

DEEPER TEACHINGS
(MEAT OF THE WORD)

#43A

SEVEN STEPS TO PERFECTION

By Sam Fife



According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

1Co 3:10

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This is a study of God's purpose for His Church in these last days. In the Book of Revelation, the second chapter, in the letters to the seven churches, we find Jesus seven times saying, "to him that overcometh, will I give" something. In these seven times that Jesus says this, we have revealed to us the seven progressive steps from our salvation to our perfection. If you will turn in your Bible to Revelation chapter 2, we will begin to study them.

STEP 1

Rev. 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.

This is the salvation experience or when one first begins to feed upon the Word of God. The tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God is union with God's Spirit or the Word of God. In Rev. 22 where John describes the Holy City he says, "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bear twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." The tree of life is full union with the Spirit of God. The twelve manner of fruits the tree bears (twelve being the ultimate perfect number), indicates all the blessings that came from being in perfect union or perfection in the Spirit of God: perfect health, perfect peace, perfect wisdom, perfect faith, perfect power, and we could go on and on and on. It denotes all the blessings.

You will notice, the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There has never been anything given to heal the nations of the great sickness that is upon them but the truths that are in the Word of God. So the truths that are in the Word of God given by the Spirit of God are the leaves of the tree which are for the healing of the nations.

So when Jesus says, "to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life," it is denoted unto us that the person who overcomes all the lies, the false ideas that the world presents to them that Jesus is not the Saviour, that they should not surrender to Him as Saviour, who overcome their relatives and the devil as he drags them back and tries to hold them back, trying to keep them from coming to Christ as Saviour; Jesus says to those that overcome and come to Him as Saviour will He begin to give them to eat of the tree of life.

This does not mean that they have attained unto their full salvation. It only means that they have begun to eat of the tree which gives life through coming to Christ. Before that, they are dead in trespasses and sins. Now they begin to live. This is the first step on our journey toward perfection in Christ Jesus.

STEP 2

Rev. 2:11 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.

This is the second step in our progressive journey toward perfection in Christ Jesus. Through eating of the tree of life we are saved. We are given eternal life, therefore, escape the second death or to be cast into hell, separated from God throughout eternity.

STEP 3

Rev. 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. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna."

You'll notice that this overcoming must be done after we become a Christian, after beginning to eat of the tree of life, and after escaping the second death. This is the third step in

our progressive journey, when we begin to eat of the hidden manna - when we begin to feast on the hidden manna. When we have been baptized in the Holy Spirit and begin our walk in the Spirit, we begin to see the spiritual truths behind the letter of the Word. Until we come to this point, we are still walking in carnal, formalistic, ritualistic, Christianity feeding only upon the letter of the Word, knowing what the Bible says but not knowing what the Bible means by what it says. We are not able to look back behind the literal letter of the Word and see the great spirit of the Word that is there and to know what Paul meant when he said, "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

When we come to this third step in our journey, we are baptized in the Spirit. Then Jesus begins to take us back behind the letter of the Word, and we begin to feast on the hidden manna seeing the great spiritual truths that reveal the spiritual realities that are behind the letter of the word.

Time after time today we are hearing ministers across the country (Lutherans, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, etc.) soon after receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit say, "My Bible has become a new book to me." When we begin to walk in the Spirit, the Holy Spirit begins to enable us to feast upon the hidden manna -those spiritual truths that one cannot see as long as they are only walking in carnal Christianity, trying to interpret the Bible with their carnal intelligence, instead of by revelation of the Spirit of God.

"And will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." It was for many years that I waited upon God to know what this white stone was that Jesus is speaking of here. When the Spirit spoke, He reminded me of a bit of information I had picked up back during the years, I do not know just where. When one was accused of a crime in the Jerusalem of Jesus day, they were brought before the Sanhedrin Judges which were the ruling council of Israel in that time. They did not have civil courts as we do. Their

religious leaders were their judges. The great Sanhedrin was made up of 70 religious leaders. When one was brought before the Sanhedrin accused of a crime, he was allowed to plead his case and his counselors to present the evidence against him. When it was time for the judges to decide whether he was guilty or not guilty, a receptacle was passed. If a member of the Sanhedrin wanted to vote guilty concerning this person, he would drop a black stone in the receptacle. But if he wanted to vote not guilty, if he wanted to say, "I believe this man is innocent of the crime," then he would drop a white stone into the receptacle.

