

# Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

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CHRIST, THE OVERCOMER OF THE WORLD.

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## A Sermon

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“Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”—John xvi. 33.

WHEN these words were spoken our Saviour was about to leave his disciples to go to his death for their sakes. His great anxiety was that they might not be too much cast down by the trials which would come upon them. He desired to prepare their minds for the heavy sorrows which awaited them, while the powers of darkness and the men of the world wrought their will upon him. Now observe, beloved, that our Lord Jesus, in whom dwells infinite wisdom, knew all the secret springs of comfort, and all the hallowed sources of consolation in heaven and under heaven, and yet in order to console his disciples he spoke, not of heavenly mysteries nor of secrets hidden in the breast of God, but he spake concerning himself. Doth he not herein teach us that there is no balm for the heart like himself, no consolation of Israel comparable to his person and his work. If even such a divine Barnabas, such a first-born son of consolation as the Lord himself must point to what he himself has done, for only so can he make his followers to be of good cheer, then how wise it must be in ministers to preach much of Jesus by way of encouragement to the Lord's afflicted, and how prudent it is for mourners to look to him for the comfort they need. “Be of good cheer,” he saith, “*I*”—something about himself—“*I have overcome the world.*” So then, beloved, in all times of depression of spirit hasten away to the Lord Jesus Christ; whenever the cares of this life burden you, and your way seems hard for your weary feet, fly to your Lord. There may be, and there are, other sources of consolation, but they will not at all times serve your turn; but in Him there dwelleth such a fulness of comfort, that whether it be in summer or in winter the streams of comfort are always flowing. In your high estate or in your low estate, and from whatever quarter your trouble may arise, you can resort at once to him and you shall find that he strengthens the hands that hang down and confirms the feeble knees.

A further remark suggests itself that the Lord Jesus must be more than man from the tone which he assumed. There are certain persons who deny the godhead of our Lord and yet think well of Jesus as a man; indeed, they have uttered many highly complimentary things with regard to his character: but I wonder it should not strike them that there is a great deal of assumption, presumption, pride, egotism, and all that style of folly in this man if he be nothing more than a man. For what good man whom you would wish to imitate would say to others "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." This is altogether too much for a mere man to say. The Lord Jesus Christ frequently spoke about himself and about what he has done, and commended himself to his disciples as one who was only a man and of a lowly mind could never have done. The Lord was certainly meek and lowly in heart, but no man of that character would have told others so. There is an inconsistency here which none can account for but those who believe him to be the Son of God. Understand him to be divine, put him in his true position as speaking down out of the excellency of his deity to his disciples, and then you can comprehend his so speaking, yea, it becomes infinitely seemly and beautiful. Deny his godhead, and I for one am quite unable to understand how the words before us, and others like them, could ever have fallen from his lips, for none will dare to say that he was boastful. Blessed be thou, O, Son of man, thou art also Son of God, and therefore thou dost not only speak to us with the sympathizing tenderness of a brother man, but with the majestic authority of the Only Begotten of the Father. Divinely condescending are thy words, "I have overcome the world."

If you look at this claim of Jesus without the eye of faith, does it not wear an extraordinary appearance? How could the betrayed man of Nazareth say, "I have overcome the world"? We can imagine Napoleon speaking thus when he had crushed the nations beneath his feet, and shaped the map of Europe to his will. We can imagine Alexander speaking thus when he had rifled the palaces of Persia and led her ancient monarchs captive. But who is this that speaketh on this wise? It is a Galilean, who wears a peasant's garment, and consorts with the poor and the fallen! He has neither wealth nor worldly rank nor honour among men, and yet speaks of having overcome the world. He is about to be betrayed by his own base follower into the hands of his enemies, and then he will be led out to judgment and to death, and yet he says, "I have overcome the world." He is casting an eye to his cross with all its shame, and to the death which ensued from it, and yet he saith, "I have overcome the world." He had not where to lay his head, he had not a disciple that would stand up for him, for he had just said, "Ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone"; he was to be charged with blasphemy and sedition, and brought before the judge, and find no man to declare his generation; he was to be given up to a brutal soldiery to be mocked and despitefully used and spat upon; his hands and feet were to be nailed to a cross, that he might die a felon's death, and yet he saith, "I have overcome the world." How marvellous, and yet how true! He spoke not after the manner of the flesh nor after the sight of the eye. We must use faith's optics here and look within the veil, and then we shall

