

# COMMIT TO MEMORY

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world;  
and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

Who is the one who overcomes the world, but  
he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? - 1 John 5:4-5

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The celebration of Independence Day in our nation each year ushers in a time of rest, enjoyment, great food and even greater displays of fireworks. All across the land you can witness the elaborate display of our independence. Our study this fall is about another type of independence. I call it spiritual independence. If you have named the name of Christ as your only God and Savior, you have declared independence from the rule of sin and Satan over your life. You have been set free. As Colossians 1:13 tells us, “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.”

Even though you have been legally set free from the reign of sin in your life, Satan does not want you to be experientially set free. See, it’s one thing to have a status of freedom; it’s another thing entirely to experience it.

Our focus over the next few weeks will be on walking you into the full realization and experience of spiritual freedom. Jesus Christ, through the apostle John, wrote a message to the seven churches of Asia Minor where He addresses this concept in multiple ways. Throughout the book of Revelation, the number seven comes up regularly. We read there are:

- Seven churches (1:4, 11, 20)
- Seven golden lampstands (1:12-13, 20; 2:1)
- Seven stars (1:16, 20; 2:1; 3:1)
- Seven spirits (1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6)
- Seven lamps (4:5)
- Seven seals (5:1, 5)
- Seven horns (5:6)

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COLOSSIANS 1:13

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These are just a few of the mentions of seven in Revelation. There are many more. The number seven in the Bible is the number of completeness and fullness. When the number seven is used, it often means things have reached their full expression. It is also the number often used to signify perfection. When we see Jesus writing to these seven churches, we can infer that He wants them to be complete, fulfilled and not lacking. Therefore, He gives them a series of messages cumulatively arriving at the number seven as though to say if you overcome in these seven areas, you will have overcome completely and perfectly.

# CONSIDER

# CONNECT

We all come to this small group experience with our own history, background, personality, passions and purpose. When we are willing to share our experiences with others, that can help them be encouraged to grow and share of their own experiences.

Remember to always open your group time together in prayer. Invite God's Spirit to manifest Himself fully in your midst, to soften your hearts and ears to His Word and to guard your lips—seasoning each person's speech as with salt. Keep specific prayer requests to be covered at the end of the meeting, if possible. This is a time to connect with each other and to connect with God as we open our time together.

As you begin, pass around a copy of the *Small Group Roster* or a sheet of paper. Have everyone introduce themselves, then write down their contact information. Ask someone to make copies or type up a list with everyone's information and email it to the group during the week.

***Share your responses to these questions as you open up your time of connection.***

What do you hope to get out of this study and small group experience?

What motivated you to participate in a small group this year?

After these questions, take the time to reflect on and review your values together. Look at the *OCBF Campaign Covenant*. Read through it together, and have each member sign their copy of it. A covenant assures that everyone clearly understands the values of the group and is committed to what will take your group to the next stage of intimacy and spiritual health.

**After this preliminary connecting time is completed, watch the DVD teaching by Pastor Evans on this session.** Next, have someone read the discussion questions in the Concentrate section and guide the discussion.

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# CONCENTRATE

*Use the following questions and Scripture passages to guide your discussion of the teaching you just experienced from Pastor Evans and the discussion from your group members.*

1. Read Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21. What is the common phrase repeated in each verse?
2. According to 1 John 5:4, 5, our Commit to Memory verse this week, who has the ability to overcome the world?
3. What is the victory that gives us the ability to overcome?
4. Pastor Evans describes the difference between “inheriting” in heaven and “entering” into heaven when speaking on Revelation 21:7. What is the main difference between the two?

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“One is the way you spend eternity and the other is how you spend eternity.”

– TONY EVANS

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5. Based on the video teaching, what is the key to overcoming? Refer to John 16:33 if you need help in answering this question.

## Notes

*(Use this space for personal notes on the lesson and discussion.)*

# CONVERGE

“be doers of the Word,  
not just hearers”  
- JAMES 1:22

In this section, talk with the group about how you will apply the wisdom you've learned from the teaching and Bible study.

***Discuss the following questions:***

1. What role does faith play in overcoming? Share about an area in your life where you desire greater faith? What steps can you take to pursue it?
2. Have someone read Revelation 21:7 to the group. This verse speaks of a special, uniquely intimate relationship between a believer and God. Describe how you know when you are experiencing a uniquely intimate relationship with God. Do you have a personal example of His powerful presence in your life?
3. In the video teaching, Pastor Evans describes Jesus based on Revelation 1:12-20. He talks about a warrior Jesus that doesn't necessarily resemble the meek and mild Jesus we see in pictures. What image of Jesus do you perceive when you think of Him? Is it the meek and mild Jesus or the Jesus described in this passage in Revelation? In what ways does Jesus embody all of these aspects?

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Focusing on practical applications of what we've learned in this lesson in order to better align our life choices with God's truth and will.

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To close your time together, spend some time worshiping God together—praying, singing and reading Scripture. Use the *Prayer and Praise Report* to keep track of how God answers prayer.

# CONTINUE

Rest, and allow the Lord to lead you as you seek Him through His Word.

The following section is for you to use personally on your own as you continue in the week's topic throughout the next few days. Pray and ask the Lord to open your ears to truly hear His truth and apply it in your life. If you want to, feel free to write what you learn in the margins or in the Notes section of this week's lesson.

## Day 1

These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world. - JOHN 16:33

### REFLECT:

What is it that seems to steal your peace?

How can you place a greater faith in Christ in order to tap into the peace He has for you?

## Day 2

When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him. - COLOSSIANS 2:15

### REFLECT:

Jesus triumphed over the enemy and disarmed them. How can this truth strengthen you to live as an overcomer?

In what ways are you giving Satan more authority than he rightfully has? How can you change that? Will you commit to making it a priority to change your mind-set on this and align it with God's Word?

## Day 3

His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. - REVELATION 1:14

### REFLECT:

In what ways does knowing Jesus and His power in this way comfort you?

How can a comprehension of these characteristics of Christ assist you in overcoming?

## Day 4

and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father—to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. - Revelation 1:6

### REFLECT:

What does it mean to be a kingdom and priests to God?

Are you fully living out this purpose for your life? In what ways can you adjust your thoughts, mind-sets and choices to better reflect the high calling you have been given in Revelation 1:6?

## Day 5

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? - Revelation 1:14

### REFLECT:

If you are struggling under the circumstances or emotions of life, will increasing your faith help you to overcome?

In what way can you increase your faith?

Why is it important to have faith in Jesus, the Son of God, if you are going to live as an overcomer?