Jesus knew this, so when He said, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna and will give him a white stone," he was saying, "I will make that person not guilty. I will declare him to be not guilty or I will reveal to him at this point in his spiritual growth that he is not guilty. It is when we begin to feast upon the hidden manna that we come to see that through the blood of Jesus we are absolutely pure and perfect and sinless in the eyes of our Heavenly Father, truly not guilty before Him.

This becomes true in our own consciousness through revelation as the Spirit of God reveals to us that that is our wonderful standing with God. It is revealed to us as we begin to walk in the Spirit and feast upon the hidden manna.

Then He said, "And in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." This new name which we receive is the name Christ. At this point after we are baptized in the Spirit and begin to feast upon the hidden manna, it is revealed to us that we are the Body and members thereof. Jesus is the Head. Jesus alone is not the Christ of God but that we are Christ. The word Christ simply means "God's deliverer" or "the Anointed one" who is sent to deliver the earth from the bondage of corruption.

At this point in our progressive journey we come to see that Jesus the Head alone was the first anointed of God. Now He is the Head of a great Body, a many-membered Body, His Body, which is just as much a part of God's

anointed one. It is through this Body that Jesus the Head is going to deliver the earth from the bondage of corruption. So Jesus is the Head, and we are the Body, and all of us together make up the Christ of God. We no longer see ourselves as a puny powerless human being but as members of the Body of Christ, anointed of God by the power of the Spirit of God to deliver the earth from the bondage of corruption. Yea, we see that we are Christ, God's deliverer that shall deliver the earth from the bondage of corruption. This new name is a name no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it is most certainly true. Because, only those who have grown up in the Spirit of God, see who they are in Christ, can receive this name unto themselves.

STEP 4

Rev. 2:26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.

This is the fourth step in our progressive journey as we continue to overcome. We have eaten from the tree of life, salvation. We have escaped the second death. We have been filled with the Spirit of God and have begun to feast upon the hidden manna. We have been given the new name as revealed to us that we are Christ, God's anointed one who is to deliver the earth from the bondage of corruption, then the next step is to be given power over the nations.

As we continue to overcome, the Spirit of God leads us to continue to grow in Christ. We are being, and will be given, that supernatural power of God which shall one day lead us to rule the nation with a rod of iron. Too many people when they read this take it to mean powerless now until Jesus returns, and then after He appears to us the second time he will then give us power to rule over the nations. This is far from the truth.

To him that overcometh, he is giving, and will be giving that supernatural power now, and it will increase and increase. Through its coming, we shall drive Satan and his

kingdom completely out of the earth. We shall bring Jesus back and then rule the nation with a rod of iron.

Too many people have misunderstood the statement in Scripture which says that Jesus is going to bind Satan in the bottomless pit before the millennium begins. They have assumed that Jesus was going to come back and all by Himself He was going to bind Satan in the bottomless pit. We were going to have nothing to do with it, and then He was going to give us some marvelous power to rule over the nations. Perhaps many have assumed that binding Satan in the bottomless pit was taking one being, the devil, and binding him with some kind of chains and putting him in a pit somewhere.

Number one, there is no pit anywhere. A pit without a bottom is only a place.

Number two, Satan is not a physical being, so he cannot be bound with physical chains. He must be bound spiritually.

Number three, Satan is not one being. The devil's kingdom is not one being but is made up of Lucifer and his millions of demon spirits.

When the Bible speaks of binding Satan, it is not speaking of binding one big omnipresent being which is everywhere, because the devil is not an omnipresent being. Lucifer is only one spirit, but he has millions of demons. When the Bible speaks of Jesus binding Satan in the bottomless pit, Jesus is going to do it, true. But, He is going to do it working through His Body which we each are a member thereof. Everyone is expecting Jesus outside the Body of Christ to do it all by Himself. Jesus is not going to do anything that He does not do working through His Body. Just as your head formulates the plans, your body carries them out. Your head does not do anything that it doesn't do working through your body. Even so, Jesus our Head has the plans and the purpose, but He is going to carry it out through His Body, yea, working through His Body He is going to bind Satan in the bottomless pit.