see not alone the despised bodily person of the Son of man, but the indwelling, noble, all-conquering soul which transformed shame into honour, and death into glory. May God the Holy Spirit enable us to look through the external to the internal, and see how marvellously the ignominious death was the rough garment which concealed the matchless victory from the purblind eyes of carnal man.

During the last two Sabbath mornings I have spoken of our Lord Jesus Christ: first, as the end of the law; and secondly, as the conqueror over the old serpent; now we come to speak of him as *the overcomer of the world*. Addressing his disciples he said, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Now, *what is this world that he speaks about? and how has he overcome it? and what good cheer is there in the fact for us?*

I. WHAT IS THIS WORLD WHICH HE IS REFERRING TO? I scarcely know a word which is used with so many senses as this word "world." If you will turn to your Bibles you will find the word "world" used in significations widely different, for there is a world which Christ made, "He was in the world and the world was made by him"—that is, the physical world. There is a world which God so loved that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him might not perish. There are several forms of this favourable signification. Then there is a world, the world here meant, which "lieth in the wicked one," a world which knows not Christ, but which is evermore opposed to him: a world for which he says that he does not pray, and a world which he would not have us love—"Love not the world, neither the things which are in the world." Without going into these various meanings, and shades of meaning, which are very abundant, let us just say that we scarcely know how to define what is meant here in so many words, though we know well enough what is meant. Scripture does not give us definitions, but uses language in a popular manner, since it speaks to common people. "The world" is very much the equivalent of the "seed of the serpent," of which we spoke last Sabbath-day. The world here means the visible embodiment of that spirit of evil which was in the serpent, and which now worketh in the children of disobedience; it is the human form of the same evil force with which our Lord contended when he overcame the devil; it means the power of evil in the unregenerate mass of mankind, the energy and power of sin as it dwells in that portion of the world which abideth in death and lieth in the wicked one. The devil is the god of this world, and the prince of this world, and therefore he who is the friend of this world is the enemy of God. The world is the opposite of the church. There is a church which Christ has redeemed and chosen out of the world and separated unto himself, from among men, and of these as renewed by the power of divine grace, he says, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world," and again "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Now, the rest of mankind not comprehended amongst the chosen, the redeemed, the called, the saved, are called the world. Of these our Lord said, "O, righteous Father, the world hath not known thee;" and John said, "The world knoweth us not because it knew him not." This is the power which displays a deadly enmity against Christ and

against his chosen ; hence it is called "this present evil world," while the kingdom of grace is spoken of as "the world to come." This is the world of which it is said, "He that is born of God overcometh the world."

You will see that "the world" includes the ungodly themselves, as well as the force of evil in them, but it marks them out, not as creatures nor even as men who have sinned, but as unregenerate, carnal and rebellious, and therefore as the living embodiments of an evil power which works against God ; and so we read of "the world of the ungodly."

Perhaps I ought to add that there has grown up out of the existence of unconverted men and the prevalence of sin in them certain customs, fashions, maxims, rules, modes, manners, forces, all of which go to make up what is called "the world," and there are also certain principles, desires, lusts, governments and powers which also make up a part of the evil thing called "the world." Jesus says "My kingdom is not of this world." James speaks of keeping ourselves "unspotted from the world." John says, "the world passeth away and the lust thereof ;" and Paul says, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed."

Moreover, I may say that the present constitution and arrangement of all things in this fallen state may be comprehended in the term "world," for everything has come under vanity by reason of sin, and things are not to day according to the original plan of the Most High, as designed for man in his innocence. Behold there are trials and troubles springing out of our very existence in this life of which it is said, "in the world ye shall have tribulation." To many a child of God there have befallen hunger and disease and suffering, and unkindness, and various forms of evil which belong not to the world to come, nor to the kingdom which Christ has set up, but which come to them because they are in this present evil world, which has so become because the race of men have fallen under the curse and consequence of sin.

