

Who Inherits In The Kingdom Of God And Of Christ

(Your comments and questions are welcome)

(**Bold type** and underlining in scripture text have been added for emphasis)

In this life, we realize the benefits of God's grace through living by faith-Ro.1:17, which is the same as **walking after the Spirit**, as opposed to walking after the flesh. For the Spirit is the "earnest of our inheritance" until the redemption of the body-Eph 1:13,14. Significantly, **the fullness of eternal inheritance at the end of this age** will be realized on the same basis of **living by faith**.

At Rev. 21:7 we read: He that **overcometh** shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. Also, in each of the letters to the seven churches in Revelation, future inheritance is realized by "**him that overcometh**".

The word "overcometh" is translated from the Greek word Nikao and means to *subdue* (lit. of fig.). (Strong's's Concordance) Nikao is also translated: *Prevailed* at (Rev. 5:5); *Conquer* at (Rev. 6:2); and *gotten the victory* at (Rev. 15:2).

While there is opposition to the way of the Lord, both, from within and from without, God has provided in Christ sufficient grace to overcome such opposition, **not by struggling in the flesh**, but through **walking after the Spirit**-Gal. 5:16; **walking in the light**-1 Jon. 1:7; **living by faith**-Ro. 1:17, these three being inseparable. *Faith is an inward posture of devotion and commitment to the Lord that rests on knowledge* acquired by the Holy Spirit's ministry to us in God's word-Ro. 10:17. When one is so positioned inwardly, they are necessarily disposed toward *heeding every bit of light received from the Lord*. Christ dwells in us by the Holy Spirit *whose purpose is to lead us according to God's thoughts by*: enlightenment through the scriptures (spiritual understanding); granting wisdom to discern, both, God's will and how to accomplish it-Col. 1:9; and saving or freeing us from the demands of the flesh that we might be able to perform-Ro. 8:2.

In the letter to the Church at Ephesus, we read at:

Revelation 2

⁷ He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith **unto the churches**; To him that **overcometh** will I give to eat of **the tree of life**, which is **in the midst of the paradise of God**.

The "tree of life" is in the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem (Rev. 22:2).

We read at:

Revelation 22

¹ And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb.

2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was their **the tree of life**, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

⁷ Behold, **I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth** the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

¹¹ He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

¹² And, **behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.**

¹³ I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

¹⁴ **Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.**

¹⁵ For **without** are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

¹⁶ I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things **in the churches**. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

In verse seven of chapter two we read: “To him that **overcometh** will I give to eat of the **tree of life**.” **In verse fourteen of chapter twenty two** we read: “Blessed are they that **do his commandments**, that they may have **right to the tree of life**, and may **enter in through the gates of the city**.” The testimony of scripture shows that *overcomers are “they that do his commandments”*. And further, the **time** of this reward is **when the Lord comes**, to give to every man according to his works, whether good or bad. (22:11,12)

In the letter to the church at Smyrna we read:

Revelation 2

¹⁰ Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: **be thou faithful** unto death, **and** I will give thee a crown of life.

¹¹ He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto **the churches**; He that **overcometh** shall not be hurt of the second death.

In the above passage we learn that *receiving the crown of life rests on faithfulness*. And, that it is those **who overcome** who will **not** be hurt by **the second death**. It is a **proper** inference that those who **do not overcome** will be hurt **by the second death**. **The second death is in the lake of fire**. (Rev. 21:8)

In the letter to the church at Pergamos we read:

Revelation 2

¹⁷ He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto **the churches**; To him that **overcometh** will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

Here we learn that the inheritance includes a feasting that is known only to the one who overcomes. Also, the one who overcomes has a new name that is known only to the one who receives it.

In the letter to the church at Thyatira we read:

Revelation 2

²⁰ Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce **my servants** to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

²¹ And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

²² Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and **them** that commit adultery with her **into great tribulation, except they repent** of their deeds.

²³ And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one **of you** according to your works.

²⁴ But unto you I say, and **unto the rest** in Thyatira, **as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan**, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

²⁵ **But that which ye have** already **hold fast** till I come.

²⁶ And he that **overcometh**, and **keepeth my works unto the end, to him** will I give **power over the nations:**

²⁷ And **he shall rule them** with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: **even as** I received of my Father.

The Lord's servants are being seduced, and those who do not repent, but continue in the seduction, will go into great tribulation. But those **servants** who do not hold this doctrine and practice are exhorted to "hold fast till I come". Here is a **clear distinction between the Lord's faithful and unfaithful servants. Those who overcome are those who "keepeth my works unto the end."** They have "**gotten the victory**" over the **desires and interests of the flesh, and "the fiery darts of the wicked"**. (See Eph. 6:16-17) And, the one **who overcomes** will be given "**power over the nations: and he shall rule them** with a rod of iron".

