

Victory that Overcomes the World
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"For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith." 1 John 5:4

What does victory in the world look like? Maybe a new treatment for disease, or maybe a wonderful new vaccine? Perhaps at the moment we would count even steps towards returning to normal, or a clear decline in daily death rates as a "victory". In normal times we tend to think of "victory" in the world in terms of money, or success, or power, or fame - or any of those oh so fleeting idols that crumble into dust oh so quickly.

None of these are what St. John is speaking to at all. John is speaking of a victory over the world, even perhaps beyond the world, beyond the normal humdrum or even the normal sorrows and terrors of life in the world. John is speaking to the benefits that we receive from God has His born again children through faith in Christ Jesus.

The world is full of strangeness, hardship, wickedness, and evil. And all too often, so are we. We might pretend it isn't so, we might hide behind luxuries and confidences and self-justifications, but there are times (normally times of tragedy) where we are reminded just of the impact of sin - that the wages of sin is death, and that not all the planning, power, or hand sanitizer in the world can remove that. Pilate washed his hands but still had problems a plenty.

Yet now consider what you have received from God. By faith, you have been joined to Christ Jesus. And what has Jesus done for you? He has taken away your sin, destroyed death with His own death, ensured that you will rise to life again come the last day - but even more than that - He has given you His own righteousness and His own holiness, so that now you are good with God. God is well pleased with you - for now, for all time, and even on to eternity beyond time itself.

Satan will try to overwhelm you with... "stuff"... in this life. Maybe it's temptations, or wealth, anxieties or fears. But all of this is just his vain attempts to make you forget what Christ Jesus has won for you, what is yours by faith. You are forgiven in Christ, and in Christ you have life and salvation - life and salvation that lasts well beyond and triumphs over any "stuff" Satan can shovel at you.

So remember what is yours in Christ. It always is yours, whether the week to come seems to go well or poorly. Of course it is yours, for Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed, alleluia! Amen.