

How You Can Overcome

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How can you overcome and master your human nature? -- and keep ALL God's Commandments?

I feel I must have a real heart-to-heart talk with my family of readers and co-workers, sharing with you thoughts that came to my mind. It concerns the most important thing in life and eternity for you. But at the moment, I was thinking about myself.

Every person--yes, even you--is his own worst enemy. All my life I have been impelled to fight my worst enemy -- that troublesome inner self, which by nature is desperately wicked.

I was not born with a mild, submissive, weak-willed inner self. Had I been, I probably never could have been used as God's instrument in bearing His message to you. My mother, who lived well into her 90's, said I was a very strong-willed boy, and while I was still young enough to be under parental discipline, I caused her and my father no end of trouble.

Since growing into the age of self-discipline, this same evil, determined inner self has caused me no end of trouble. And I should add that since I gave that self over to God, it surely must have tried His patience!

The troublesome inner self

That brings us to the point. The thought that came to my mind concerned this very troublesome inner self. How, came the question, can I myself ever become finally saved, and inherit eternal life in the Kingdom of God, with such a powerful, seemingly irresistible inner force of evil constantly pulling the other way?

When God says "there shall in no wise enter into it {the Kingdom of God} anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." (Rev 21:27) , it surely seemed impossible that I should be able to "overcome" and "endure unto the end."

But the same instant the answer flashed to my mind -- GOD will save me!

I can't save myself. When I look at this troublesome, evil self, so human and full of faults and weaknesses, so beset by temptations of pride and the flesh, with all its limitations and shortcomings -- knowing that to be finally saved I must Grow in grace and God's knowledge, must develop in righteous holy character, must overcome this self and temptations and weaknesses and must endure through trial and test and opposition and discouragement unto the end -- well, when I look at it that way, it seems utterly Hopeless to expect ever to be saved.

And I wondered, as this thought flashed through my mind, how many of my readers and co-workers are tempted to look at it the same way -- to feel a sense of futility and helplessness -- perhaps to become discouraged and lose faith?

Ah, that's the key word -- FAITH! Our plight isn't hopeless at all!

How we shall be saved

Of course, of ourselves, it is impossible to be saved. But with GOD it is certain -- if we yield to Him and TRUST Him. We shall be saved, not by our own power to overcome and develop perfect characters, but through FAITH IN GOD'S POWER!

But right here is where 999 out of 1000 become deceived by the fables of this time. And when the blind lead the blind, they both fall in the ditch!

Because we can't save ourselves -- we can't master the evil inner self -- we can't always resist every temptation -- we can't keep God's holy law perfectly -- and, of ourselves, we would fail to overcome, to grow in spiritual character and to endure to the end -- the false teaching is going out that JESUS DID THESE THINGS FOR US -- that we don't need to do them.

Millions today believe God imputes Jesus' righteousness to us, counting us as righteous when we are not! There couldn't be a more soul-damning delusion of the devil!

No, Jesus didn't live a good life for you, in your stead! You are not excused from keeping God's Commandments, living a righteous holy life, overcoming, growing in spiritual character and enduring in spite of all opposition, persecution, trial and test unto the end. YOU and I must actually do these things in order to be saved!

Here is the great mystery! Since we must do these things to be saved, yet are utterly unable to do them, it is natural to conclude either that God sent Jesus to do it for us and excuse us from accomplishing it, or else to become discouraged and be tempted to quit trying. The true answer is the KEY to salvation!

KEY to salvation

We can't save ourselves. GOD will save us! But How? Not by saving us in our sins -- not by deceiving Himself into counting us righteous by imputing Jesus' righteousness to us while we remain unrighteous -- BUT BY SAVING US FROM OUR SINS, by giving us His very own Spirit!

God's Spirit gives us His POWER to overcome these cantankerous selves. His LOVE to actually fulfill His law, His PEACE to avoid strife with enemies and resentment and bitterness at their injustices, His PATIENCE to endure!

We can't save ourselves -- GOD must save us!

But He does it by changing us, through His indwelling divine supernatural power, from what we have been into the holy, righteous characters He wills to make of us! He does it by forgiving past sins not only, but cleansing us from sinning now and in the future!

God does not look upon our hopeless plight -- our evil natures, our weaknesses and inabilities -- and say: "Poor, helpless humans! Since they are unable to master and overcome their evil natures, to keep my law, to endure trial and test and temptation and to grow into holy characters, I'll be merciful and have my Son do it for them, and save them just as they are in all their sins."

Instead, God who knows our every weakness -- who knows and understands this human nature in every one of us -- sent His Son into the world to proclaim His MESSAGE to us that we must yield to GOD'S government over our lives --that we must REPENT and turn from our filth of the flesh and pride of mind and heart.

He sent His Son into the world to be tempted in all points as we are -- human as we are -- to prove that a human can with the help of the Spirit of God, live without sin -- TO SET AN EXAMPLE FOR US THAT WE SHOULD FOLLOW HIS STEPS and live also without sinning!

He sent His Son into the world to die for us -- not living a good life in our stead, but paying the penalty of our past sins in our stead -- that we might be reconciled to God, so that we might receive His Spirit, begetting us as His SONS, so that God through the power of His Spirit may CHANGE us from mortal sinners into immortal, holy sons of God!

"Come as you are"?

Some hotels and restaurants, catering to tourists who may be in old clothes and dirty from traveling, post a sign: "COME AS YOU ARE!"

The favorite "invitation" or alter-call hymn sung by the popular denominations in revival or evangelistic services is "JUST AS I AM."

But, be not deceived -- GOD WON'T RECEIVE YOU JUST AS YOU ARE! You can't sit down at His immaculate, holy table with your wrinkled, soiled clothes, and dirty hands, which symbolically represent the sinning human condition.

No, you must first be WASHED in the blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ -- and before Jesus, as your Savior and Mediator with God, can wash you of the filth of your sins, YOU MUST REPENT OF TRANSGRESSING GOD'S HOLY LAW WHICH MEANS TO BE SO SORRY THAT YOU FORSAKE YOUR WAY AND THE WORLD'S WAY AND TURN TO A LIFE OF OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S LAWS AND WAYS!

Of course, you'll have to come as you are to Christ for CLEANSING from the filth of your past life -- but confessing your filthy, sinful condition, asking Him to cleanse you and wash you in His blood, because you can't cleanse yourself -- so that He may present you chaste and pure and spiritually clean to His Father, that you may then receive the indwelling POWER of God that will enable you to overcome and keep God's law, and live as His sons ought to live!

Receive God's power

Jesus showed us by His life that we can, if we rely upon God in faith for the power to do, live the way of God's will as expressed in His spiritual law! Of Himself, even Jesus said He could not do it -- "the Father that dwelleth in me," He said, "He doeth the works" (John 14:10). And again, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also" (verse 12)

And so it was that, almost the same instant the temptation to doubt the final result came to my mind, as I thought of my own weaknesses, faults and limitations, the answer flashed strong and firm:

"GOD WON'T LET ME FALL! He may punish me more yet to chasten and teach me and make me righteous, but He won't let me fail -- He will impute His very own righteousness by implanting it into my life until, through His power energizing me, I'm really living it -- ETERNALLY!"

And that comforting and definite ASSURANCE of the final result, based on God's OWN unbreakable PROMISES, just warmed my heart and made me feel good clear through -- and so I had to share this glorious assurance with all of YOU! Read Jude 24 and 2 Pet 1:10.