

OVERCOMING

(Symposium from 1909 Convention report, page 32, on the subject of overcoming.)

By Brother H. C. Haskill.

The 7th verse of the 2nd chapter of Revelation is assigned as the basis for our remarks, especial attention to be given to the thought of overcoming. The verse reads as follows: "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."

In the first place we notice the message is only to him that hath an ear, or to consecrated followers of our Lord. The churches mentioned evidently refer to the seven stages or epochs of the nominal church from the days of the Apostles till the end of the Gospel Age. Our Lord's parable of the vine and the branches shows that it is not a matter of belonging to some good denomination or class of believers but of our obedience to our Lord's will individually that will determine the result of our warfare.

Although the expression, "The world, the flesh, and the devil" is not a verse of the Bible, it is true that these are our three greatest enemies. The world with its offer of honor in the way of social position, offer of riches or praise for those who are successful in intellectual attainments, music, art, etc., is probably the foe which one first encounters at the beginning of their Christian experience. Many of us were brought up with the hope that some time we would be rich or have enough money to be beyond the fear of want and live comfortably the remainder of our lives. To give up this hope and consecrate all to the Lord and gladly go through any experience He would have us to go through requires a struggle to overcome. The next enemy, the works or inclinations of the flesh are enumerated by the Apostle in Gal. 5:19-21 as follows: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness and revelings." At first, we may have thought that *we Christians* surely would not be guilty of any such things and that these warnings apply only to the lowest class of people in the world. But when we learn more of the meaning of these terms as used in God's Word, we find that they do indeed apply to us. For instance, from God's standpoint hatred of a brother is murder, and if we love anything else more than the Lord it is idolatry.

So these warnings against the works of the flesh, and in fact *every* admonition of the Scriptures are applicable to us, because if there was one that was not, it would imply that we were perfect in that *one* particular and we know that not one of us is *perfect* in any one thing. Some of us have developed good qualities in one direction and others in

another direction, but none of us is *perfect* in any one of these, so we will all need to watch as long as we are this side of the veil, if we are to be overcomers.

The third great enemy is mentioned by the Apostle in Eph. 6:12, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [or, wicked spirits] in high places.”