

## ARE YOU READY TO OVERCOME?

Revelation 12:11 reads: ***"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death."*** Did you know that every time you speak a Word from your spirit man you overcome? The tests and trials you're going through are linked to the 'word of your testimony' that comes out of your mouth. Your 'spirit man' is like the Ark of the Covenant, where the testaments are placed and kept safe. When you endure the enemy's temptations and quench his fiery darts, your spirit man develops an overcoming attitude that is powerful in God. First, let's make sure we share the same definition of the word testimony. "Testimony" is best defined as someone's personal "spiritual narrative" - the story of your spiritual journey. And while your testimony includes parts of your biography, that isn't the heart of it.

"To testify" means *"to express or to declare a strong belief in, to make a statement based on personal knowledge in support of an asserted idea; to declare publicly or make known, and to bear witness or provide evidence for"*. The Word of God is full of people who testified to the power, majesty, grace and mercy of God. Every positive experience with God provides us with the opportunity to testify! Joseph testified to his brothers when he said: ***"Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about, as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid"*** (Genesis 50:19-21). Job told the Lord, ***"I know that you can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You"*** (Job 42:2). David said, ***"I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears"*** (Psalm 34:4). Mary declared, ***"For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name"*** (Luke 1:49).

Stephen, moments before he was stoned, said, ***“Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!”*** (Acts 7:56) Paul said to the Philippians: ***“Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”*** (Phil. 4:12-13). One thing all of these testimonies have in common is that each one of the speakers directs our attention to God. Our testimony, like our worship, is meant to magnify the Lord - not our own ego. Only when Jesus is exalted will our testimony bear the witness of the Holy Spirit and engage His resurrection power. What is written on our hearts must be heard!

There are times when your soul needs to hear what your spirit has to say. In 1 Samuel 30:6, when David and his men found that Ziklag had been burned and their wives and children had been captured, David ***“strengthened himself in the Lord.”*** In fact, those who were with David wanted to stone him. They obviously had not been fellowshiping with the Holy Spirit - so David had to strengthen himself. His soul really needed to hear what was written on his heart. Have you ever allowed your spirit man to encourage your soul? Have you ever encourage yourself in this way? It's during those times that you want to be sure you have a well-nourished, strong, healthy spirit - a spirit that has been fellowshiping with the Holy Spirit - because there may not be anyone else around. If you had to encourage yourself today, if your spirit had to influence your soul, how would you do? I sincerely recommend that you to nourish your spirit by praying the Holy Spirit daily. Yes, resist the devil and walk in the Spirit. Keeping your spirit in fellowship with the Holy Spirit at all times, so that you can become more like Jesus and be connected to others who are doing the same. The blood and the word of your testimony together will overcome the world, the flesh and the devil. You are empowered to overcome, and you win in the end! By staying connected to Jesus, all your defeats in a former season will become victories and triumphs in the next.

Remember, the Holy Spirit in you will always testify of God's goodness to your spirit man! So don't let the devil steal your testimony! In 1951 Professor James S. Stewart was a key speaker at Yale University and as he preached about the cross he said, *'I fear that as Darwin banished the Creator God, Freud will see to it that we replace spiritual warfare with phobias and with psychological jargon.'* Billions of pounds are spent every year on 'anti-depressants'. People take pills to help them go to sleep at night, pills to wake up in the morning and a pill to help them get through the day. And this includes Christians! We need to realise that the source of this problem is our arch enemy – Satan! Don't let Satan steal your testimony, for if he does, he'll rob you of your joy and leave you without any hope or strength! Keep listening to the Holy Spirit in you., and make sure that your spirit hears what He has to say!

We read in Luke 10:17-20, ***"The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."*** If the devil starts to rob you of anything in your life, remind him that he has fallen from the sky and tell him to take his hands off what belongs to God. After all, ***"In Him we live and move and have our being."*** You belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, and He has already won the victory by shedding His precious blood! Therefore, if the devil reminds you of your past, remind him of his future!

On the Ark of the Covenant, the atonement cover was also known as the "Mercy Seat." Here we see that Jesus is paralleled with the exquisite gold piece that covered the ancient Ark. God told Moses on several occasions what the significance of the "Mercy Seat" or "atonement cover" was.

If the “atonement cover” was the place where God was to be found, and Christ himself is our “atonement cover”, then Christ is the place where God is to be found. Follow the concept here. The consuming fire present “above the cover - between the cherubim that are over the ark of the Testimony” - is the God, whom we are told is Christ. Christ is the place where God always “appears.” Yet Christ is also the “atoning sacrifice.” He is the one who makes it possible for a man to be in the same room with the all-consuming presence of God. He is the pacifier; the one who appeases. Because of Christ we can enter into the throne room of grace. Because of Christ we have a testimony that causes us to overcome. Note, we do not defeat the devil because we are in Christ, but because we can declare “who we are in Christ.” This is the word of our testimony!

Exodus 30:6, ***“Put the altar in front of the curtain that is before the ark of the Testimony - before the atonement cover that is over the Testimony - where I will meet with you.”*** Look at the language here – the 2nd part of this verse tells us that the atonement cover or ‘mercy seat’ is over the Testimony. But we have already learnt that Jesus himself is the “atonement cover.” Christ is not only the reason for our testimony, but He guards it within us! Just as the atonement cover protected the stone tablets of God’s Word, so Jesus (as the atoning sacrifice for our sins), keeps God’s imperishable seed, His Word, safe in our hearts! He watches over His Word to perform it and keep it protected! And the Holy Spirit’s mission is to take what is Christ’s and reveal it to our souls, so that we can testify - declare the truth!

We are like the Ark of the covenant – God’s laws are written on our hearts. And just as the testimony (God’s word) was placed in the ark, so too we now have the “full and perfect Testimony” - the Person and the Spirit of Jesus Christ, living in our hearts. Therefore, every time we speak a Word (a ‘rhema’) from our “spirit-man” we overcome the devil.

Remember, it's not because we are "in Christ," but rather, who we declare we are in Christ that causes us to overcome! This is the word of our testimony! Revelation 12:11 says: ***"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death."***