

OVERCOMING

By Alden Truesdell

(Continued from last month)

Overcoming is the practice of proving the facts of an ideal spiritual life. It is a coming over from an inferior to a superior state. That which is to be overcome cries out and endeavors to sustain the good old days, when it could maintain ignorance with a self-righteous assurance. But growth is relentless, progress must prevail, and the old give place to the new. The advantages of that which is being brought about are designed for the pioneer souls who, like Paul and with Paul, have the hardihood to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The only way anything can grow is up. The new must come through, and out of, the old. The old must become compost for the growth of the new.

Jesus Christ said, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin." Even to His Disciples He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." And, when He washed their feet, He said, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." All these sayings imply a higher, finer, better, more abundant way of life for those who are willing and prepared to come over to that Christ Way.

The entire life of Jesus is an object lesson in that Way of life, but Jesus Christ is also an essential ingredient in the initiation into that life. Jesus Christ is the Way-Shower, surely; but He is more than the road map for the trip. He is the motivating, directing, sustaining, and transporting Power Itself. In the process of overcoming, one comes out of the mortal state of consciousness into the Christ state, wherein God through Christ becomes the overcomer's all-sufficiency in all things to the extent that the ongoer becomes aware that to live is Christ. Here is where Jesus was when He presented Himself to the Disciples, alive, after the crucifixion.

The Apostle John was the instrument by which Jesus Christ proclaimed the benefits of coming over into Truth, as John declares in Revelation. John was an exile on the Island of Patmos, and there Christ revealed Himself to him. The Christ John describes as seeing was not the Jesus of the physical form, but, a spiritualized Entity.

But let us consider John's own description of his experience:

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I

saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter."

It is with a hungering and a thirsting after righteousness that we give reverent attention to the Scriptural communications of those recorders who have been trusted to relay such valued communications. We cannot add to them; we will not take from them. We accept the privilege of observing that we, too, may become beneficiaries.

The names of the Old and New Testaments have significant meanings, and it may be helpful to consider the meanings of the names of the churches to which John was told to write his transcendent messages. Please know that, in such consideration, we are not attempting to interpret, but are contemplating together a spiritual exhibit of rare beauty and significance.

EPHESUS

The first recipient of John's message was to be the angel of the church of Ephesus. Briefly, Ephesus represents desire, and the message is:

"These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. "

There follows an admonition because of leaving the "first love," a warning to remember the original and high aspiration and to return to first principles; then a threat of losing the spiritual light unless this is done. (Sometimes we know only too well the sense of being disconnected from spiritual light and power.) But another commendation follows for hating the Nicolaitanes, which are worthy of hatred. The Nicolaitanes represent the mixed and compromising thoughts about Truth, that which seems truth in convictions that are not true. The reward promised for the overcoming of such is, "I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." All desire is actually for more, better, and fuller life; and here is promised fulfillment from the tree of limitless life in the perfect presence of God's Providence. This is the ultimate for directed and disciplined desire.

SMYRNA

Smyrna represents that state of consciousness that deals with substantiality. The name actually means myrrh, which is a precious gum from a low, thorny tree found in Arabia. It was one of the ingredients of the holy ointment and of embalming substance. It was used also in medicine and as perfume. We remember the wise men presenting the baby Jesus with gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Let us consider then the import of John, who represents love, writing to the angel of the church (or the spiritual supervisory department) of that which senses substantiality, that which considers form and desires to perpetuate form. We note that the report of John is written as a message from "the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive." The department which delights in form has

interest in continued life in the body, or the overcoming of death, and the authority is the One who has accomplished this task. This department, having been commended for works and trials and seeming poverty (for the awareness of Substance is a rich state of being), is warned against those who profess an interest in Truth only to partake of the substantial benefits. It is suggested further that there will be other trials and testings, but to those who are faithful, even in the face of death, a crown of life will be given. And such as these "shall not be hurt of the second death," for the allegiance has been life-ward.

PERGAMOS

Pergamos represents the intellectual department. As we observe the intellectual control of the words we speak, we see why the communication to the church at Pergamos comes from the One who has "the sharp sword with two edges." The sharp sword represents the Word of Truth, which cuts off all that is non-essential and cuts back to the very core of Reality. We remember John's description of his Instructor, "And out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword."

