

Philippians Series

Lesson #014

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Dean Bible Ministries

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Philippians

Overcomer: Tree of Life

Philippians 1:6; Revelation 2:7



**What the Bible Teaches
About**

the “Day of Christ”





RAPTURE
OF THE CHURCH



Church
Age

Tribulation

Millennial
Kingdom

Eternal
State

Second Resurrection
(unsaved)

BEMA
Judgment
Seat of
Christ

GREAT
WHITE
THRONE

Unsaved Dead

Revelation 3:21, “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”

Two Questions:

- 1. Why isn't 1 John 5:5 talking about the content of the gospel in light of John 20:31?**
- 2. Is 1 Cor. 9:24–27 talking about overcomers even though the word isn't used?**

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1 Jn. 5:5, “Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” ~NKJV

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Jn. 20:30, “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;

Jn. 20:31, “but these [signs] are written that you may **believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that [by] believing you may have life in His name.” ~NKJV**

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**pres act part masc
sing nom**

With an article–

**functions like a
noun or relative
pronoun**

**“to conquer; win,
overcome”**

πιστεύω pisteuō

**pres act part
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“to believe, trust”

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For both, the present tense indicates ongoing action in present time. Not “overcame” or “believed.”

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2 plur aor act

subj

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Main verb

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Main verb

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present act part masc singular

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NO article; thus adverbial,

explains something about the

main verb. “*by believing*” the

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Main verb

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present act part masc singular

nom to believe, trust.

NO article; thus adverbial,

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main verb. “*by believing*” the

means of gaining eternal life.

***The timing of the pres
participle is at the same time
as the time of the initial faith.**

2. Is 1 Cor. 9:24–27 talking about *overcomers* even though the word isn't used?

1 Cor. 9:24, “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.

1 Cor. 9:25, “And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.

1 Cor. 9:26, “Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air.

1 Cor. 9:27, “But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”

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1. There are two metaphors used here for describing the Christian life: running a race and in boxing. For either, the verb *nikao* was used to describe the winner.

The word for victor was used in the ancient world for victory in a battle or contest (´Epistle of Aristeas, 281) BDAG; of a good athlete, (Lucian Timon 50, Oxyrhyncus Papyri 1759, 4 letters to an athlete;) Ignatius to Polycarp 3:1. BAGD

- 2. In both metaphors, those who competed (agonize) were the runners and the fighter. The runners and fighters represent Christians in the analogy. All Christians are running a race, boxing in a match, competing for the prize.**
- 3. The prize is a crown, a *stephanos* crown. The crown is not eternal life. That would mean that salvation was based on works.**
- 4. Not all will receive the crown in the physical competition, but all compete for it. So not all receive the crown in the spiritual competition.**
- 5. Some will fail to persevere. They do not lose their salvation, but they will be disqualified from losing rewards.**

