

Overcoming this World: Jesus Did It ... So Must We!

"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." John 16: 33

The context of Jesus' teaching

Jesus and the disciples were in what is referred to in Christianity as the "upper room". He began by washing their feet (John 13), then they shared the Last Supper (Passover meal) together. He comforts them because of their despair over His words that He is leaving them – death. He introduced them to the Holy Spirit and assured them He was and is the only way to get to God.

He went on to warn them that the world, including religious leaders, would hate them because it hated Him. Following is part of His warning:

"These things" – Very disconcerting words from Jesus before He was about to leave them

*"**These things** I have spoken to you so that you will not be led into sin. They will ban you from the synagogue, yet an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering a service to God. **These things** they will do because they have not known the Father nor Me. But **these things** I have spoken to you, so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them. However, I did not say **these things** to you at the beginning, because I was with you."*

"in Me you may have peace" – Jesus had already promised peace and defined it as coming in the Holy Spirit. They were going to need this kind of peace, not only survive,

but to prosper and carry the Gospel forward after His ascension.

"Peace I leave you, My peace I give you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." John 14: 27

This peace in Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit is the same peace the Apostle Paul described as *"peace of God that passes all understanding"* in Philippians 4:7.

"In the (this) world you have tribulation (or troubles) – The disciples had yet to see or experience the kind of tribulation that was coming their way. They would live under constant threat and persecution the rest of their lives. All are said to have been martyred for their stand on the Gospel and refusal to stop teaching its Truth. Jesus said when not if (vs 2-3)

*Indeed, the hour is coming **when whoever kills you** will think he is offering service to God. And **they will do** these things because they have not known the Father, nor me.*

The Apostle Paul echoed Jesus words and gave us encouragement for living in tribulation.

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we also have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we celebrate in hope of the glory of God. And not only this, but we also celebrate in our tribulations..."
Romans 5:1-3

"take courage" – (Other versions read *take heart, be of good cheer*) In other words, Jesus was telling His disciples to be strong and courageous and stand firm in the face of all that was going to come their way. It is the same courage Jesus told them to have when they saw Him walking on the water toward

Him. They thought He was a ghost and were very afraid.

*"But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take **courage!** It is **I.** Don't be afraid." Matthew 14:27*

The question is HOW? How did they? How can we? The answer is simple. Jesus concluded by saying,

"I have OVERCOME the world" – What did that mean then and how does it help us today?

How did Jesus overcome the world?

- Jesus lived a perfect life so that He could be the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world
- Jesus' death met the blood sacrifice God demanded to redeem and restore people to Him.
- Jesus overcame death – conquered it – so that we could have eternal life in Him
- Jesus ascended into Heaven so that He could send the Holy Spirit to comfort and guide us into all truth until we leave this world for Heaven.

Our part is faith. Faith that believes He is Who He said He is and receives His as the only One Who can save us from our sins. That alone secures eternal life in Heaven vs eternal life in Hell.

For Christ's sake,

Walter