

3 Ways to Overcome Satan in the Last Days

The Bible tells us that on the night of our Lord's betrayal, the apostle Peter publicly denied knowing Him three times. He then "wept bitterly" in repentance. (See Matthew 26:69-75.)

But this human failure was not spiritually fatal or final. Peter proved to be an overcomer.

History shows that Peter faithfully overcame the spiritual forces of the evil one for decades as a leader in the early church. But he warned that those who have "escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and ... are again entangled in them and are overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning" (2 Pet. 2:20, MEV).

Avoiding Apostasy

Jesus Christ affirmed the church in Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7-8), telling them that they had kept His word and had not denied His name. That seems to be the secret to avoiding apostasy in the last days!

Keep God's word (or commandments) and do not deny His name.

Consider these warnings:

- John the Baptist spoke bluntly that "He who believes in the Son has eternal life. He who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him" (John 3:36).
- Jesus told the disciples that in a future, stressful season of troubles and persecution, "many will fall away" and "because iniquity will abound, the love of many will grow cold" (Matt. 24:10-12).

- Paul explained to the Thessalonians that our Lord's second coming, our being "gathered together unto him" (raptured), and the future day of God's wrath and judgment (the "day of the Lord") on unrepentant nonbelievers "will not come unless a falling away comes first" (2 Thess. 2:1-3).
- Paul also taught young Pastor Timothy, "Now the Spirit clearly says that in the last times some will depart from the faith and pay attention to seducing spirits" (1 Tim. 4:1).
- John, the "beloved disciple," testified that he was imprisoned on the island of Patmos "on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9).

The last days apostasies are more than a generic form of spiritual rebellion or defections from faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by false or weak believers. This end-times apostasy has a definite article with it in the original Greek. It projects a *specific* spiritual rebellion, which then reveals "the man of sin," who "opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God" (2 Thess. 2:3-4).

While some have succumbed to the schemes of Satan (Eph. 6:11) and are foolishly "deconstructing" their faith, we can wisely "reconstruct" ours by reviewing and renewing biblical foundations for our faith. We can make sure our footings are sound and the materials of our lives are in compliance with God's Word. It will help us reaffirm our own convictions and equip us to stand strong in times of adversity and tribulation.

The Will and Way of God

While the Word of God reveals the *will* of God, the testimony of Jesus Christ reveals the *way* of God (John 14:6). The English word *testimony* is the Greek word *marturia*, from which our word *martyr* is derived. Its use in Revelation is also

translated as “patience” or “patient endurance.”

The witness for Jesus Christ, during the harsh days of tribulation to come, is described as exhibiting “patient endurance” (Rev. 13:10b; 14:12, NIV). Pastor Jack Hayford has described the term as “steadfast courage under unjust suffering.”

The implication is that the attestation, evidence or certification the witness gives is true, and he is willing to die to prove it. Revelation 12:11 specifically says the overcomers “did not love their lives to the death” (NKJV). On the basis of the efficacy of the cross of Christ Jesus our Lord and the authority of God’s Word, the martyr/witness does not shrink from even the possibility of martyrdom.

This “patience and faith of the saints” (Rev. 13:10b, MEV) sustained them in the midst of tribulation and trials; it will sustain us as well! Let us encourage and empower each other so that our faith will not fail, as we would “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (14:12) in the last days!

Paul taught that our God is faithful and will strengthen us and protect us from evil and the evil one (2 Thess. 3:3). As we live in the last days, we will not be immune from troubles and persecutions caused by sinners and Satan (Matt. 24:3-14). But we will be immune (“obtain salvation”) from the actual wrath of God (1 Thess. 5:9) on unrepentant sinners (Rev. 6:15-17).

Jesus said, “In the world you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world” (John 16:33b, MEV).

Overcoming With Jesus in the Last Days

Here are three ways to overcome in these last days. We must demonstrate the following:

1. **Spiritual faithfulness** – illustrated by Paul's last days exhortations (1 Thess. 5:12-24)
2. **Patient endurance** – during trials and tribulations (1 Cor. 9:24-27; 1 Cor. 10:1-5, 11-13)
3. **Determined devotion** – “But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith. Pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in the love of God while you are waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, which leads to eternal life” (Jude 20-21)

Our Lord's half-brother Jude ends his brief epistle with this benevolent prayer. Receive it as your own:

“Now to Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you blameless before the presence of His Glory with rejoicing, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen” (Jude 24-25). {eo}

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