Now the world is all these matters put together, this great conglomeration of mischief among men, this evil which dwelleth here and there and everywhere wherever men are scattered,—this is the thing which we call the world. Every one of us know better what it is than we can tell to anybody else, and perhaps while I am explaining I am rather confounding than expounding. You know just what the world is to some of you—it is not more than your own little family, as to outward form, but much more as to influence. Your actual world may be confined to your own house, but the same principles enter into the domestic circle which pervade kingdoms and states. To others the world takes a wide sweep as they necessarily meet with ungodly men in business, and this we must do unless we are to go altogether out of the world, which is no part of our Lord's plan, for he says, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world." To some who look at the whole mass of mankind, and are called thoughtfully to consider them all because they have to be God's messengers to them, the tendencies and outgoings of the human mind towards that which is evil, and the spirit of men's actions as done against God in all nations and ages,—all these go to make up to them "the world." But be it

what it may, it is a thing out of which tribulation will be sure to come to us, Christ tells us so. It may come in the form of temporal trial of some shape or other ; it may come in the form of temptation which will alight upon us from our fellow-men ; it may come in the form of persecution to a greater or less extent according to our position : but it will come. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." We are sojourners in an enemy's country, and the people of the land wherein we tarry are not our friends, and will not help us on our pilgrimage to heaven. All spiritual men in the world are our friends, but then, like ourselves, they are in the world but they are not of it. From the kingdom of this world whereof Satan is lord we must expect fierce opposition against which we must contend even unto victory if we are to enter into everlasting rest.

II. Now this brings me to the more interesting topic in the second place of HOW HAS CHRIST OVERCOME THE WORLD ? And we answer, first he did so *in his life* : then *in his death* : and then *in his rising and his reigning*.

First, Christ *overcame the world in his life*. This is a wonderful study, the overcoming of the world in the life of Christ. I reckon that those first thirty years of which we know so little were a wonderful preparation for his conflict with the world, and that though only in the carpenter's shop, and obscure, and unknown to the great outside world, yet in fact he was not merely preparing for the battle, but he was then beginning to overcome it. In the patience which made him bide his time we see the dawn of the victory. When we are intent upon doing good, and we see mischief and sin triumphant everywhere, we are eager to begin : but suppose it were not the great Father's will that we should be immediately engaged in the fray, how strongly would the world then tempt us to go forward before our time. A transgression of discipline may be caused by over zeal, and this as much breaks through the law of obedience as dulness or sloth would do. The Roman soldier was accounted guilty who, when the army was left with the orders that no man should strike a blow in the leader's absence, nevertheless stepped forward and slew a Gaul ; the act was one of valour, but it was contrary to military discipline, and might have had most baleful results, and so it was condemned. Thus is it sometimes with us ; before we are ready, before we have received our commission, we are in haste to step forward and smite the foe. That temptation must have come to Christ from the world : many a time as he heard of what was going on in the reign of error and hypocrisy his benevolent impulses might have suggested to him to be up and doing, had it not been that he was incapable of wrong desires. Doubtless he was willing to be healing the sick. Was not the land full of sufferers ? He would fain be saving souls—were they not going down to the pit by thousands ? He would gladly have confuted error, for falsehood was doing deadly work, but his hour was not yet come. Yet our Lord and Master had nothing to say till his Father bade him speak. Strongly under an impulse to be at work we know he was, for when he went up to the temple he said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business ?" That utterance revealed the fire that burned within his soul, and yet he was not preaching nor healing, nor disputing, but still

remained in obscurity all those thirty years, because God would have it so. When the Lord would have us quiet we are doing his will best by being quiet, but yet to be still and calm for so long a time was a wonderful instance of how all his surroundings could not master him, not even when they seemed to work with his philanthropy; he still remained obedient to God, and thus proved himself the overcomer of the world.