Binding Satan in the bottomless pit means nothing other than the Sons of God, the Body of Christ, being so filled with revelation, knowledge, and the anointing and power of God in the last days, that by the power of God's Spirit with the nine manifestations of the Spirit working in perfect order, they going to uncover and bring to light every demon spirit that is hiding in the darkness of the earth, in people, and in the air. They are going to drive every one of them out of the earth's sphere and bring Jesus, our wonderful Head, back through bringing forth the victory.

God showed this to me in a vision the night before He told me to preach this message to my people. He had given me the message on Saturday afternoon. As I laid down in bed that night, I suddenly began seeing a vision. A great herd of black cattle was being driven across the face of the earth. I could see the face of the whole earth in the vision. I was not asleep, I was wide awake. I saw this great herd of black cattle being driven across the earth by rays of light that swept up and down behind them. Then I looked in the vision and to the right I would see a small herd coming out of a city being driven out of the city. They would be joined to the main herd and driven on with the main herd. Up ahead I would see another small herd coming out of a jungle, and they would be joined to the main herd and driven off. On the left I would see another small herd coming out of another city and being joined to the main herd. As I watched, I saw up ahead the first line, the first wave began to go over a cliff and then the second wave and then the third, as the rays of lights were driving them. Sometimes a few of the cattle in the back would try to dart out of the herd and get away, but a ray of light would sweep back behind them and drive them back into the herd just as the cowboys do when they are driving cattle. As I looked ahead, wave after wave continued to go over the cliff until finally the last line came up and went over the cliff. Then the rays of light lit up the whole earth and I thought I heard my Saviour say, "Then shall the righteous shine in the kingdom of their father."

This is how Satan is going to be bound in the bottomless pit. It is going to be done as the Sons of God overcome and are given power over the nations, progressively more and more power, supernatural power until they drive every demon out of the earth. The Judgment of God is come upon the wicked. Through this we are going to bring Jesus back. We are not waiting on Him. He is waiting on us to fulfill God's purpose in our lives.

STEP 5

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.

This white raiment that is spoken of here is not the imputed righteousness that is given to us when we accept Jesus as Saviour. You will note that Jesus in Revelation here is sending these letters to the seven churches. Therefore, He is writing to people who have already had the imputed righteousness given to them.

He says there is yet another white raiment that is to come to you through your overcoming. This is not the imputed righteousness of Jesus' name, but the actual righteousness which God is going to bring us to, that perfect walk in Christ, that perfection that He is bringing us to fulfilling the words of Jesus in Matt. 5:48, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." And the fulfilling of Ephesians 4:15, "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things which is the Head, even Christ." This is the fifth stage of our journey - to be led to that perfection, that perfect righteousness that Jesus walked in during His 3 ½ years of ministry.

STEP 6

Rev. 3:12 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.

Here we have tremendous depth of revelation of God's plan for us. First, to him that comes to the sixth stage of overcoming will I make a pillar in the temple of my God. Here Jesus says that He is going to place us in the temple of God. We will not be sitting in some building worshipping God. We will be a part of the building. We will be a pillar in the building. You see, we are that temple God is building. God is not building a temple for us to sit in. He is building a temple out of us.

In Ephesians 2:19-22 the Spirit says through the Apostle Paul, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." God is building a temple for He Himself to dwell in and rule over His universe throughout all eternity. We are that temple that He is building.

So Jesus says to him that overcometh He will make a pillar in that temple, and he shall go no more out. No longer will we be in and out of the presence of God. No longer will we be in and out of the leadership of God's Spirit. We will be in perfect union with the Spirit of God and shall go no more out.

Then Jesus says at this stage "I will write upon him the name of my God," All the way through the Scripture when the Bible speaks of the name of God, it refers to His nature and His character. When we speak of anyone's good name, we are speaking of their nature and their character. So what Jesus says here is to him that reaches this stage of overcoming I will give him the very nature and character of

God. Oh! That God might reveal to you the full implication of this statement, dear friend. It is so powerful that for me to point it out to you might frighten you. But to be given the very nature of God, the very character of God means to be what God is, and may the Spirit of God take you on to see the fullest implication from there on.

