

The Encouragement Newsletter

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OVERCOMER!!!

John 16:33 (NAS)
These things I have spoken to you,
so that in Me you may have peace.
In the world you have tribulation,
but take courage: I have
OVERCOME the world.

I John 5:4-5 (NAS)
For whatever is born of God
OVERCOMES the world; and this
is the victory that has **OVERCOME**
the world—Our Faith. Who is the
one who **OVERCOMES** the world,
but he who Believes that Jesus is
the Son of God?

Overcome—

Webster's: To get the better of, to prevail; to render helpless or powerless, as by tears, laughter, emotion, etc; to be victorious; to surmount obstacles, etc.

Overcome and Overcometh—

Concordance: To subdue; conquer, prevail; get the victory

The word of God already declares that we are overcomers because we are “more than conquerors” (Romans 8:37). We have what it takes to prevail because the overcomer lives within us. However, the reality of living or the ability to consistently live like an overcomer can be challenging. Things happen and we experience things that leave us feeling defeated or lacking a prevailing spirit.

As always, I love to go to the word of God to encourage readers. There are many examples of men and women of God who were overcomers. They were able to prevail even in ungodly systems and we can draw strength from their lives.

I want to explore the book of Daniel and make some points that can we can apply to live as an **OVERCOMER**.

Chapter 1 of the book of Daniel begins with the captivity of Judah by the king of Babylon. Daniel was one of the sons of Israel forced to live in Babylon. He was chosen to serve in the king's court because he had the qualities the king was looking for - 1) a youth; 2) no defect....he was good looking or “fine”, as some would say today; 3) intelligent; 4) endowed with understanding and discerning knowledge; and 5) had the ability to serve the king. To be reprogrammed and renewed in his mind, he was required to learn the literature (writings) and language of the Chaldeans (astrologers). In addition to being reeducated and reconditioned to the system of Babylon, Daniel was to eat a certain type of food. As we know, food is what we take in for growth, development, nutrition, health, satisfaction of hunger and for strength. There was something about the food that caused Daniel to refused to indulge. He did not want to defile himself. (v. 8) Although the food was called “choice food” or the best, Daniel knew it was not the best for him. Gaining favor, he found a way out of eating or indulging in the king's food. **NOTE:** *eating denotes—partaking, participating; fellowship; agreement; devour and consume.*

POINT #1—To be an OVERCOMER, we cannot indulge, in things that defile and weaken our discernment. God is calling his church to stand in high places or positions of authority in government, companies and corporations, but this does not mean we conform to their ways or ethics. We do not want to be weak and lack the ability to be an overcomer because we indulge in the appetites of the world. We can be kept in the world according to John 17:14-15. Daniel had to learn the ways of the astrologers (those who studied the stars for scientific reasons and for the purpose of divination. Babylon was a hot bed for sorcerers, magicians, diviners and other occultists. Although Daniel had to learn the ways of the astrologers, sorcerers, and diviners, he did waiver in his belief system. Daniel had been chosen for such a time as this to represent the Kingdom of God in the Babylonian kingdom and we have been chosen likewise. He remained constant and committed to his God. Additionally, because he did not consume the food, he was ten times better than those with in the same position. When we make a decisive decision not to eat the things that defile and eat the spiritual things that bring life, we will find that we will have favor and our appearance along with our work ethic will be better than those around us.

Daniel chapter 2 gives further insight into Daniel's life. His life along with the astrologers, magicians and sorcerers was threatened because the magicians, conjurers, sorcerers and Chaldeans (the wise men) called into the king presence could not interpret his dream. Daniel asked his friends to pray that he would receive the interpretation of the dream. The dream was revealed and Daniel gave the interpretation to the king. The lives of the wise men were spared and Daniel was promoted to another level.

POINT #2—To be an OVERCOMER, we must surround ourselves with those who are spiritual and who know how to touch heaven. In the time of great need who can you call on to pray on your behalf? We will face moments when we will need intense prayer for situations (spiritual or natural life or death). Having a friend or friends that we can call to pray for us to receive an answer from heaven is essential to life. Periodically, we all have to do a friend inventory and look closely to determine if those we are closely connected to are an asset or liability. May we surround ourselves with praying friends who can touch heaven on our behalf during desperate times.

Reading further in verses 27-30, Daniel does not hesitate to make sure the king knew that the God in heaven (not one of their gods) reveals secrets and he did not receive the revelation because he had more wisdom than anyone else.

POINT #3— To be an OVERCOMER, we must give all glory and honor to God for every accomplishment. We are able to do things only by God's revelation and creativity that flows from heaven to and through us. We must remain humble and let it be known that it is through our God we do valiantly and we are not be ashamed to make it known without hesitation. As we give Him the glory, we will see His increase.

