

The Voice of Truth # 481

The Promise to the Overcomer - continued

In the study of these promises that God made to the overcomers in these seven churches, we stand amazed that God should make promises to his own creatures. Before God gave his word, which included his great promises, he was free to do as it pleased him, but you know, after God gave his promises, then his truth and honor binds him to do as he promised, or as he said. Yet these promises do not limit his liberty in any way, because as we study these different promises, there is always the declaration of his sovereign will and good pleasure, and his very delight is to act and move according to his word. That's an amazing thought to me as I think of the Bible, the scope of it, and the richness of it, and that it is the very breath of God. It's the Word of God and contains all the promises of God to his creatures. The most marvelous thing to me is that God would form a covenant bond with his people. We see that the Lord has made a covenant of grace with the overcomer in which he not only has confirmed his promises, but binds himself with an oath. This truth is set forth in Hebrews 6:18, **that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.** So, we see in this covenant, there are many, many precious promises, and every one of them are confirmed in Christ Jesus and established upon the foundation of the faithfulness of God. So, these promises are God's peculiar treasure to the believers. Therefore, all the promises of our covenant God belong unto us, to lay hold of, and enjoy as our personal possession. Are these promises personal to you? They are to me. Then by faith we receive them, we embrace them, we hold them fast as our true riches. Then why these great promises, made to these churches by the Lord Jesus Christ himself, are so little read, and received, is the most astounding thing to me in this present so-called Christian age. Let me call your attention to one more thing before we go into the study of the promises given in the last three churches, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, and that is found in 2 Peter 1:4, **whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises.** I want to call your attention to that word, "given". Peter tells us here, whereby are "given" unto us exceeding great and precious promises. These

promises are gifts from God. The scripture says the gift of God is eternal life. Therefore, my friends, the believer lives upon divine charity. I'm not able to earn one thing, but God is able to give me all things because John 3:27 says, **A man can receive nothing, except he be given him from heaven.** These precious promises given to the overcomer here in Christ's own language are exceeding precious, gracious, and they are gifts directly from the Lord Jesus Christ to the overcomer. I wish you would read them, reread them, and study them for your own benefit.

Now let's turn to Revelation 3:5, and we find the promise that was given to the overcomers in the church of Sardis. Listen, **He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his holy angels.** We notice here the first promise made to the overcomer in Sardis, the church that Christ looked upon as alive and was yet dead, that they shall be clothed in white raiment. History tells us that the Jewish scribes in their dignified self-righteousness deemed it a great honor to walk in long robes. Also the Roman dignitaries wore white robes as a sign of their high rank. But here were these poor saints at Sardis, beaten down, persecuted, lived under severe trials from their enemies, counted as the enemies of mankind, that, as they conquered in Christ, they would have the distinctive honor of wearing white robes in heaven. Now, that may not mean anything to you, but it does mean something to me, listen. Yes, the overcomer who had lived and fought with the Lord Jesus Christ will be clothed in white raiment in that crowning day. The words Christ used here means that those garments would shine with intense whiteness with a dazzling heavenly glory. The Word of God says, **it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.** In the seventeenth chapter of Matthew, we have a picture of the glorified Christ, listen, **and was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.** We have a picture of our Lord here of his inward glory enveloping his entire being. So, it will be with the overcomer when he is resurrected and rises to meet the Lord in the air and comes into the banquet hall. After that triumphal procession with the Lord through the air, he will be clad in the brilliant festal robe, because in Daniel 12:3, we find another picture like that of the overcomer, **And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and**

ever. Then we are given a picture in Revelation 1:16, of what the believer will be in Christ; **and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.** To me, that's a precious promise. Here in this life, as a sheep amidst wolves, clawing you, thrusting their fangs in you, tearing you to pieces, mutilating your character, and your very life, cruel as the grave, then to think as we stand forth in the power of the Lord Jesus Christ here, witnessing, weeping over their blindness, coming out victorious in Him, what a joy to think that one day we'll stand in that great heavenly procession, clothed in the likeness of our Lord, in raiment of white, on which and in which there is no spot or stain, or anything that maketh a lie, or worketh abomination. In other words, it will be an inward glorification of our whole being, like unto our Lord Jesus Christ. That's enough for me. Isn't that enough for you?

