

OVERCOMER PREFACE

From the moment sin entered the world in the Garden of Eden, there have been spiritual forces at work against God and His people. In fact, Jesus promised that, “*Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows*” (**John 16:33**). These trials, struggles, persecution and sorrows do not surprise God. The pages of the Old and New Testaments are full of God’s people trying to persevere when the enemy was aggressively or subtly attacking them. They also persevered through hard situations and in cultures that actively opposed them and their faith. The same is true for us today.

While the book of *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*¹ unveils the long-standing, still-progressing war in heaven and on earth—between God and Satan—it also unveils who will win. The victor is Jesus, the ultimate Overcomer and our eternal hope.

Thankfully, in this war “[Believers] are not tasked with defeating the devil, but only with staying loyal to Jesus and resisting the devil. Our job is to return again and again to the source of our victory: the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, on the cross.”² When believers stay faithful to their testimony about the truth of Christ’s sacrifice, they too are overcomers³ and have the hope of a glorious eternity with Him.⁴ (**Revelation 12:11, John 16:33**)

“One caution is in order when speaking about terms such as ‘victory’ or ‘conquer’ [or overcoming], since [these words] are typically defined by our culture in terms of military, political, economic or athletic power. We dare not risk leaving these terms undefined, since cultural definitions will fill in the gaps. ... The message of Revelation is that Christians ‘conquer’ [overcome] ... by being faithful to Christ even in the face of suffering (**Revelation 12:11**).”⁵

To overcome is to faithfully follow Jesus, the ultimate Overcomer, until the end of our earthly lives.⁶

¹ Historically this book has often been called *The Revelation of John*. However, it is actually called *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (**Revelation 1:1**) as it reveals that Jesus is the ultimate Overcomer. (Johnson, 14) In this study it is often shortened to *Revelation*.

² Duvall, 180

³ The NLT translates “overcome” as “victorious.”

⁴ Duvall, 178

⁵ Ibid. 180

⁶ Ibid. 48

THE FOUR W'S—HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE:



Welcome: This section will help you enter into the theme of the lesson by answering an opening question. It is meant to be used personally and/or as a sort of ice-breaker during your group time.



Word: This section will help you engage with the biblical text, both with information and with questions to answer and discuss with your group.



Worship: After you have looked into God's Word, this section will guide you into a time of worship. While traditionally worship involves singing, the expanded understanding of worship in this study also involves spending time showing love, adoration and praise to God in various ways. These lessons will provide a time for meaningful worship both personally and as a group.



Witness: Believers are called to reflect Christ in the world. This section will help you engage with how to be a witness from week to week, reflecting Christ to people who don't know Him or to build up the faith of those who do know Christ.

Readers' note: This study relies heavily on information presented in footnote form.

If you are using this study guide in a group, feel free to utilize the footnotes as a launching pad for discussion. You could potentially start or end your group time by asking, "Was there anything you read in the footnotes that enhanced your understanding of Revelation, of God, of yourself, etc.?"