

Living as an Overcomer – Tony Evans

Living as a Conqueror in All Things – Chapter 10

1. The second choice that a Christian has to make to become an overcomer is choosing to be a conqueror in all things. In the previous chapter, we learned that if we choose, we can access God's power to battle against Satan.
2. Without faith in God's power, we could potentially cower in our homes out of fear. John 16:33 is the cornerstone verse for becoming an overcomer. It tells us, "*I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*"
3. Both God and Jesus are waymakers. Isaiah 43:15-16 says, "*I am the Lord, your Holy One, Israel's Creator, your King.*" 16 *This is what the Lord says—he who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters.*" The woman with the bleeding disorder recognized that Jesus would make a way for her to be healed. If she could just reach through the crowd and touch the hem of His garment in Matthew 9:20.

"But if anything ought to garrison (fortify) our faith and strengthen our spiritual walk, it's those times when God shows up in the midst of the chaos and brings us through. Our view of Him is broadened in those seasons we can't handle on our own but God gives us all we need when we need it most. It is one thing to hear God is a waymaker, but it's another thing altogether to see Him make a way. It is one thing to hear God is able, but it's another thing altogether to see Him work things out. It's one thing to hear Jesus can fix it, but it's another thing altogether to see Him fix it." (Evans)

4. Read Romans 8:31-39. We should post this in our homes. One of the most powerful statements in the Bible, "*If God is for us, who can be against us?*" We have the same power at our disposal that created the universe or raised Jesus from the dead.
5. In verse 37, the Greek word "hypernikaō" is used and translated as "*more than conquerors*" (NIV and NKJV) but the NASB translates it as "*overwhelmingly conquer*". With the power of God, we can do more than get by, we can overwhelming conquer.
6. I have said numerous times, we put human limitations on the power of God. His power is limitless. If you call on it, He will do "*exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.*" (Ephesians 3:20 NKJV)
7. To claim this "supersized" overcoming, you need to understand your relationship with God through Jesus. Romans 8:16-17 says "*16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. 17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*"
8. Evans says that co-heirs are so much more than a simple heir. If you have a sibling then your inheritance is cut in half but a co-heir means that inheritance is not divided. For instance, if your father has two kingdoms and you are an heir, you will inherit one of the

kingdoms. As a co-heir, you inherit control over both kingdoms with your other co-heirs. Everything that your sibling controls, you also control. The NKJV calls us joint heirs with Jesus.

9. Being a co-heir with Jesus gives us a connection with Him that is beyond a friend or brother. This connection and the verses from Romans 8:17-27 sets up Verse 28. Evans calls Romans 8:28 “the greatest verses in the Bible for Life Application”. It says, “*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*”
10. Verses 17-28 speak about struggles. My Bible has the header of “Present Suffering and Future Glory”. We can look at the misery or division in the U.S. today or a physical ailment or a death in the family as our “Present Suffering”. We can wonder what is going on. “But Paul wants you, a child of God, to know that in the midst of the tears and pain life brings your way, God can work it all out for good if you love Him and live in the calling He has for you.”(Evans)
11. Evans uses the example of a cake. You don’t eat each ingredient by itself. You mix them together and bake them and you end up with a cake that tastes great. In life the same thing can occur. If you look at each individual trial by itself, it can weigh you down. But if we look back on these trials and troubles together and try to understand it in God’s eyes and not our eyes, we may see the good in it.
12. If you look at the apostle Paul’s life. He was raised with a great foundation in Judaism. He persecuted Christians, even to the point of death. Then when he met Jesus on the Damascus road, he was changed forever. But he still had troubles. He was jailed and whipped and persecuted. These trials made him more empathetic to the troubles of the Gentiles and to us. His understanding of the Old Testament enabled him to defend his faith against the Jewish leaders and troublemakers. Everything that he went through ended up making him a better witness for Jesus. It all helped him love Jesus more. “*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*” (Romans 8:28 NIV)
13. As a parent, you never want to answer a Why question with “Because I said so!” We want our children to obey because they love us. There are times in our lives when God asks us to do something that we don’t want to do and we ask “Why?”. He wants us to just do it because we love Him. Jesus tells us in John 14:15 that “*If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*” (NASB)
14. John MacArthur in his book, “The Gospel According to Jesus”, points out that part of the Gospel taught by Jesus includes obedience. Evans says, “God knows our love is real when we choose to obey Him. Loving Him is a tangible, measurable concept, not merely an ethereal, emotional feeling in the moment. You love God when you do what He wants you to do even if, and especially if, you don’t want to. And that can be tough.”
15. Consider Abraham and his son Isaac. (Genesis 22:1-15) When God said “*Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there*

as a burnt offering.” (NASB) God knew that Abraham loved Him because he did as God asked without question.