Another promise he made to the overcomers at Sardis was, **And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I'll confess his name before my Father and before his angels.** But this promise I've just quoted, many have quoted it as meaning that you could be lost after you were saved. But let me call your attention to that expression, "book of life". This expression is not the same as that one found in Revelation 13:8. from which reads like this, All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in "the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world". The book of life here is the one in which are written the names of all of God's elect from the foundation of the world. The book of life in Revelation 3:5 might be termed "the register of Christian profession, both true and false". Everyone who names the name of Christ, it seems that their name is written in this book. Many names, once entered into this book, will not be there at the final opening of the book. Many names of infants were written there when they were dedicated to the Lord. Many who made professions of faith, seemingly all in earnest, but have fallen away, and their names are blotted out. Many names that were written there once made a great showing in the Christian profession, but apostatized and failed to endure to the end. Many names written there who were once, from the outward eye, on the way of life, but dropped out before the race was finished. But all the true and faithful followers of the Lord who shall endure to the end, their names will not be blotted out, even though they may be stricken from the rolls of honor and distinction in this world. No works or merits of our own can write our names in

that book. They were written there before the foundation of the world. On the other hand, many who now stand high in Christian profession and whose names may be household words will be erased in the day when life's record shall be scanned by the all-seeing eye of the Lord of the churches. But I praise the Lord that my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life before the foundation of the world. One time Christ said to his disciples, **Rejoice not that the devils are subject unto you, but rather rejoice that your names are written in the Lamb's book of life.** I know many will tell me, well, once saved, always saved. That's right, friend, if you're saved. But many multitudes of you folks are trying to get to heaven on that doctrine, who know nothing about Christ, not a thing, and your lives belie your profession. And Paul speaks of individuals where he had preached that their names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life. What an unworthy name mine is! And to think that my Lord wrote it in the Lamb's Book of Life, called me in time, redeemed me by his grace, washed me in his blood, keeps me by his power, fills me with his Spirit, uses me as he will. My friend, I can't get over that. Is your name written there? Do you know it? **He that persevereth unto the end shall be saved.** That's the evidence that your name is written there.

Then he says, I'll confess his name before my Father and before his holy angels. So, we see here that the one who does not shrink from confessing Christ during his earthly ministry, no matter under what trials he may be, he will be acknowledged by Christ before his Father and His holy angels. The individual, although he may be unpopular in religious circles and ever so in the world, shall be singled out in the august presence of the Father and His angels, and Christ will confess His name before that grand heavenly assembly. Won't that be grace? This is the Lord God of heaven putting his redeemed child, a child of grace in the show window of heaven, and saying, Behold, what my grace has done. These promises are living promises to me, precious and full of grace.

Now let's turn to the promise made to the overcomers in the church at Philadelphia. **Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and I'll go no more out, and I'll write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God, and I'll write upon him my new name.** The first promise he makes here to the overcomer is, I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. The

temple of God here refers to the sanctuary in heaven. The earthly temple that Solomon built, which was a pattern of a heavenly temple, had two large pillars, according to I Kings 7.21. The one was named Jachin, which means 'established', and the other Boaz, which means 'strength'. The reference here is to these two pillars. Here was a poor, weak tried believer who had been cast out of the Orthodox Church, and worldly popular religious church on earth. But Christ said in the eternal, glorious, heavenly temple, you shall be established and made strong, which means you will be put in a fixed position and will never be cast down again. and never go out, never will be cast out, and I glory in this great promise. What comfort, what blessedness, what a lifter up as we walk through this wilderness here below as a stranger and a pilgrim, looking for that city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God, eternal in the heavens, where Christ will be the light and the joy and the blessedness and the delight of that temple.

The next promise to the overcomer is, **I will write upon him the name of my God.** You know the greatest blessedness that comes to a believer is to know that he knows God through our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our portion, but then he says, **His name shall be in their foreheads.** There will be no obstruction to keep us from coming directly into the presence of the Lord God of heaven. It will be the special privilege of every saint to be so crowned with the blessedness of God, so identified with him as to have his name written on us, that we belong to him and we will not go out any more, never stray away from him. The mark of ownership will be on us. You know, that is the cry of the heart of every believer now. Lord, so make me thine until I'll be so identified with thee that there can be no separation in this life or the life to come. Then he says, **I'll write upon him the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from God.** The city of God, which will be the home in heaven of God's children, will pour out its wealth of blessedness upon the overcomer. By his grace, the new Jerusalem will be our dwelling place. Christ said to his disciples the night of the betrayal, I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself. That where I am ye may be also. It was said of Abraham that he looked for that city. It is the longing of every born-again believer to reach that city. Yes, sir, and their prayer is that I may not fall short of that city where my God dwells, where the Lord Jesus Christ sits on the

throne. Just to be there with him, just the thought of it overflows my heart. My friend, I want you to go with me. I want you to be there with me. Oh, my son, my daughter, my granddaughter, I want you to be there with me. My sons, oh, would that I could take your place, if either one of us had to go to hell, and go to hell for you. Oh, you folks in Radio Land, I want you to be there with me. My what precious promises, what a gracious God, what a loving God! The surety of the covenant! What promises growing out of the covenant that God made with His people! What riches is poured into our laps! What treasures of His grace!