In the letter to the church at Sardis we read at:

Revelation 3

¹ And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast **a name that thou livest, and art dead.**

² Be **watchful**, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

³ Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. **If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou** shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

⁴ Thou hast **a few names** even in Sardis which **have not** defiled their garments; and **they** shall **walk with me in white:** for **they are worthy.**

⁵ He that **overcometh**, the same shall **be clothed in white raiment;** and I will **not blot out his name out of the book of life,** but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

⁶ He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto **the churches.**

The church at Sardis is exhorted to "**Be watchful**"; "strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die"; "**Remember** therefore how thou hast

received and heard, and **hold fast, and repent**". While some attribute such deficiencies to the heathen (professors, not "true" believers), it is evident within the text that **those being exhorted** are God's children who are **unfaithful**. They are those who have defiled their garments. **However, there are "a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments"**. *Because they have not defiled their garments, not because they are "born again", they are worthy to walk with the Lord in white. These have overcome, while the other brethren have not.* These that overcome will be clothed in white raiment, and their names **will not be blotted out of the "book of life"**. Clearly, the other brethren at Sardis **will be blotted out of the "book of life"**, except **they repent**.

See Heb. 12:23, where we learn that the "**church of the firstborn**" are **written in heaven**.

In the letter to the church at Philadelphia we read at:

Revelation 3

¹⁰ **Because thou hast kept** the word of my patience, **I also will keep thee** from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

¹¹ Behold, I come quickly: **hold that fast which thou hast**, that no man **take thy crown**.

¹² Him that **overcometh** will I make a pillar **in the temple** of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him **the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem**, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him **my new name**.

¹³ He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto **the churches**.

It is significant to note that **the brethren** of the church at Philadelphia will be kept from the judgment that will come upon the inhabitants of the earth, *not because they are born again, but because they have "kept the word of my patience"*. (The "hour of temptation" in verse 10 refers to the "day of the Lamb's wrath, which is considered in some detail in the Revelation study.) We also see that they could lose their crown *if they do not hold fast what they have--v-11*. "**Him that overcometh**" will have written on him **the name of God, and the name of the city of God, the New Jerusalem**, which comes down from heaven.

In the letter to the church of Laodicea we read at:

Revelation 3

¹⁹ As many as **I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent**.

²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: **if any man hear** my voice, **and open** the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

²¹ To him that **overcometh** will I grant to sit with me in my throne, **even as I also overcame**, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

²² He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto **the churches**.

The prevailing condition in the church at Laodicea was that of being lukewarm. The Lord's appeal is **to individuals** that they **repent**. **To obtain**

repentance the Lord will chasten them. The Lord chastens His children to yield the “**peaceable fruit of righteousness** unto them which are **exercised** thereby.” (See Hebrews 12:6,7,8,11) *While the Lord does not force His presence on anyone, His desire is to have relationship with His children. If His child will invite Him in, He will enter and “sup with him, and he with me”*. And, he that **overcomes** will **reign** with Him.

There is a system of theological thought that claims that the overcomers are those who have been born again, and that, the day that we trusted Christ was the day we overcame the world. The rationale for this view is in part that Jesus overcame the world, which of course, He did-Jon. 16:33; Rev.3:21. Therefore, all of God’s children are overcomers by virtue of their position in Him.

This rationale follows a perversion of the **principle of imputation**, which perversion is that the **virtues of Christ** such as righteousness and triumph over the world are **judicially** declared by God to be accounted to His child **eternally** through **one’s initial act of faith**.

The scripture sets forth Abraham to explain the role of faith in man’s relationship to God. We are told that Abraham’s faith was counted to him for righteousness. We read at:

Romans 4

³ For what saith the scripture? Abraham **believed** God, and **it** was **counted** unto him for righteousness.

⁵ But to him that worketh not, but **believeth** on him that justifieth the ungodly, his **faith** is **counted** for righteousness.

Faithfulness in doing the will of God *is not dead works, but rather, it is nothing more, nor is it anything less than the product of faith. James addresses this point at:*

James 2

¹⁴ What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man **say** he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

¹⁵ If a brother or sister **be naked, and destitute** of daily food,

¹⁶ And one of **you say** unto them, Depart in peace, **be ye warmed and filled;** notwithstanding **ye give them not those things which are needful** to the body; **what doth it profit?**

¹⁷ **Even so** faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

¹⁸ Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

¹⁹ Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

²⁰ But wilt thou know, O vain man, that **faith** without works **is dead?**

²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works, **when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?**

²² Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

²³ And **the scripture was fulfilled** which saith, Abraham **believed** God, and **it was imputed** unto him **for righteousness:** and he was called the Friend of God.