16. Evans calls Romans 8:28 a “cause and effect” verse. You have a role to play in living as an overcomer. Evans says, “Submitting or surrendering to God in the midst of your suffering and negative situations is what moves you from living as an heir to living as a coheir with Christ.” We are to be obedient to God in the good and bad times.
17. Some people claim the salvation that faith in Jesus brings. They view it as “I have things covered for when I die.” That isn’t all faith in Jesus brings. If we look at Abraham again. He was completely obedient to God. He made a connection with God. God’s hand was on him throughout his entire life, as well as his descendants’ lives. He lived a blessed life with a close personal relationship with God.
18. Romans 8:32 says, “*He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?*” (NASB) The word “freely” means that it comes at no charge. We get His grace. We get what we don’t deserve.

“Freely means that the good God gives us comes out of our coheir relationship with Him. This free flow of grace shows up when God takes the good, the bad, and the ugly in your life and works it together for good. The good refers to the things you’re proud of. The bad refers to the things you may regret. The ugly refers to the painful stuff that life itself, or others, may have done to you. All of these things mix together to produce a good or beneficial result when you fully love God.” (Evans)

19. The foundation of our relationship cannot be based on the gifts that we are expecting. The foundation must be love. Remember, Jesus said “*If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*” John 14:15 (NASB) Our relationship with God is not a “carrot and stick” relationship. If our motivation is the blessings that He gives above our love for Him. It won’t work. He will see right through us.
20. God knows when we need Him most. Psalm 46:1 says, “*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.*” Jesus reveals His loving heart for us during the bad times. Evans says, “That’s where His power and authority become yours and allow you to live as an overwhelmingly victorious, conquering, overcoming Christian.”
21. To me, the least painful funeral is for the loss of a believing loved one. As a believer, you can rely on Jesus for His strength and love to get you through the loss. But since they were a believer, you can take comfort in knowing that you will see them again. I don’t know how non-believers get through the loss of a loved one without Jesus.
22. An old adage said, “Shared joy is double joy; shared sorrow is half a sorrow”. God wants us to give the sorrow, pain and other negatives to Him. If we share the problems in our lives they are reduced but giving them to God makes them insignificant.

23. God wants us reliant on Him. Self reliance means we go through the trials alone. God doesn't want that for us. He wants us to be "super-overcomers" and only He can make that happen.
24. Evans uses the example of Joseph in the O.T. I can't imagine all of the bad things that were poured on him by his brothers or because of them. God took the bad things that happened to him and turned them into good in his life. In Genesis 50:20, Joseph tells his brothers, "*You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.*" (NLT) Remember Romans 8:28, "*in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*" All things and that includes the good and the bad.
25. Remember Jesus tells us in Matthew 28:18 that He was given power and authority over all things. So it doesn't matter who or what you are up against in your life, Jesus has all power and authority over it or them. You may get a horrible diagnosis like the "c" word, the doctor doesn't have the final say. You may be called into your boss' office during a "downsizing", your boss doesn't have the final say. Your emotions may have a say in what you are feeling but always remember Jesus is in control of everything.
26. ACCESS GOD'S KINGDOM AUTHORITY - In chapter 7, we covered this topic in depth. In Revelation 3:8, to the church at Philadelphia, Jesus "*placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength*". Jesus has given them the permission thus authority to go through the open door. Evans defines authority as the right to use the power you possess. "What living as an overcomer through our obedience to Jesus and love for Him produces in your life is access to kingdom authority." (Evans)
27. Evans uses referees in a football game as an example of ones that are weak compared to the football players but they have been given authority over everyone in the game. Their authority overrules the power of the players and coaches.
28. Compared to Satan, humans are weak and are no match for the power of the fallen angel. Your relationship with Jesus as co-heirs, you have access to His authority which overrides Satan's power.
29. Read Colossians 2:13-15. Jesus has "disarmed" Satan through His work on the cross. Our faith in Jesus and His forgiveness gives us access to His kingdom authority. We have said numerous times that Satan is no match for our Savior. Keep Matthew 28:18 at the front of you mind, it tells us that "*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me (Jesus).*"
30. We need to realize that unless we allow him, Satan has no power over us. As Evans says, "Satan's gun is empty."