In verses 48-49, Daniel is elevated to another level. He did not just get his promotion, move on and leave those who were an asset to him behind. Nor did he have the attitude, "I got mine, so you get yours". He used his influence to pull his friends up too.

POINT #4— To be an OVERCOMER, we must reach back and pull others along side us who have been instrumental and supportive. Have you witnessed some who make it to the next level and forget about those who helped them get there? There are friends who will be such an asset at our next level just as they were an asset in the first level. Daniel was honored and positioned in a place where he could request the promotion of those who were of like mind and spirit. If you have a position of influence, use it to bring increase and a better quality of spiritual and/or natural life to others - especially those who have been an asset to you. What do you have that can be given to friends, family members, who have helped you? Pull them up!

YOU H A V E BEEN CALLED to P R E V A I L

To recondition Daniel's mind, his name was changed to represent one of the god's of Babylon (Chapter 1:7). Daniel means God is my judge. The new name, Belteshazzar, is defined as protect his life. In the Babylonian custom, anyone who lost their freedom was given a new name. A name is an indication of ones character. It identifies and defines individuals. In many cases we act out the meaning of our name. Changing the name of the American slave is the closest thing I can use as a reference to help us understand the Babylonian custom. The purpose of the slave's new name was to give them a new identity, force them to think differently and forget about their heritage. The movie Roots comes to my mind as I write this. You may remember how the slave master had a hard time getting Kenta Kinta to accept his new name and conform to his ways. He was hard to break. He refused to call himself Toby. Confessing the new name would give him a new identity and he refused this new identity. After being whipped so many times, he finally said his name was Toby. Having watched Roots so many times, I do not think he ever fully accepted this new name or the new identity they were trying to give him. I believe, in his heart he knew he was from Africa and just went along to survive.

POINT #5—To be an OVERCOMER, know your name. Know who you are. You may be called many names by others, but you must know your own name and your own identity. Daniel did not allow the new name to distract him from who he was or cause him to conform. After using his gift, he was identified as the chief of magicians (Daniel 4:9) and called the one with a "spirit of the holy gods". A new name, title or identity is what the world (and sometimes the church) will give anyone using their gifts in a powerful way. We see this evidenced in the sports industry, the music industry, music ministries and pulpits of America. When we are used by the Lord, we must be like Jesus. He did not seek the applause of man. His sole purpose was to do the will of the Father. We see this in Daniel's character as well.

Many times we spend years trying to find ourselves. In the process we find ourselves envious and jealous of others' gifts and abilities when all we need to do is simply go on a treasure hunt. As we look up and look within we will see that we have been endowed with so many gifts and treasures to build His kingdom. May we be like Daniel, knowing who we are and knowing that we have nothing to prove. May we only look to the Lord God, our Creator, for our identity not to others.

In chapter 6, Daniel was being considered for another promotion. Some sought to find an occasion to discredit him. Daniel was so excellent in his work. They could not find any grounds for accusation. Daniel was faithful and no corruption could be found in him. The only thing they could accuse him of being was a "man of prayer". What a tremendous testimony! Daniel was consistent and faithful to pray at a certain time and place every day. These men persuaded the king to sign a law that no one could pray to any other god. Daniel was aware of this law, but continued the commitment

to his time of prayer and worship. He was caught praying by those who were against him and he had to pay the penalty—be cast into the lions den. However, he was not afraid of the consequence.

POINT #6— To Be an OVERCOMER, we must be a person of prayer and willing to pay the price to stay in fellowship and obedience to the One Who has called us. Daniel did not fear the consequence because he was more committed to God than fearful of what man could do to him. He was fully confident that God would deliver him just like he delivered Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. He did not compromise because of the consequence. His ability to stand in the face of death was attributed to being a man of prayer. As an OVERCOMER, he was a witness to the king and promoted again for maintaining his faithfulness to God. What the enemy meant for evil, God turned it around and caused Daniel to be an OVERCOMER. Today in our country, there are many laws in the process of being passed that will restrict what a pastor can preach and how Christians can respond to certain issues. It has the potential of watering down the gospel so others will not be “offended”. Now the preaching of the gospel will offend those who offend it. That is just the law of the gospel. What are we going to do as preachers and teachers of the gospel and saints should these laws pass in every state and region? We must do as Daniel did, continue “just as you’ve done before”. I firmly believe we will have to continue on, let the Lord fight the battle with our accusers and keep a life marked by praying and giving thanks.

