

# OVERCOMING

By Anna Gerhauser

Sunday 13 February @ Church on the Park, Milton

Text: "I have said these things to you, that **in me you may have peace**. In the world **you will have tribulation**. But **take heart, I have overcome the world.**" (John 16:33)

**Tribulation:** affliction, distress, oppression troubles pressure, suffering, persecution, hardship, difficult circumstances.

**Overcome:** conquer, prevail, be victor, vanquish, outstrip, excel, to be victorious over, to triumph.

"The world" - also the mindsets of this world. The ways of this world.

You will go through tough times. But WITH JESUS, you will overcome.

*The righteous person may have many troubles,  
but the Lord delivers him from them all (Psalm 34:19)*

*No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (Romans 8:37)*

## What does it mean to overcome?

In Revelation, there are many promises made to *the ones who overcome*. This is God's heart for us.

Like Glen preached last week, you can not overcome on your own.

**Overcoming** the world is not about being more buff, toughening up, having sheer grit and determination, striving with all your might to be successful, and proving to everyone who ever doubted you that they were wrong. You cannot overcome the world without God.

Instead of overcoming the world (the spirit of this world and worldly mindsets), the world has overcome you.

Overcoming is also not about hiding away - being alone - even though we are all tempted to run away and live like hermits when life becomes tough!

Remember how Glen shared last week about how all the temptations Jesus faced in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11) were about satan trying to get Jesus to do things independently of his Father.

**This is what it looks like to overcome the world** - to come out of a trial sweeter, loving Jesus more, trusting Him more, experiencing His goodness, all bitterness gone from your heart and sincerely loving those people who hurt you. You are totally dependent on Jesus for your life and you live submitted to His will.

And this will only happen as you “fix your eyes on Jesus”, no matter what you’re going through. The last few years, the Spirit just keeps reminding me, “Keep your eyes on Jesus.” That’s the only way we’ll make it.

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, **fixing our eyes on Jesus**, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. (Hebrews 12:1-3)*

Just like a boat in the middle of the ocean, you are *in* the world, but don’t let the water get into your boat. If a storm comes, scoop the water out of the boat as fast as you can. Don’t let the mindset or ways of this world get into your heart, or you’ll start to sink.

### **My testimony:**

After Christmas, all the pain and strain of the year seemed to settle in and I was really battling a sense of deep sadness every day. I felt exhausted in every way.

But I knew that I had to turn my eyes to Jesus, to just keep looking at Jesus... WHO HE IS. I knew that if I kept looking at bad things that had happened, or continued to get upset at things people had done or said (even if I had a right or be upset), I would end up in the same pit.

And so I just kept coming to the Lord every morning, no matter how I felt, and asked the Holy Spirit to show me again who Jesus is as I read the gospel of John.

(Side Note: You can never wear out the Word. I’ve read the gospels so many times, but every time I go back, the Lord shows me something new and fresh. You cannot exhaust its depths.)

As I continued coming to Jesus and looking at Him in His Word, He healed my heart, strengthened me and filled me with His peace.

I want to share some keys that really helped me to overcome.

## **“FOLLOW ME”**

When I started thinking about other people and what they were doing, I was quickly reminded of what Jesus said to Peter (and He says to me too):

*“... what is that to you? YOU follow ME.” (John 21:22)*

**The vision: Get my eyes off people and look at Jesus.** Run after Jesus; others will follow.

**(Hold on to the personal words/promises that the Lord has given you** - just like Abraham built an altar every time He had an encounter with God. God’s words to you are not just for that moment, but for you to carry with you for the rest of your life. Remember. Eg. “Know Me in My Word”)

**You can only follow someone as you keep your eye on them,** as you keep looking at them. If you start looking at others, you can easily get off track.

Corrie Ten Boom said:

*“If you look at the world, you’ll be distressed.  
If you look within, you’ll be depressed.  
But if you look at God, you’ll be at rest.”*

Following Jesus - and looking at Jesus - is not just imagining a picture of Him in our minds. It means **taking note of how Jesus lived** - how He responds to people, pain, persecution, the government, people’s expectations... **paying attention to what He says** and making that the standard for our own life. Continually asking Him to work His nature in us and having confidence that He is.

To **properly look at Jesus**, we have to **be near Him**, to **pause - give Him time**. It’s difficult to give a good description of someone from a distance or someone you’re passing as you speed by.

## “BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD”

*The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “**Behold the Lamb of God**, who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29*

*Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as he walked, he said, “**Behold the Lamb of God!**” The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. John 1: 35-37*

(By the way, this pretty much sums up **discipleship**)

John was prophesying Jesus’ end goal from the beginning. The Holy Spirit really highlighted this statement to me: **Behold the Lamb.**

The word *Behold!* is an imperative - it’s urgent, of vital importance. It’s a command to *Look! See! Take notice! Pay attention! Listen!*

*And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a **Lamb as though it had been slain**, having seven horns, and seven eyes (speaking of perfect strength and vision/wisdom), which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne... Revelation 5:6-7 (READ ALL OF CHAPTER 5)*

What is He? The Lion of Judah or the Lamb that was Slain? He is both at the same time!

Overcoming looks different in the Kingdom.

**Do not be discouraged because of persecution, suffering, being misunderstood or the appearance of weakness. There is nothing that appears more pathetic, more vulnerable, more defeated, sadder, weaker, than a “slain lamb” (see Isaiah 53). A lamb cannot - does not - defend itself.**

**But this same Lamb of God, had all authority (Philippians 2:5-11) and was the only one worthy to open the scrolls, defeated sin and sickness, redeemed all to God through His sacrifice. The slain Lamb was God’s secret weapon, His “trojan horse” to defeat the enemy and liberate the captives.**

**As we behold the Lamb, we become like Him.**

*For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. **To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.** “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” **When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.** “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. (1 Peter 2:19-25)*

**“Kept entrusting”** - hand over, give over, commit, yield up, surrender...

As I beheld the Lamb, the Lord lifted all depression of me and pulled me out of the pit!

Whatever pain you’ve felt, Jesus has already experienced it. No one may know or understand what you’re going through, but **Jesus fully understands**. He is full of compassion for you and can comfort you like no one else can. (*Hebrews 4:15,16; 2 Corinthians 1:3*)

*I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. (Psalm 16:8)*

**The only way we’ll make it to the end is to keep our eyes on Jesus, to walk in His footsteps. Don’t be distracted; keep beholding the Lamb.**

***The key to overcoming the world: Behold the Lamb. Follow the Lamb.***

**END**

