

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Fall Term of 2016**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE FAILURES IN THE CHURCHES,
THE DEGRADATION OF THE CHURCH, THE OVERCOMERS IN THE CHURCH,
THE RECOVERY OF THE CHURCH, AND THE STAGES OF THE CHURCH**

Message Five

The Overcomers in the Church

(1)

Scripture Reading: 1 John 5:4-5; 2:13-14; Rev. 21:6-7; 3:1, 14-18, 20

I. We overcome through faith in Christ to inherit the eternal life and to be sons of God in eternity—Rev. 21:6-7:

- A. This refers to our enjoyment in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth.
- B. The meaning of *overcomes* in verse 7 differs from that in chapters 2 and 3:
 - 1. In 21:7 it means to overcome by believing, as in 1 John 5:4-5.
 - 2. The overcoming in Revelation 2 and 3 qualifies the believers for participation in the enjoyment of the millennial kingdom as a particular reward in God's dispensational administration, whereas the overcoming in 21:7 qualifies all believers for participation in the New Jerusalem with all its enjoyment as a common portion of God's eternal salvation.
- C. The sons of God in the New Jerusalem are the constituents of the New Jerusalem; they are the regenerated believers who have the divine life and the divine nature—John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5-6, 15; 2 Pet. 1:4.

II. The overcomers in the church have overcome the world through faith in the Son of God—1 John 5:4-5:

- A. In 1 John *world* denotes an ordered system set up by Satan—2:15:
 - 1. In order to usurp the God-created man, Satan has formed an anti-God world system.
 - 2. The whole of such a satanic system, which includes all persons, matters, and things, lies in the evil one—5:19.
 - 3. This system is altogether against God's economy, and it opposes the believers in their following of Christ in an absolute way; therefore, we need to overcome the world—2:16-17.
- B. "Everything that has been begotten of God overcomes the world"—5:4a:
 - 1. This refers to every person who has been begotten of God—John 1:12-13.
 - 2. *Everything that has been begotten of God* refers especially to the spirit of the regenerated believers, which has been regenerated with the divine life; the regenerated spirit of the regenerated believers overcomes the world—3:6.

3. By overcoming the world, the believers also overcome the evil one—1 John 2:13-14.
- C. “This is the victory which has overcome the world—our faith”—5:4b:
 1. This is the faith that believes that Jesus is the Son of God (v. 5) so that we may be begotten of God and have the divine life, by which we are enabled to overcome the Satan-organized-and-usurped world.
 2. Our faith brings us into an organic union with the processed Triune God, and it is this organic union, not the faith directly, that overcomes the world.

III. The overcomers in Revelation 2 and 3 overcome all the degradations of the degraded churches spoken of in 2:4, 6, 13-15, 24; 3:1, 15, 20; and 17:5:

- A. We need to overcome the deadness and incompleteness of Sardis—3:1-2:
 1. “I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead”—v. 1:
 - a. The reformed Protestant church, signified by Sardis, is dead; she has lost the vitality of life and is living in name only.
 - b. We surely do not want to be in the condition of the church in Sardis; we want to be living and active in gospel preaching, in nourishing the new ones, in perfecting the saints, and in prophesying to build up the Body of Christ—John 15:16; Matt. 24:45; Eph. 4:12; 1 Cor. 14:1, 3-5, 12.
 2. “I have found none of your works completed before My God”—Rev. 3:2:
 - a. In the eyes of God there is nothing completed in the so-called reformed churches; everything has a beginning without an end.
 - b. The Reformation did not bring the church back to the beginning; it only caused the worldly church to become the state churches—cf. Matt. 16:18; 18:17; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:22-23; Rev. 1:11.
 - c. The Lord is a Lord of completion; therefore, He requires completion—Phil. 1:6.
 3. To overcome in Revelation 3:5 is to overcome the deadness of the Protestant churches, that is, to overcome dead Protestantism.
- B. We need to overcome the lukewarmness of Laodicea—vv. 14-16:
 1. In Greek *Laodicea* means “opinion, judgment, of the people” or “of the laymen”—v. 14.
 2. In the eyes of the Lord the characteristics of Laodicea are lukewarmness and spiritual pride—vv. 15-17:
 - a. Spiritual pride comes from history; some were once rich, and they think that they are still rich; they still remember their history, but they have lost their former life.
 - b. Laodicea means to know everything but, in reality, to be fervent about nothing.
 - c. When a person becomes proud, forsakes the way of life, and neglects reality, while reminiscing on his history and his own riches, the only thing left will be the opinions of many.
 - d. In verse 21 to overcome is to overcome the lukewarmness and pride of the degraded recovered church, to pay the price to buy the needed items (vv. 18-19), and to open the door so that the Lord can come in (v. 20).