We again see a lifestyle of prayer in Daniel’s life in chapter 9, but in addition to praying, we find him fasting. We must have a lifestyle of fasting as well. Prayer and fasting is a double edged sword. Another key component we must add to prayer and fasting is repentance. We must develop an attitude of quick repentance for our sins. So, we have three things in one point—Prayer, Fasting and Repentance.

In chapter 3, the friends Daniel reached back and pulled along side of him, are found “rebellious” against the king shortly after they were promoted. They refused to bow and worship the golden image when the music was played. It is so interesting how worship and music are so intertwined. If we are not careful, we can unknowingly worship another god by listening to certain music. Some love beats and have not clue about what is being spoken into them. But, could that beat be the sound of worship of another god? *Just food for thought.* Because of their stand, they were sentenced to death. These three men were so confident in God. Their response to the king was, **“The God Whom we serve is able to deliver us..He will deliver us out of your hand...But even if he doesn’t, let it be known, we are not going to serve your god....”**. Oh what a statement!

POINT #7— To be an OVERCOMER, we must have a strong confidence in the God we serve and worship. These men possessed this deep assurance in the God of all gods. They refused to bow under pressure. Like Jesus in the wilderness, they refused to worship another god. Their deep loyalty to God caused them to “not love their lives even unto death” (Revelation 12:11). They were bold OVERCOMERS, delivered by the prevailing power of God and prospered. We do not have to cower under pressure, believing we will prosper if we compromise and go to the other side. Under pressure? Step back and allow the Father to move on your behalf. Do not be afraid, compromise and succumb to the pressure. We are more than conquerors and He is more than able to deliver us for His name sake and make His name glorious.

Daniel Chapter 11 reveal conflicts of two kingdoms—the Kingdom of light vs. the kingdom of darkness. Reading it will made me wonder how can anyone escape such turmoil. I want to focus on verse 32 because of the warfare we are facing today. The 2nd part of the verse says, **“...the people that know their God will display strength and take action”**. In the face of adversity, we can always stand on this. Instead of retreating, we can take action.

POINT #8— As an OVERCOMER, we must “know” God and “take action”. I cannot detail any specific “action” to take for every situation, but I can say that when we know Him, He will guide us and tell us how to take action. We do not have to stand back and watch things happen, we can make things happen. What are you facing? What is your trial? Are you taking action or are you just sitting back saying, “Woe is me”. Get to know your God better than you know him now. Display His strength and take action. It is not by might, nor by power or any human ingenuity, but it is by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts. (Zechariah 4:6). He will use us to slay the giants in our personal land and the land we live in. **Know Him and Take Action!**

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OVERCOMER

TO BE AN OVERCOMER WE—

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POINT #1— Cannot indulge, in things that defile and weaken our discernment. 	II Timothy 2:19; II Corinthians 7:10 and Romans 12:1-2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POINT #2— Must surround ourselves with those who are spiritual and who know how to touch heaven. 	I Corinthians 15:33; Psalm 119:63; Ephesians 1:16-18 and Philipians 1:3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POINT #3— Must give <u>all</u> glory and honor to God for every accomplishment. 	I Corinthians 10:17-18 and I Samuel 2:30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POINT #4— Must reach back and pull others along side of us who have been instrumental and supportive. 	Daniel 2:17-18 and 3:49
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POINT #5— Must know our name. Know who we are. 	Psalm 22:9-10; Psalm 139:13; Jeremiah 29:11 and Jeremiah 1:5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POINT #6— Must be a person of prayer and willing to pay the price to stay in fellowship and obedience to the One Who has called us. 	Psalm 5:1-3; I Thessalonians 5:17 and Acts 5:29
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POINT #7— Must have a strong confidence in the God we serve and worship. 	II Corinthians 10:5 and Philipians 1:6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POINT #8— Must “Know” God and “Take Action”. 	Daniel 11:32

The points are not an exhaustive list of all we need to do to be overcomers. It is only a few points. I encourage you to read the life of Daniel and search the scriptures to become strengthened to OVERCOME every barrier and obstacle. Lastly, think like an **OVERCOMER**, speak like an **OVERCOMER**. Be an **OVERCOMER**. Come on you **OVERCOMERS!!** Let the enemy know that you will not be defeated. Say it with a loud voice— **I AM AN OVERCOMER!!!**



The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but
THE RIGHTEOUS ARE BOLD AS A LION.
(Proverbs 28:1)

May our Lord and God our Father, who love us and by His grace gave us eternal Encouragement and good hope, Encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word. *II Thessalonians 2:16-17 (NIV)*

If this newsletter has been an Encouragement to you, please let me know by e-mailing me at hisminstrl@yahoo.com. I'd love to hear from you.