When he appears upon the scene of public action you know how he overcomes the world in many ways. First, *by remaining always faithful to his testimony*. He never modified it, not even by so much as a solitary word to please the sons of men. From the first day in which he began to preach even to the closing sentence which he uttered it was all truth and nothing but truth, truth uncoloured by prevailing sentiment, untainted by popular error. He did not, after the manner of the Jesuit, disguise his doctrine by so shaping it that men would hardly know but what it was the very error in which they had been brought up, but he came out with plain speaking, and set himself in opposition to all the powers which ruled the thought and creed of the age. He was no guarder of truth. He allowed truth to fight her own battles in her own way, and you know how she bares her breast to her antagonist's darts, and finds in her own immutable, immortal, and invulnerable life her shield and her spear. His speech was confident, for he knew that truth would conquer in the long run, and therefore he gave forth his doctrine without respect to the age or its prejudices. I do not think that you can say that of anybody else's ministry, not even of the best and bravest of his servants. We can see, in looking at Luther, great and glorious Luther, how Romanism tinged all that he did more or less; and the darkness of the age cast some gloom even over the serene and steadfast soul of Calvin; of each one of the reformers we must say the same: bright stars as all of these were, yet they kept not themselves untarnished by the sphere in which they shone. Every man is more or less affected by his age, and we are obliged, as we read history, to make continual allowances, for we all admit that it would not be fair to judge the men of former times by the standard of the nineteenth century. But, sirs, you may test Christ Jesus if you will by the nineteenth century light, if light it be; you may judge him by any century, ay, you may try him by the bright light of the throne of God: his teaching is pure truth without any admixture, it will stand the test of time and of eternity. His teaching was not affected by the fact of his being born a Jew, nor by the prevalence of the Rabbinical traditions, nor by the growth of the Greek philosophy, nor by any other of the peculiar influences which were then abroad. His teaching was in the world, but it was not of it, nor tinged by it. It was the truth as he had received it from the Father, and the world could not make him add to it, or take from it, or change it in the least degree, and therefore in this respect he overcame the world.

Observe him next in *the deep calm which pervaded his spirit at times when he received the approbation of men*. Our Lord was popular to a very high degree at certain times. How the people thronged around him as his benevolent hands scattered healing on all sides. How they approved of him when he fed them; but how clearly he saw through

that selfish approbation, and said, "Ye seek me because of the loaves and fishes." He never lost his self-possession: you never find him elated by the multitudes following him. There is not an expression that he ever used which even contains a suspicion of self-glorification. Amid their hosannahs his mind is quietly reposing in God. He leaves their acclamations and applause to refresh himself by prayer upon the cold mountains, in the midnight air. He communed with God, and so lived above the praises of men. He walked among them, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, even when they would have taken him by force and made him a king. Once he rides in triumph, as he might often have done if he had pleased, but then it was in such humble style that his pomp was far other than that of kings, a manifestation of lowliness rather than a display of majesty. Amid the willing hosannas of little children, and of those whom he had blessed, he rides along, but you can see that he indulges none of the thoughts of a worldly conqueror, none of the proud ideas of the warrior who returns from the battle stained with blood. No, he is still as meek and as gentle and as kindly as ever he was, and his triumph has not a grain of self-exaltation in it. He had overcome the world. What could the world give him, brethren? An imperial nature like to his, in which the manhood held such close communion with Deity as is not readily to be imagined, what was there here below to cause pride in him? If the trump of fame had sounded out its loudest note, what could it have been compared with the songs of cherubim and seraphim to which his ear had been accustomed throughout all ages? No, allied with his deity, his manhood was superior to all the arts of flattery, and to all the honours which mankind could offer him. He overcame the world.

