

OVERCOMING

(Symposium from 1909 Convention report, page 33, on subject of overcoming.)

By Brother A. Calkins

I wish first to express my great appreciation of the many good things brought to us by means of this convention. Our friends from the East have been an inspiration to us. We feel this inspiration and want it to abide with us. What voltage is represented here? A dynamo for receiving and distributing spiritual power. Electrical force seems to exist everywhere, but it needs a dynamo to make it of practical application. How many such dynamos are represented in the world today as we note the many conventions of like character to this one, and to what shall we liken this great force in nature as prevalent as the air we breathe, this electrical fluid pervading the earth, if not to the power of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of truth, the spirit of love, received from God's great Power House, focused by the Dynamo of this convention and transmitted along the lines of the individual lives and characters of those present to carry on the great work of this harvest time. We fervently thank God for this Holy Spirit's power. "Be ye filled with the Spirit."

Now to our text. I have been asked to give a few thoughts on Rev. 3:5, "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." "He that overcometh," a familiar term in the Scriptures, and one that implies action. Something to be done. It implies not ordinary action, it implies conquering, victory, in whatever is undertaken. *What* we are to overcome has been set forth by the preceding speakers in the words, "The world, the flesh, and the devil." Surely this would seem to include everything that we as new creatures have to fight against and have to overcome. Paul gives us an actual illustration of overcoming when he says, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed, we are perplexed, yet not in despair; persecuted, yet not forsaken; cast down, yet not destroyed. Besides the fears without we have fightings within, for the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh." The Apostle Paul gives us an array of the moral filth and pollution belonging to the flesh in the 5th chapter of Galatians, and also an array of the fruits of the spirit, by means of which we are to overcome these things of the flesh. Then we see the strenuousness of the fight, that it is a continual warfare.

We next inquire, How are we to overcome? Paul says again, "I therefore so run not as uncertainly, so fight I, not as one that beateth the air, but I keep my body under." If we can do this, if we can meet trials and temptations with courage and fortitude, if we can render good for evil, or "overcome evil with good," as the Scripture tells us, we may hope to be among the overcomers. "To endure hardness as good soldiers" in the face of discouragement and defeat, to go bravely on when all seems dark and forbidding, and

everything seems to be working against us, *all this* is a part of overcoming, and we are enabled to do this only through *faith*. “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith.” We also read that “the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, even to bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” We also have the word of our Lord to comfort and encourage us. He says, “In, the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” The Apostle also left a record of his faithfulness to the end, in the following testimony, “I have *fought a good fight*, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” In other words he had gained a complete victory.

Our text contains three promises to him that overcometh. The first, he shall be “clothed with white raiment;” and what do we understand by this? We read in Rev. 19:7, 8, when the marriage of the Lamb shall come, and his wife hath made herself ready, then it shall be granted to her that “she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.” “What?” do you say, “Have I any righteousness of my own?” Not now, dear friends, for we know our own righteousness is as filthy rags. But we also know that our rags, our imperfections are covered by the ample robe of Christ’s righteousness and sanctification and redemption. But if we are among the overcomers, if we are members of the Bride class, the Lamb’s wife, “when she shall have made herself ready,” there will be given to each of us a robe of linen, clean and white, which shall then be ours by actual possession, for “the white linen is the righteousness of saints.” The second promise is, “I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.” This implies that His name has already been written in the Lamb’s book of life, and He will not blot it out. Brethren, are *our* names written in the Lamb’s book of life? We trust they all are, and that through His grace we may prove to be faithful overcomers, then we may confidently expect the fulfillment of the third promise, “I will confess his name before my Father and before His angels.” Dear friends, what great pleasure it gives us to introduce the members of our family or some beloved brother or friend to our dear Bro. Russell on this occasion. We love to see them clasp hands and greet each other and make each other’s acquaintance. What will be our joy when our dear Lord Jesus confesses our names before His Father and the holy angels?

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power both now and ever, Amen.”