In the area of the intellect one finds consideration of doctrines, some false, some true. Some in this area practicing the doctrine of Balaam, try to mingle black magic with pure Truth. Consideration of the doctrine of Satan, or that which feeds on opposition to Truth, has its seat in the intellect; but so also does the tenacious practice of exalting the name of God and of Christ.

Pergamos is admonished to clean house - or else! "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them (specious doctrines and malpractice) with the sword of my mouth."

The alternative to this nemesis is the housecleaning and the overcoming. The overcomer is promised "a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." A new mind, a new nature, a new character will be provided to the overcomer.

THYATIRA

Thyatira represents zeal, the department of nature that enthuses over a given anticipation of objective. The message to this quality is from "the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass." This is a worthy Communicant to the seething soul desire.

We know how enthusiasm can mislead and hamper the original determination to seek God and learn the Truth. We have seen many students start in the way of Truth, only to be distracted by siren calls from charlatans and false prophets. Accordingly zeal is admonished for harboring Jezebel, the prophetess; while it is commended for other works, for faith, service and patience.

Because of the early predominance of women in the modern Truth movement, it was inevitable that a certain percentage of the women so attracted should have seen in the movement an opportunity for self-aggrandizement and the gratification of cupidity. Jezebel, the prophetess, is representative of those who encourage this tendency. Following such retards progress and diverts those who could have been led in pleasanter and more profitable ways.

When enthusiasm, however, is entirely weaned from any semblance of compromise and successfully directed Spiritward, it overcomes, or comes over into that area that rules the nations.

"He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall thou be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star."

Except there had been a wise and benevolent rulership over the nations of the world, there had long since been complete destruction.

SARDIS

Sardis stands for the power of riches. The admonition and slight commendation come in John's letter, which begins:

"I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God."

The power of riches and the riches of the powerful in the race seem to be the summit of attaining. Even the Disciples of Jesus were impressed by the power of riches; and, when Jesus said that it was difficult for those who trusted in riches to enter in (or overcome), they wondered who then could be saved. These seemed to be the most worthy, having made the great achievement of making life yield its greatest apparent treasure. But, according to John's Instructor, not all of the rich have found favor or been accepted. Some are dead, but do not know it. They are admonished that what has been given is given of God.

Such emphasis is placed on the power of riches that it assumes the proportions of an entity in itself and disconnects from the real Source of supply. It has a name that it lives (or it seems to be alive), but it is dead. The possession of riches, however, is not an insurmountable handicap. "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy."

For him who is identified with the power of riches and is also successful in becoming rich toward God the promise is: "The same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father."

PHILADELPHIA

We are quite familiar with the meaning of the name Philadelphia, because we have referred to our great city of that name as "the city of brotherly love." The Communicant to the angel of this church is "he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth."

There seems to be much commendation for a collection of entities in love with God, and loving others as God would love them. An open door, which no man can close, is set before them; for, with what little strength they have had, they have kept the word of God and never denied His name. Those who have claimed and pretended will be obliged to come and acknowledge and "worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee."

The benefits for the practice of God Love and brotherly love - or the inducements for overcoming - are lavish:

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."

LAODICEA

"The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God" dictates the admonition to the angel of the church of Laodicea. Laodicea stands for judgment, that which is able to set the standard for all the people in consciousness. Thus right standards must be maintained. In an indifferent standard of self-sufficiency, there is no healing heat nor cold austerity. Therefore the indictment reads:

"So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

When good judgment replaces limited judgment, one comes over into the privilege of sitting in the throne room with the Son of God. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

By way of recapitulation it will be well to review the promises that are made to the overcomer:

"To him that overcometh I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. . . . He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

. . . To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone, a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. . . . He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and I will give him the morning star. . . . He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. . . . Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God. And I will write upon him my new name. . . . To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne."

Desire will be given to eat of the tree of life.

Substantiality will receive a crown of life.

The intellections will be completely renewed in tone and quality.

Zeal will rule the nations.