James is saying that *a claim of faith, apart from the faithfulness that always proceeds from it is of the same content as telling one who is naked and destitute of daily food to be warmed and filled, and then give that person nothing.* He then tells us that Abraham's offering of Isaac on the alter fulfilled the scripture that says, Abraham **believed** God and it, was **imputed** to him for righteousness. Thus, **Abraham's faith** was imputed to him for righteousness when he **did God's will** in offering his son on the alter **as God had commanded.** (See Gen.22:15-18) *This is faithfulness, whereas, Abraham's effort to have the son that God had promised him, by taking Hagar, Sarah's handmaid was not an act of faithfulness in doing God's will, but rather, it was the product of the wisdom and will of the flesh, and therefore, dead works before God.* (Gal. 4:22,23)

In addressing the need to continue in faith to inherit the promises the writer of the Hebrew epistle says at:

Hebrews 6

⁹ But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

¹⁰ For God is not unrighteous to forget **your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.**

¹¹ And we desire that **every one of you** do shew the **same** diligence to the full assurance of hope **unto the end:**

¹² **That ye be not slothful,** but followers of them **who through faith and patience** inherit the promises.

¹³ For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,

¹⁴ Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

¹⁵ And so, **after** he had **patiently endured,** he obtained the promise.

The apostle Paul addresses the need to continue in faith at:

Colossians 1

²⁰ And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things **in earth,** or things **in heaven.**

²¹ And **you,** that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now **hath he reconciled**

²² In the body of his flesh through death, to present you **holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:**

²³ **If ye continue in the faith** grounded and settled, and **be not moved away** from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

The above referenced scriptures, explaining overcoming, inheritance, and the need to continue in faith clearly reveal that, in Christ, **there is a life to be lived,** if one is to realize **the benefits** of God's promises. And, that this life is **lived by faith.** *Faith is not simply an intellectual embrace of scripture as God's truth, but also, includes an inward attitude of commitment and devotion*

*to the Lord. Such an inward posture is faith. Faith is expressed by careful observance of duty to do **God's will**; loyalty to the relationship when tempted to renounce or ignore it; and confidence in and dependence on God's ability in and choice of determining the conclusion of a situation. This is the substance of the above explanation of faith in James epistle.*

We also observe Abraham's faith, and it's expression in the account of his offering Isaac at:

Hebrews 11

¹⁷ **By faith** Abraham, when he was **tried**, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

¹⁸ Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

¹⁹ **Accounting that God was able** to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Here we see fidelity to duty to **do God's will**, loyalty when tried, and dependence on God for the result, thereby **expressing** Abraham's **attitude** of commitment and devotion to the Lord. *When God sees this attitude toward Himself, He bestows grace, whereby, we are enlightened to know, and strengthened to do His will. God's will is comprehended in terms of **wisdom** and **spiritual understanding**, that we might **walk worthy of the Lord** pleasing Him in all things, and that we might **increase in our knowledge** of God. **We read at: Colossians 1***

⁴ Since we heard of your **faith** in Christ Jesus, and of the **love which ye have to all the saints**,

⁵ For the **hope which is laid up for you in heaven**, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the **gospel**;

⁶ Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and **bringeth forth fruit**, as it doth **also in you**, since the day ye heard of it, and **knew the grace of God in truth**:

⁷ As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;

⁸ Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.

⁹ **For this cause** we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be **filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding**;

¹⁰ That ye might **walk worthy of the Lord** unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

¹¹ **Strengthened** with all might, **according to his glorious power**, unto all **patience and longsuffering** with **joyfulness**;

God has made adequate provision for His children **to know** and **to do His will**. This provision is **entirely a matter of grace**, which grace is **accessed only by faith**. (Ro. 5:1,2) However, when we come to Christ, we will inevitably be confronted with the experience described in the seventh chapter of Romans, which is the **struggle involved in learning how to perform according to what we know to be the Lord's will**. This struggle can and must be overcome by

realizing that: The law **makes sin known** to us, but **offers no deliverance** (Ro. 7:7); **We cannot deliver ourselves** from the demands of the flesh (Ro. 7:21-24); The **indwelling Spirit has exclusive power to deliver** from the desires and interests of the flesh, and the condemnation that we experience **due to our inability to perform** (Ro. 8:1,2); For this dilemma, God **made provision in Christ** for His children **to walk uprightly**, fulfilling the righteous demands of the law **by walking after the Spirit** (Ro. 8:3,4). These and many other scriptures make clear that salvation from sin is not merely a **judicial declaration** by God of a future hope, and of security from punishment for sin, that rests on **an initial act of faith**. *This future hope and security is not independent of the joy and security of salvation from sin's power, which is by grace through faith while we dwell on this earth.* We are, "5 ... kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 7 That the trial of **your faith**, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found **unto praise and honor and glory** at the appearing of Jesus Christ: 8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: 9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." 1 Peter 1:5-9

(When We Come To Christ: To What Have We Come, and The Person And Work Of Christ: Applied To One's Relationship To God are studies available through the web page that consider in more detail the matter of "work out your own salvation" **on the basis of** "God which worketh in you both to will and to do his good pleasure"). **Some other scriptures addressing the matter of "overcoming", and the consequences for not overcoming sin and the "fiery darts of the wicked" are:** Eph. 6:10-18; 2 Pet. 1:1-11; Heb. 3:6-14; 10:26-31.