"He no longer has the last word, because Jesus Christ now sits high above all other rule and authority. And you and I are seated with Him, sharing in that authority when we are a coheir with Christ based on our relationship with Him." (Evans)

31. This doesn't mean that you won't have problems, trials, depression and all of the other things that come from living in this imperfect world. Remember Romans 8:28, "*in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*" There will be bad times but Jesus will help you get through them and possibly you will see the benefit to your life.
32. Evans says, "One way to bring this victory about even faster is to praise God." Consider all the trials of Paul, he lists them in 2 Corinthians 11:16-33. After everything that he endured, he still praised God. Paul says in verse 31, "*God, the Father of our Lord Jesus, who is worthy of eternal praise*". We don't praise God for the bad things that happen. We should never stop praising Him. It is important to continue to praise God even in the valleys of our lives.
33. We can praise Him because He has power and authority over Satan and He has given us access to that power and authority through our relationship with Him. Ephesians 2:6 says, "*(God) raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*"

"This is why our focus on the churches in Revelation is so critical. The believers, as recorded in Revelation 12:10-11, overcame. They overcame Satan because they never lost sight that the very thing set out to bring hell into their lives did not have the last word. They never lost sight that Jesus has conquered Satan, granting them access to an authority higher than the devil's own."
(Evans)

34. Seated with Christ. Back up in Tony Evans' quote (between #30 and 31), it says that as co-heirs with Christ we are seated with Him. This came from Ephesians 2:4-7. "*But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions —it is by grace you have been saved. 6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.*"

Guzik says, "We don't sit in the heavenly places *with* Christ Jesus, or at least not yet. Instead, we sit in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Since our life and identity is in Christ, as He sits in heavenly places, so do we."

Clarke says, "And now we *sit in heavenly* places — we have a *right* to the kingdom of God, anticipate this glory, and are indescribably happy in the possession of this salvation, and in our fellowship with Christ Jesus."

35. Yes, we are still on this earth but once we are saved then our home is no longer on this earth. Our citizenship is in heaven, read Philippians 3:20-21. Earth is where we are living but we can draw on Jesus' spiritual power through prayer.
36. Consider Ephesians 6:12, "*For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*" In order to battle Satan, we can't defeat him

if we think in a physical way. We have to draw on the spiritual power of Jesus to defeat him. We can never be an overcomer unless we think spiritually.

37. In Matthew 6:32-34, Jesus tells us about worrying about the future. He says, “*32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*” When you tap into the power and authority of Jesus through your relationship with Him, it changes the way that you feel and think. It is the difference between self-reliance and relying on the limitless power of Jesus.
38. Paul understood it. He wrote in Philippians 4:3, “*I can do all this through him who gives me strength.*” We need to rely on the power that comes from heaven. Later in that chapter Paul wrote, “*But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*”(v. 19) We need to replace our stress with prayer. When you tap into the power of Jesus, it should change the way that you think.
39. In closing this chapter, Evans says something that no human wants to hear. God does not take us out of our troubles. In order to experience the overcoming power of Jesus, we pass through the valley. We want God to pluck us out of the troubles.
40. Romans 8:37 says, “*But IN all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.*” It says “*IN all things*”. None of us want to go through trials and troubles but if we skip them, we won’t see the power of God.
41. When they left Egypt, the Israelites would have liked to have blinked and ended up in the Promised Land. If that would have happened, then they would have missed the parting of the Red Sea, the protecting fog, the manna from heaven and the walls of Jericho falling down, just to name a few. God constantly delivered them throughout their trip, despite their whining.
42. Jesus said, “*And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*” We have heavenly power through our relationship with Jesus. As co-heirs, we have a seat in heaven because He has a seat in heaven. It is our great intercessor.
43. We will not be delivered from our trials but we will be delivered in and through them. The poet understood it when he penned “Footprints in the Sand”. Jesus walks beside us until the trials come and then he will come. When they get too difficult, He will carry us through them.

“But though I want to encourage you, I don’t want to paint an unreal picture of this life. God is not promising that the devil will leave you alone if you follow Him. He’s not promising that if you love Him, people won’t seek to oppress or block you. He’s not promising you a life free from bumps or bruises or sprains. But He does want you to know that since He did not spare His only Son but delivered Him up for you, your victory is secure. No matter what you’re going through or facing right now, you can overwhelmingly conquer as a super-overcomer in Jesus Christ. (Evans)