Then He captured all of this most precious promise, **I'll write upon Him my new name**. You get it now. What a promise, that we will be so intimately associated with Christ, in all the future glory in Christ Jesus, our Lord. One great truth I see here that pours forth like an artesian well, is that the Lord Jesus Christ so loves to identify us with himself until we become co-heirs with him in all the inheritance. Just to think that the Lord is not ashamed of his child. He is not ashamed of me. I notice it says here, **my new name**. It's a name that has not yet been revealed unto his people. It's a name that no one knows but he himself. It is amazing how little we know of Christ. We do not know him in his fullness. Greater revelations and fuller knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ awaits us in the heavenly Jerusalem. I believe that in those days all the mysteries of His person will be revealed to His loved ones. No doubt it will take eternity, if we could think of it as even ending, for us to learn and understand all the mysteries of the person of the Lord Jesus, born of a virgin, crucified for sinners, raised for our justification, within the veil as our living High Priest, the surety of the covenant, in whom all the promises of the covenant are sure and eternal, a new name.

Now we come to the promise that Christ made to the overcomer in the Laodicean Church. Let's read it. **Now to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sit down with my Father in his throne**. We come upon a word here that we don't find in any of the other promises, and that is the word throne, and there's two of them, the Father's throne and the Son's throne. Christ said to the overcomer, **will I grant to sit with me in my throne**. This indicates that Christ is not sitting on His throne, and it also indicates that Christ will sit on His throne. Now He is sitting with His Father in His throne. This truth is brought out in Hebrews 1:3, **who being the brightness of his**

glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. How did he come to sit down with his father in his throne? First, by the right of royalty, and by the right of inheritance. In the second place, he set down on his father's throne because he was a conqueror, an overcomer. He learned obedience through suffering. It was his life of patience and death that was a sweet savor for his father's glory. Now in the second place, let's notice that Christ will sit on his throne. **And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest. And the Lord God shall give him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.** This truth is also brought out in Matthew 19:28, and also in Acts 2:30, and Acts 15:14. We see from these scriptures, and others I could give, that Christ will sit upon His throne. His kingdom will be universal. His kingdom will be righteous in administration. His kingdom will be everlasting in duration. The Jerusalem on earth will be the capital city of the kingdom, according to Jeremiah 3:17.

Now Christ said to the overcomer, and I want you to get this, I'll give you the privilege and power to sit with me in my throne. You know, one day John and his brother James, I believe it was, came to Christ with their mother with a request. Realizing and believing that Christ was going to set up a kingdom here on earth, they thought at that time. They wanted his word that when that time came, they could sit on his throne with him, one on the right hand and one on the left. You know, as I read that story, Christ did not rebuke those two, dear disciples. You know what he did? He just merely asked them a question. Brethren, are you ready to suffer what I'm to suffer? And to be baptized with the baptism that I'm to be baptized with? And they said, yes. You know, I believe here that Christ was saying to John, John, do you remember what you asked me back there on earth one day about sitting on my throne? Now I'm going to answer your question. **To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and have sat down with my Father in His throne.** As the right of a conqueror, I am sitting with my Father and your Father. Now to Him that conquers, to Him who will be baptized with the baptism that I was baptized with, to Him that overcometh, I promise you, John, and others who will be associated with me in

my kingdom, and my glory, but remember one thing, John, the contest must be maintained to the end, to him that overcometh. Does that mean a thing to you? I want to tell you, my friends, this thing you call the Christian life isn't a joke. It's a battle. It's a battle to the end. And if you are not willing to endure to the end, you are not saved. You are not saved. I don't care, you may go down, you may get up, you may go down you may get up. You may be beaten down. Aren't these promises precious? When we are attacked from all sides, troubled yet not distressed, perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in my body. Look up, believer, thy salvation draweth nigh. Behold, Christ cometh, go ye out to meet him. Be not ashamed of the Lord Jesus Christ in this evil generation. Come ye out from the world. Be ye separate, and he'll give thee the crown, and thou shalt sit with him on his throne. Brother, I make no apologies for talking about the glorious victory in Christ Jesus at the end of this life, if we endure to the end.