The prisoners of the power of riches will be clothed in white robes of righteousness.

The affections will become pillars in the temple forever, functioning in God's own name.

Judgment, resurrected, will sit upon God's throne.

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WHICH OF TWO PATHS TO TAKE?

By Nell Truesdell

Man, by gazing raptly into the world, subjects the attention of his mind to things that rise and perish. As he considers the apparent substantial qualities of material things, he makes himself inferior to his own formulations. By thus debasing himself, he misses the mark of his high calling as the foremost of God's creation, the one to whom is given dominion over all the things of the earth. To the extent that he dishonors himself, he bars himself from any notion of either the Nature or the Power of God.

How can man recall himself from the hypnotic allure of the mundane realm and lift himself once more toward the Supreme, so that he may abide with his Origin? One of two paths may be chosen: the path of denial, or the path of uplook. By the former, man persistently refuses to believe the outward show of substantial things that seems real and enduring. He sets himself to follow this course regardless of the opposition or remonstrance of his fellows. The path of denial, however, is long and arduous; for, when man denies appearance, he must necessarily fix his attention on the very appearances that he would do away with. He is, then, at odds with himself until he masters the principle involved in denial.

By the second way of approaching God, the way of the uplook, man firmly directs his attention toward the Changeless and Eternal, which he neither sees nor touches by sense perceptions. He recalls that he, created in the Image and Likeness of God, has worth in God's sight. He looks steadfastly toward the Unseen by means of a hidden intention that will not be disregarded. This inner urge is not something separate from man; it stems from the Source of man's Being; it is the touch of the Divine upon him.

If God were alien, man's search would be futile. But God is the Author of all living things. Into them he breathes the breath of life, and their very aliveness attests to His Presence within them. They droop and die when they drop their attention away from Him. But God goes on forever. He can neither abandon Himself nor any living thing that steadfastly refuses to abandon Him.

In the confusion of error that encases man, he is overwhelmed, though he feels that, as the highest creation of God, he ought to enter into the Freedom and Light that are his birthright. However the darkness that covers him is no hindrance to his easy access to the Court of Light. Aspiration will open the

door. The leaning toward God takes the form of prayer in a way that is always within man's power. When man is sincere, prayer is a quiet, wordless watching that seeks nothing asks nothing, wants nothing but the privilege of looking toward the Author of all Being. The noisy demanding prayer apparently goes unanswered; for it indicates a deep interest in transient things, and it causes man's attention to extend downward so that he is imprisoned in the world. But a quick, sure look upward brings a man rapidly into the Presence and Power of the One that is true.

Alphabet Of
DAILY MEDITATIONS

For Every Week Day Of The Month

SEPTEMBER 1952

1. Lo, I AM with you ALWAYS, even unto the end of the world.
2. I counsel thee to BUY of Me gold tried in the fire.
3. Thou CROWNEST the year with Thy goodness.
4. Lord, all my DESIRE is before Thee.
5. In the Lord Jehovah is EVERLASTING strength.
6. Hold that FAST which thou hast.

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8. I will GIVE him the morning star.
9. HE that HATH an ear, let HIM HEAR what the Spirit sayeth.
10. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose IMAGINATION is stayed on Thee.
11. Thy JUDGMENTS are in the earth.
12. Behold, I stand at the door and KNOCK.
13. LEARN of Me.

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15. Behold, the MAJESTY of the Lord.
16. There Is NONE holy as the Lord.
17. Lord, Thou wilt ORDAIN peace for us.
18. Great PEACE have they which love Thy Law.
19. Behold, I come QUICKLY.
20. Thou mayest be RICH.

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22. With my SPIRIT within me will I SEEK Thee.
23. TAKE My yoke upon you.
24. UNDERNEATH are the everlasting arms.
25. Love VAUNTETH NOT itself.
26. Trust YE the Lord for ever.
27. In mount ZION (peace within) shall be deliverance.

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29. The Lord Thy God in the midst of thee is mighty.
30. Ye are all the children of God.

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"When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."

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As electricity is the working power of the electrical principle,
SPIRITICITY is the working power of the Spiritual Principle.