

WHO IS THE OVERCOMER? WHO RECEIVES THE REWARD?

Three Main Views

View #1

A saved person who retains their salvation (overcomer)
Those who do not forfeit theirs.

A. All Seven Promises

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|-----------------|----------|
| 1. Ephesus | Rev 2:7 |
| 2. Smyrna | Rev 2:10 |
| 3. Pergamum | Rev 2:17 |
| 4. Thyatira | Rev 2:26 |
| 5. Sardis | Rev 3:5 |
| 6. Philadelphia | Rev 3:12 |
| 7. Laodicia | Rev 3:21 |

....are received by only that number among the saved who finally prove faithful.

B. Some, who once were truly saved do not persevere and therefore forfeit their eternal salvation.

View #2

A saved person who conquers, in contrast to a defeated Christian

- A. The more victorious believer receives the rewards Christ promises
- B. The unfaithful “saved” person will still remain saved eternally. He simply fails to gain aspects of reward that are distinct from salvation.

View #3

Every saved person – all saved, will turn out to be overcomers.

Scripture Support for View #3

1 John 5:4,5

A. Every person who believes that Jesus is the Son of God, overcomes the world JUST AS every person who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.

1 Jn 5:1

❖ (John 20: 30-31 → Everyone that believes that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God has life in His Name.)

1 Jn 5:9-13

Note: John is not claiming that the person, by virtue of what he is in himself, automatically is able to overcome. It is the power within him, the dynamic of God's life, which is what overcomes.

(Whatever... neuter gender lays special focus on the power and not on the person, himself.)

❖ In 1 Jn 5:5 who “the person” overcomes because “whatever” overcomes the world.

❖ Jesus is the One who overcomes.

Jn 16:33; Rev 5:5; 17:14

Our faith overcomes the world because of its Object.

❖ In Rev 2-3 “he who overcomes” is virtually the same as he who believes.

If the above is true, then every saved person, in fact, overcomes in the Biblical sense (positional). One may overcome to a richer, more thorough degree than another, yet, every Christian overcomes to some degree.

1 John 4:4

A. All the “little children” have overcome – every spirit of anti-christ in the world

- ❖ In this epistle “little children” is a common term to describe all believers.
2:1, 28; 3:1,2,7,10,18, etc.
- ❖ God’s power, which produces victory, comes from the indwelling God – because...4:4
- ❖ Rev 21:7 – He who overcomes:
 1. I will be his God vs 3
 2. He will wipe away every tear vs 4
 3. There will be no mourning, crying, or pain vs 4
 4. All things will be made new vs 5
 5. Verse 7 appears to conclude and be a part of verses 3-7, while in verse 8 “But” refers to another group.
This second group is referenced in 21:27; 22:11, 15.

In Rev 21:27 the overcomer group is characterized by “those whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life”

- ❖ A person’s relation to “God’s Word” appears to be stressed, more than their “overcoming” actions.
Rev 3:8, 10; 6:9; 12:11; 13:8; 14:9-12; 22:7,9,11
- ❖ Overcoming is not stated as a condition for receiving eternal life. It is always spoken of as being given freely.
Rev 1:5; 21:6; 22:14, 17
- ❖ It is always the “blood of the Lamb” Rev 7:14 which provides the basis for entrance to the kingdom --- Never overcoming.

- ❖ From an experiential standpoint: What believer has not failed to overcome some or many times in his life-span, following his new birth?
Who has the list of which failures classify a believer as a non-overcomer?

Note: Is not the word “follow” a synonym for the word “believe” ? Jn 8:12; 10:4,5; 12:26

“Follow me”, in Peter’s case was a synonym of “serve”, not “save”. Jn 21:19,22

We follow (serve) because we are His, not to become His.

Matt 4:20; 8:23; 19:27-28

“Hear” and “follow” appear to be parts of the same thing.

- ❖ Rev 20:5-6 speaks of the completion of the First Resurrection.
Those who are raised receive the benefits listed.
Rev 21:3-7 appears to be a further description of their blessings as those belonging to Christ. I Cor 15:23