He was the same when the world tried the other plan upon him. *It frowned at him, but he was calm still.* He had scarcely commenced to preach before they would have cast him from the brow of the hill headlong. Do you not expect, as they are hurrying him to the precipice, to see him turn round upon them and denounce them at least with burning words, such as Elias used? But no, he speaks not an angry word; he passes away and is gone out of their midst. In the synagogue they often gnashed their teeth upon him in their malice, but if ever he was moved to indignation it was not because of anything directed against himself; he always bore all, and scarcely ever spoke a word by way of reply to merely personal attacks. If calumnies were heaped upon him he went on as calmly as if they had not abused him, nor desired to slay him. When he is brought before his judges what a difference there is between the Master and his servant Paul. He is smitten, but he does not say like Paul, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall;" no, but like a lamb before her shearers he is dumb and openeth not his mouth. If they could have made him angry they would have overcome him; but he was loving still; he was gentle, quiet, patient, however much they provoked him. Point me to an impatient word—there is not even a tradition of an angry look that he gave on account of any offence rendered to himself. They could not drive him from his purposes of love, nor could they make him say anything or do anything that was contrary to perfect love. He calls down no fire from heaven: no she bears come out of the wood to devour those who have

mocked him. No, he can say, "I have overcome the world," for whether it smile or whether it frown, in the perfect peace and quiet of his spirit, in the delicious calm of communion with God, the Man of Sorrows holds on his conquering way.

His victory will be seen in another form. He overcame the world as to *the unselfishness of his aims*. When men find themselves in a world like this they generally say, "What is our market? what can we make out of it?" This is how they are trained from childhood. "Boy, you have to fight your own way, mind you look to your own interests and rise in the world." The book which is commended to the young man shows him how to make the best use of all things for himself, he must take care of "number one," and mind the main chance. The boy is told by his wise instructors "you must look to yourself or nobody else will look to you: and whatever you may do for others, be doubly sure to guard your own interests." That is the world's prudence, the essence of all her politics, the basis of her political economy,—every man, and every nation must take care of themselves: if you wish for any other politics or economics you will be considered to be foolish theorists and probably a little touched in the head. Self is the man, the world's law of self-preservation is the sovereign rule, and nothing can go on rightly if you interfere with the gospel of selfishness; so the commercial and political Solomons assure us. Now, look at the Lord Jesus Christ when he was in the world and you will learn nothing of such principles, except their condemnation: the world could not overcome him by leading him into a selfish mode of action. Did it ever enter into his soul, even for a moment, what he could do for himself? There were riches, but he had not where to lay his head. The little store he had he committed to the trust of Judas, and as long as there were any poor in the land they were sure to share in what was in the bag. He set so little account by estate, and stock, and funds that no mention is made of such things by either of his four biographers. He had wholly and altogether risen above the world in that respect; for with whatever evil the most spiteful infidels have ever charged our Lord they have never, to my knowledge, accused him of avarice, greed, or selfishness in any form. He had overcome the world.

Then again the Master overcame the world in that *he did not stoop to use its power*. He did not use that form of power which is peculiar to the world even for unselfish purposes. I can conceive a man even apart from the Spirit of God rising superior to riches, and desiring only the promotion of some great principle which has possessed his heart; but you will usually notice that when men have done so, they have been ready to promote good by evil, or at least they have judged that great principles might be pushed on by force of arms, or bribes, or policy. Mahomet had grasped a grand truth when he said, "There is no God but God." The unity of the godhead is a truth of the utmost value; but then here comes the means to be used for the propagation of this grand truth,—the scimitar. "Off with the infidels' heads! If they have false gods, or will not own the unity of the godhead, they are not fit to live." Can you imagine our Lord Jesus Christ doing this? Why then the world would have conquered him. But he conquered the world in that he would not employ in the slightest degree

this form of power. He might have gathered a troop about him, and his heroic example, together with his miraculous power, must soon have swept away the Roman empire, and converted the Jew; and then across Europe and Asia and Africa his victorious legions might have gone trampling down all manner of evil, and with the cross for his banner and the sword for his weapon, the idols would have fallen, and the whole world must have been made to bow at his feet. But no, when Peter takes out the sword, he says, "Put up thy sword into its sheath, they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Well did he say, "My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight."