Notice, Jesus says to those who reach this stage of overcoming, "I will write upon him the name of my God." The same way He said this, He meant that He would give him the nature and character of God. When He says He will also write "the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem that is revealed in the Scripture is nothing but the Church of Jesus Christ, the Body of Christ in perfection.

God never intended for it to be taken as a literal city that is going to be here upon the earth some day, Nay, the New Jerusalem that is revealed in the Book of Revelation is the Body of Christ in perfection. We are going to make a study of it also in another booklet. So when Jesus says, "I will write upon him the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out heaven from my God," He is simply saying, "I will make him a part of that great city." Every one of the members of the Body of Christ in perfection is going to be that city. There is no physical city, and there will never be any physical city with streets paved with gold. Then in the last He says, "And I will write upon him my new name." So few people know that Jesus now has a new name. Now we do not mean that He is no longer called Jesus. But when He speaks of His new name here, He is not speaking of the handle or the word by which He is called. He is speaking of the nature and character.

When He was upon the earth, He had one nature and character. Through His death, burial, and resurrection, He attained to a new nature and character. Few people know that Jesus was not yet perfect or perfected when He was here upon the earth. Now we are not saying He was not perfectly sinless. Of course He was. We are saying He was not yet

perfect or perfected. If you want Scripture, literal letter Scripture for that, then read Luke, 13:32 where some people came to Jesus and they said to Him, Herod is seeking to kill thee. Jesus said, "Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." If you need further proof, you can read in the book of Hebrews, second chapter verse 10 where the Bible says that He was made perfect through suffering. He was made perfect. Someone asked in what sense was He not yet perfect while He was here on the earth? The Bible says in Philippians that He was tempted in all points like as we, yet without sin.

While He was here on the earth, He still had the imperfect nature in the sense that sin could still be a temptation to Him. Through His death, burial, and resurrection He came to His perfect state, His new nature whereby nothing could ever be a temptation to Him. This was His new name, the resurrected nature of Christ. When Jesus says, "To him that overcometh I will write on him my new name," He is saying, "I will give to him the resurrected nature of Christ." Romans 6 says, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

STEP 7

Rev. 3:21 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.

The seventh stage of our progressive journey to perfection is where we hear Jesus say, "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." You'll notice that Jesus said, "in my throne." First we need to understand what this means. Ephesians 1 :20 tells us that through His passion Jesus was raised up to sit at the right hand of God in the heavenly places. This does not mean that Jesus has for the past 1900 years been sitting beside a physical God on a

physical throne. In the first place, God does not exist in a physical form. He is omnipresent spirit which fills this whole universe, which our scientists tell us there are more worlds out there than all the individual grains of sand on all the beaches in the world. Therefore you cannot put a God that big, you cannot bottle Him up, and put Him in a physical form or on a physical throne. This expression, "raised up to sit at the right hand of God," denotes Jesus' spiritual position. The idea of God sitting on a throne and Jesus sitting on a throne beside Him ruling with Him denotes Jesus having been raised to co-equality, co-rulership with God.

When Jesus says, "To him that overcometh I will grant to sit with me in my throne," that is what He means. Notice He did not say, "I'll let him sit beside me on a throne." He said, "I'll let him sit with me in my throne." This denotes us having been raised up to co-rulership with Jesus. Everything He is, we are. Then He said, "Even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." So when we see Jesus sitting in the Father's throne and us sitting in His throne, we see ourselves also sitting in the Father's throne, ourselves also at the last stage of our journey having also been raised to co-equality with God. These are the seven steps of our journey. Perhaps it is too great for your faith to receive, but it is the revealed plan of God. God will take us on this journey. It is "Not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord." This is not something that might happen or might not. All God's works are finished before the foundation of the world. That which God has preordained He will bring to pass.

Oh! the riches of the glory of that which God hath prepared for them that love Him. May your soul rejoice in this precious truth, dear friend. May it fill you with an earnest desire to hasten your journey toward that place which is prepared for you.

In Jesus' precious Name. Amen.