What the Bible Teaches About

the “Overcomer” in Revelation





***Ephesus:
First and
Greatest
Metropolis
of Asia***



Black Sea

Ister River

MOESIA

THRACIA

BITHYNIA and PONTUS

ASIA

Pergamum
Thyatira
Sardis
Philadelphia
Smyrna
Ephesus
Laodicea

GALATIA

CAPPADOCCIA

ARMENIA

MESOPOTAMIA

SYRIA

Euphrates

LYCIA

PAMPHAGIA

CILICIA

ACHINA

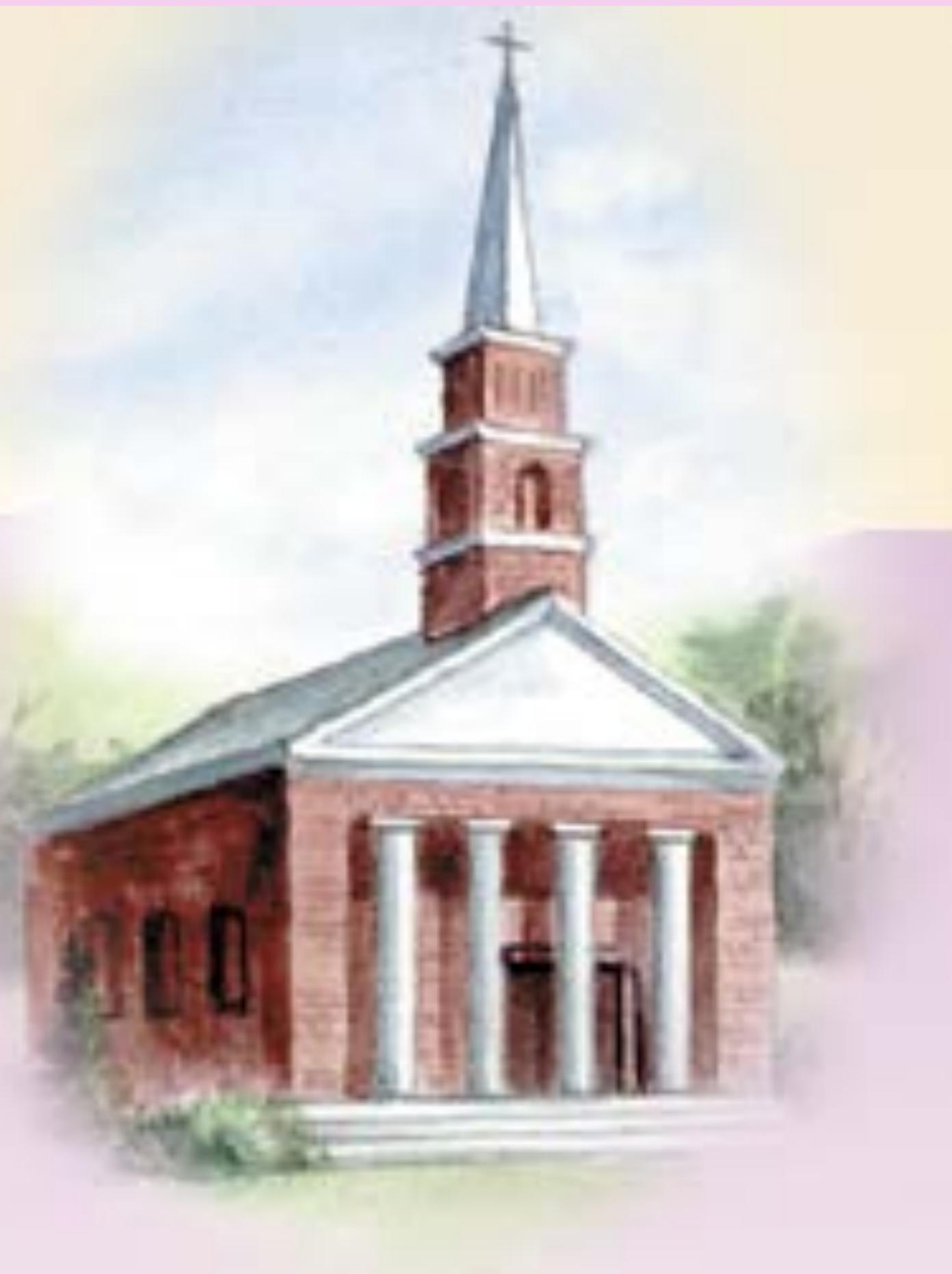
CRETE

RHODES

CYPRUS

Aegean Sea

ATHENS



Revelation 2–3

- 1. Commission: an address opens each letter***
- 2. Character: a citation, specific attributes of Christ***
- 3. Commendation: a praise for spiritual advance***
- 4. Condemnation: a warning about a spiritual flaw in the congregation***
- 5. Correction: a prescription to recovery***
- 6. Call: a command to listen and apply***
- 7. Challenge: a personal promise of reward***

Revelation 2:7, “ ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the overcomer I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.’ ”

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νικάω *nikaō* pres act articular part masc sing dat

“victors, winners, conquerors, overcomers.”

Cognate to the noun, *nikh*, *nike*, “victory, success.”

***Nikao* “to overpower, to gain victory, to win.”**

Revelation 2:11, “ ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.’ ”

Revelation 2:17, “ ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it.*’ ”

Revelation 2:26, “ ‘And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

Revelation 2:27, “ ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels— as I also have received from My Father;

Revelation 2:28, “ ‘and I will give him the morning star.’ ”

Revelation 3:5, “The overcomer shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.”

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Cognate to the noun, *nikh*, *nike*, “victory, success.”

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Revelation 3:12, “ ‘He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And *I will write on him My new name.*’ ”

Rev. 3:21, “ ‘To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.’ ”

Revelation 2:7, “ ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the overcomer I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.’ ”

1. Used in Genesis to describe a tree in the Garden of Eden.

Gen. 2:9, “And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”

Gen. 3:22, “Then the LORD God said, ‘Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever’ ”—

Gen. 3:24, “So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.”

2. It is used in several verses in Proverbs:

Prov. 3:18, “She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy are all who retain her.”

Prov. 11:30, “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise.”

Prov. 13:12, “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.”

Prov. 15:4, “A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.”

3. Three uses in Revelation are instructive. We will begin with the last first.

Rev. 22:2, “In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”

Another contrast between works and a free gift is found in the last chapter of Revelation.

Rev. 22:14, “Blessed are those who do His commandments [MajT, TR] “wash their robes [CrT],” that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.”

Rev. 22:17, “And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.”

**Rev. 22:14, “Blessed are those who do His
commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of
life, and may enter through the gates into the city.”**

John 14:15, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.”

John 14:21, “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

John 15:10, “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.”

1 John 2:3, “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.

1 John 2:4, “He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”

1 John 3:22, “And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

1 John 3:23, “And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

1 John 3:24, “Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.”

1 John 4:21, “And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.”

1 John 5:2, “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments.”

1 John 5:3, “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.”

Salvation is free.

Rev. 22:17, “And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.”

Rev. 22:12, “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.”

Salvation is free, rewards are earned.

Rev. 21:6, “And He said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.’ ”

Col. 3:24, “knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.”

In Rev. 22:14 and Rev. 2:7, the tree of life is conditioned upon something.

Rev. 22:14, “Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.”

Rev. 2:7, “ ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.’ ”

Rev. 21:7, “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.”

“Some have said that eating from the tree of life was the equivalent of receiving eternal life, but this is most evidently a false interpretation. Eternal life is the prerequisite for membership in the true Church. Eating of the tree of life is a reward that shall be given to the overcomer *in addition* to his salvation. ... He receives over and above his entrance into eternal life, a place in the Heavens in the midst of the paradise of God.” [italics added]

~Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Revelation*, 43