And he might if he had pleased have allied his church with the state, as his mistaken friends have done in these degenerate times, and then there might have been penal laws against those who dared dissent, and there might have been forced contributions for the support of his church and such like things. You have read, I dare say, of such things being done, but not in the Gospels, nor in the Acts of the Apostles. These things are done by those who forget the Christ of God, for he uses no instrument but love, no sword but the truth, no power but the Eternal Spirit, and, in the very fact that he put all the worldly forces aside, he overcame the world.

So, brethren, he overcame the world by *his fearlessness of the world's elite*, for many a man who has braved the frowns of the multitude cannot bear the criticism of the few who think they have monopolized all wisdom. But Christ meets the Pharisee, and pays no honour to his phylactery; he confronts the Sadducee and yields not to his cold philosophy, neither does he conceal the difficulties of the faith to escape his sneer; and he braves also the Herodian, who is the worldly politician, and he gives him an unanswerable reply. He is the same before them all, master in all positions, overcoming the world's wisdom and supposed intelligence by his own simple testimony to the truth.

And he overcame the world in his life best of all *by the constancy of his love*. He loved the most unlovely men, he loved those who hated him, he loved those who despised him. You and I are readily turned aside from loving when we receive ungrateful treatment, and thus we are conquered by the world, but he kept to his great object—"he saved others, himself he could not save"; and he died with this prayer on his lips, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Not soured in the least, thou blessed Saviour, thou art at the last just as tender as at the first. We have seen fine spirits, full of generosity, who have had to deal with a crooked and perverse generation, until they have at last grown hard and cold. Nero, who weeps when he signs the first death warrant of a criminal, at last comes to gloat in the blood of his subjects. Thus do sweet flowers wither into noxious corruption. As for thee, thou precious Saviour, thou art ever fragrant with love. No spot comes upon thy lovely character, though thou dost traverse a miry road. Thou art as kind to men at thy departure as thou wast at thy coming, for thou hast overcome the world.

I can only say on the next point that *Christ by his death overcame the world* because, by a wondrous act of self-sacrifice, the Son of God

smote to the heart the principle of selfishness, which is the very soul and life-blood of the world. There, too, by redeeming fallen man he lifted man up from the power which the world exercises over him, for he taught men that they are redeemed, that they are no longer their own but bought with a price, and thus redemption became the note of liberty from the bondage of self-love, and the hammer which breaks the fetters of the world and the lusts thereof.

By reconciling men unto God through his great atonement, also he has removed them from the despair which else had kept them down in sin, and made them the willing slaves of the world. Now are they pardoned, and, being justified, they are made to be the friends of God, and being the friends of God they become enemies to God's enemies, and are separated from the world, and so the world by Christ's death is overcome.

But chiefly has he overcome *by his rising and his reigning*, for when he rose he bruised the serpent's head, and that serpent is the prince of this world, and hath dominion over it. Christ has conquered the world's prince and led him in chains, and now hath Christ assumed the sovereignty over all things here below. God hath put all things under his feet. At his girdle are the keys of providence; he ruleth amongst the multitude and in the council chambers of kings. As Joseph governed Egypt for the good of Israel, so doth Jehovah Jesus govern all things for the good of his people. Now the world can go no further in persecuting his people than he permits it. Not a martyr can burn, nor a confessor be imprisoned without the permit of Jesus Christ who is the Lord of all; for the government is upon his shoulders and his kingdom ruleth over all. Brethren, this is a great joy to us to think of the reigning power of Christ as having overcome the world.

There is yet this other thought that he has overcome the world *by the gift of the Holy Spirit*. That gift was practically the world's conquest. Jesus has set up a rival kingdom now: a kingdom of love and righteousness; already the world feels its power by the Spirit. I do not believe that there is a dark place in the centre of Africa which is not to some extent improved by the influence of Christianity; even the wilderness rejoices and is glad for him. No barbarous power dares to do what once it did, or if it does there is such a clamour raised against its cruelty that very soon it has to say *peccavi*, and confess its faults. This moment the stone cut out of the mountain without hands has begun to smite old Dagon, it is breaking his head and breaking his hands and the very stump of him shall be dashed in pieces yet. There is no power in this world so vital, so potent as the power of Christ at this day. I say naught just now of heavenly or spiritual things; but I speak only of temporal and moral influences,—even in these the cross is to the front. He of whom Voltaire said that he lived in the twilight of his day, is going from strength to strength. It was true it was the twilight, but it was the twilight of the morning and the full noon is coming. Every year the name of Jesus brings more light to this poor world; every year hastens on the time when the cross which is the Pharos of humanity, the world's lighthouse amid the storm, shall shine forth more and more brightly over the troubled waters till the great calm shall come. The word shall become more and more universally

true, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Thus hath he overcome the world.

