comes from an older word spelled rightwiseness which clearly expresses the meaning of the word—to make things right.
 1. Jesus came to make things right between God and man (restore men to right relationship with God) and to make them right (restore them to the family as holy righteous sons and daughters).
 2. Jesus will come back and make things right in this earth by removing all corruption and death. He'll set up His righteous government and restore the world to a fit forever home for the family.
 - b. Matt 13:24-30—During His time on , Jesus told His followers a parable about the coming kingdom of God. He said that in this age (this present time period in which things are not as they should be in this world) wheat and tares (weeds) grow up side by side. Jesus explained the parable thusly.

1. Jesus is the farmer who plants good seed, which represents the children of the kingdom. The tares (weeds) are the children of the wicked one, sown by the wicked one. Matt 13:37-43
2. At the end of this age God's angels will remove from this world all that causes sin and all who do evil. v43—Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father (ESV).
 - A. This explanation didn't frighten Jesus' listeners. They understood from the prophets that it is the righteous who will live in God's kingdom on this earth. Ps 37:9, 11, 29, 34
 - B. And they were looking for the Messiah to provide the righteousness needed to have a place in the kingdom. In the great prophetic picture of Jesus' suffering written by the prophet Isaiah 700 years before Jesus was crucified, he wrote: And because of what he (Jesus) has experienced, my righteous servant will make it possible for many to be counted righteous, for he will bear all their sins (Isa 53:11, NLT).
 - C. Jesus would later give Paul the apostle (converted three years after the resurrection) a clear revelation of the fact that righteousness is given to all who believe on Jesus. God declares us righteous and imparts His righteousness to us through new birth. Rom 5:1. Rom 5:17
4. Matt 19:27-29—Near the end of Jesus' ministry on earth Peter said to the Lord, we've left all to follow you. What will our reward be? What will we get out of it (v27, NLT)?
 - a. Jesus answered that in the regeneration they will be given positions of authority, assuring them that anyone who has lost property, houses, or family will get back over and above what they lost.
 - b. Note that Jesus didn't have to explain to them what He meant by the term regeneration. The Greek word used here literally means new birth (*palingenesia*; *palin* = again, *genesis* = birth).
 1. v28—I say unto you, in the new age—the Messianic rebirth of the world (Amp); In the age of the restoration of all things (TPT); when the world is born anew (Rieu).
 2. Jesus' apostles were already familiar with the concept through the writings of the prophets. Isaiah wrote that the world will be made new when the Lord comes. Isaiah called it the new heavens and new earth (Isa 65:17, 22). The Hebrew word new is used to mean renewed.
 3. Titus 3:5—This word regeneration (*palingenesia*) is used one other time in the New Testament in reference to the new birth. The new birth is the beginning of a process of transformation that will ultimately fully restore all who believe on Jesus to everything God intends them to be.
 - c. II Pet 3:10-12—Thirty years later, shortly before Peter was crucified upside down for his faith in Christ, he wrote a description of the transformation that will take place when the world is made new.
 1. This passage is sometimes misinterpreted to mean that the earth will be destroyed by fire. But when you know the original meaning of key Greek words, it's clear that Peter was describing earth's transformation not its destruction.
 - A. *Pass away* carries the idea of passing from one condition or state to another (the same word is used for new creatures, II Cor 5:17). It never means cease to exist. *Elements* refers to the most basic components of the physical world (what we now call atoms and molecules).
 - B. *Shall melt* (v10) and *dissolve* (v11-12) are the same word. It means to loose. Jesus used this word when He raised Lazarus from the dead—loose him and let him go (John 11:44).
 - C. The phrase *burned up* (v10) is not used in the oldest New Testament manuscripts. Instead, the earliest copies use a word that means found or shown. The idea is exposure of corruption for the purpose of removal.
 - D. *Shall melt* (v12) means to liquefy (*teko*). We get our English word *thaw* from the Greek word. Winter releases its grip when the spring thaw sets in.
 2. The Lord is going to purge the materials elements that make up the physical world with the fire of His Word. (The prophets likened the Word of God to fire. Jeremiah 5:14; Jeremiah 23:29).
 - A. Just as in the beginning when Almighty God spoke and created the heavens and the earth, He will speak again and atoms will literally be loosed from their present state of corruption

and restored to their pre-sin condition in a new heavens a new earth. Rev 21:1

B. People who are born of God are called new creatures and the restored earth is called the new earth. The Greek word translated new (*kainos*) means something new in quality and superior in character, as opposed to something that never existed before.

d. Jesus has come and is coming to make things right. Col 1:18-20—He (Jesus) was supreme in the beginning and—leading the resurrection parade—he is supreme in the end. From beginning to end he's there, towering far above everything, everyone. So spacious is he, so roomy, that everything of God finds its proper place in him without crowding. Not only that, but all the broken and dislocated pieces of the universe—people and things, animals and atoms—get properly fixed and fit together in vibrant harmonies, all because of his death, his blood that poured down from the Cross (The Message Bible).

- C. Conclusion: Why are we talking about the future when most of us need help right now? Emphasis on the life after this life doesn't mean that there is no help now. But information about what is ahead helps you keep this difficult life in perspective and gives you hope and peace of mind in the midst of it.
1. No matter what happens, it's not bigger than God, and He will get you through it until He gets you out. Peter faced death looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth where everything is right. II Pet 3:13
 - a. There's no such thing as a problem free life in this broken, sin damage world. There are no easy answers for many of the issues we face. Although the Bible gives us direction and understanding that can help us avoid and solve some of life's hardships, most are unavoidable or not easily solved.
 - b. Victory in this life does not mean a life with guaranteed success and few, if any problems. A victor is a Christian who sees the big picture and keeps this life in perspective in the midst of trouble.
 2. Paul the apostle wrote in Rom 5:17 that those who receive God's gift of righteousness shall reign in life by Jesus. Some translations say reign as kings in life.
 - a. This does not mean that we can control and dominate all the circumstances in our lives. Being made righteous frees you from the dominion of sin, Satan, and death. However, it doesn't free you from life's struggles and trials.
 - b. The idea expressed is reigning over death in all its forms. We reign, not because we can stop all death in this life, but because no form of death can stop God's ultimate plan from coming to pass.
 1. Reigning will have its full expression on the new earth, after our bodies are raised from the grave, free from corruption and death. We will be reunited with those bodies to live forever on this earth—also freed from corruption and death. Life on earth will finally be right.
 2. Rev 5:10—In AD 95 (thirty years after Jesus' resurrection) the apostle John was taken into Heaven and given information about events that will immediately precede Jesus' second coming. While in Heaven, John heard people singing about to returning to this earth to reign.
 3. John was one of the men at the table with Jesus the night before the crucifixion. He heard Jesus utter the words: Be of good cheer. I have overcome (won the battle for) the world. John 16:33
 - a. Many years later, in one of his epistles, John wrote: Whosoever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith. I John 5:4-5
 - b. It's clear from the context of his letter that when John used the term world he meant the present world system that is in opposition to God, this present world with its wickedness and corruption.
 1. John knew that Jesus is coming back to complete the restoration that began at the Cross and bring all things under His rule. The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and He shall reign forever. Rev 11:15
 2. Those who maintain their faith (trust) in Jesus will have a place in His kingdom. On the new earth, life will reign over death in all its forms forever. This coming reality gives us hope and peace in the present as we anticipate restoration and recompense—ultimate victory. Amen!