III. Now, lastly, WHAT CHEER IS THERE HERE FOR US? Why, this first, that if the man Christ Jesus has overcome the world at its worst, they who are in him shall overcome the world too through the same power which dwelt in him. He has put his life into his people, he has given his Spirit to dwell in them, and they shall be more than conquerors. He overcame the world when it attacked him in the worst possible shape, for he was poorer than any of you, he was more sick and sad than any of you, he was more despised and persecuted than any of you, and he was deprived of certain divine consolations which God has promised never to take away from his saints, and yet with all possible disadvantages Christ overcame the world: therefore be assured we shall conquer also by his strength.

Besides, he overcame the world when nobody else had overcome it. It was as it were a young lion which had never been defeated in fight: it roared upon him out of the thicket and leaped upon him in the fulness of its strength. Now if our greater Samson did tear this young lion as though it were a kid and fling it down as a vanquished thing, you may depend upon it that now it is an old lion, and grey and covered with the wounds which he gave it of old, we, having the Lord's life and power in us, will overcome it too. Blessed be his name! What good cheer there is in his victory. He does as good as say to us, "I have overcome the world, and you in whom I dwell, who are clothed with my spirit, must overcome it too."

But then, next, remember he overcame the world as our Head and representative, and it may truly be said that if the members do not overcome, then the head has not perfectly gained the victory. If it were possible for the members to be defeated, why then, the head itself could not claim a complete victory, since it is one with the members. So Jesus Christ, our covenant Head and representative, in whose loins lay all the spiritual seed, conquered the world for us and we conquered the world in him. He is our Adam, and what was done by him was actually done for us and virtually done by us. Have courage then, for you must conquer; it **must** happen to you as unto your head: where the head is shall the members be, and as the head is so must the members be: wherefore be assured of the palm branch and the crown.

And now, brethren, I ask you whether you have not found it so? Is it not true at this moment that the world is overcome in you? Does self govern you? Are you working to acquire wealth for your own aggrandisement? Are you living to win honour and fame among men? Are you afraid of men's frowns? Are you the slave of popular opinion? Do you do things because it is the custom to do them? Are you the slaves of fashion? If you are, you know nothing about this victory. But if you are true Christians I know what you can say: "Lord, I am thy servant, thou hast loosed my bonds; henceforth the world hath no dominion over me; and though it tempt me, and frighten me, and flatter me, yet still I rise superior to it by the power of thy Spirit, for the love of Christ constraineth me, and I live not unto myself and unto things that are seen, but unto Christ and to things invisible." If it be so, who has done this for you? Who but Christ

the Overcomer, who is formed in you the hope of glory : wherefore be of good cheer, for you have overcome the world by virtue of his dwelling in you.

So, brethren, let us go back to the world and its tribulations without fear. Its trials cannot hurt us. In the process we shall get good, as the wheat doth out of the threshing. Let us go forth to combat the world, for it cannot overcome us. There was never a man yet with the life of God in his soul whom the whole world could subdue ; nay, all the world and hell together cannot conquer the veriest babe in the family of the Lord Jesus Christ. Lo, ye are harnessed with salvation, ye are panoplied with omnipotence, your heads are covered with the ægis of the atonement, and Christ himself, the Son of God, is your captain. Take up your battle cry with courage, and fear not; for more is he that is for you than all they that be against you. It is said of the glorified saints, "They overcame through the blood of the Lamb"; "and this is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith," wherefore be ye steadfast, even to the end, for ye shall be more than conquerors through him that hath loved you. Amen.

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PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—John xvi. 1—33.

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