

WORKBOOK

LIVING AS AN OVERCOMER

*ETERNAL MOTIVATION FOR
EARTHLY SUCCESS*



TONY EVANS

AUTHOR OF

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S NAMES

LIVING
AS AN
OVERCOMER

WORKBOOK

TONY EVANS



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MAKING THE MOST OF THIS WORKBOOK

This *Living as an Overcomer Workbook* is designed to help you and your group combine the video teaching you'll view, the Bible study you'll take on, and the experience you'll share into a dynamic growth encounter.

Each of the eight sessions based on the *Living as an Overcomer* book by Tony Evans includes the following sections, all of which will help you and your group make the most of both your community and personal experiences during this study. Don't hesitate to make notes in the space provided between suggestions and questions or in the margins.

COMMIT TO MEMORY

This section not only provides the foundational Bible verse or verses for each session but encourages you to memorize Scripture. You may want to review the Scripture in upcoming sessions in advance to begin the process of memorization.

CONSIDER

This section gives you key insights from Tony Evans and the *Living as an Overcomer* book, setting the stage for the rest of the session. But because the book has much more information and many more illustrations than you'll find here, you may want to read or reread the relevant book chapter for each session in this study in advance.

CONNECT

The suggestions and questions here are designed to inspire sharing that will help group members connect—or if you’ve gathered before, connect even better. We all come to small group settings with our own history, background, personality, passions, and purpose, and the events of our lives coupled with who we are as people have shaped both our mindsets and approaches to life and to others. Our willingness to share our experiences can help encourage other group members to share theirs, and everyone can grow as a result. God uses the good, the bad, and the ugly to bring about His good in our lives when we love Him and are living as called people according to His purpose.

This Connect time should always open with prayer, inviting God’s Spirit to manifest Himself fully in your midst, soften your hearts and ears to His Word, and guard your lips, seasoning each person’s speech as with salt. Try to save prayer requests and praise for answered prayer for the end of the session since this time is specifically designed to connect with one another and God.

CAPTURE

Next you’ll watch Tony’s video teaching for the session.

CONCENTRATE

Most of these suggestions and questions are designed to encourage discussion following the video as everyone recalls what they just viewed. Others might help you connect the teaching to your personal experiences or emotions. This section also features Scripture to promote spiritual growth through the reading and study of God’s Word.

CONVERGE

This section is designed to help you and the group explore how your daily lives and the wisdom you’ve gained in this study can converge—in other words, to help you determine how you can apply what you’ve learned in this session. Extra space is provided for personal notes and proposed action steps you can refer to in the coming days.

CONCLUDE

To close the session, first worship the Lord together in any way meaningful to the group, such as singing a song. Then before a final prayer, share any prayer requests or praise for answered prayer.

CONTINUE

This last section—divided into five parts—is designed to help you dig deeper throughout the following days on your own, keeping the session's content and principles fresh in your mind and encouraging you to put what you've learned and purposed into practice.

FOR LEADERS AND FACILITATORS

Ensure that each group member has their own workbook. This will allow everyone to not only make personal notes during the session but to use the Continue section.

- Consider logistics in the setting for your gathering so no one in the group will be distracted by discomfort or miss anything. Will everyone have a comfortable seat? Is the lighting adequate? Will they all be able to clearly see the video? Is the audio set at a good level? You might also want to have some extra pens or pencils handy.
- Ahead of time or with the group at the first session, decide if someone will read the Consider section aloud as other members follow along or if each member should read it in advance.
- To prepare personal responses that could encourage the flow of discussion, review the suggestions and questions throughout each session. You may also want to flag discussion prompters that seem most significant for your group in case you start running short of time and need to move on.

WELCOME!

We all need to overcome something—a circumstance, an emotion, a habit, or a situation that holds us back. But guess what? Not only does God want you to overcome life’s challenges, but He’s provided the way for you to do it. That’s why I’ve chosen to teach on the seven churches in the book of Revelation and develop this eight-session video curriculum.

One at a time, we’ll study these seven churches and the important message Jesus sent to each of them through an angel and the apostle John. Then we’ll allow the principles we learn to reveal how we can live as overcomers both within the church and in the world around us. You are to live as a victor, not a victim, and so I aim to equip you with all you need to experience that reality. Toward that end, you’ll not only go through the written material in this workbook but view the videos I filmed in a city appropriate for this study—Las Vegas!

This curriculum is designed to integrate learning and community, and the seven churches in Revelation will be studied within the context of community. We are all meant to do life with other people, and in a group setting, we can build community as we learn, socialize, pray, worship, and grow together. But if you choose to go through this curriculum alone, the study can still help you learn and reflect on all that God is teaching you.

Either way, my prayer is that you’ll experience God in a fresh way, finding all you need to overcome anything and everything that’s holding you back. So get ready for growth because the principles for and the keys to overcoming will challenge, convict, and mature you. What’s more, they will reward you as you learn to overcome whatever it is you face.

My prayer is that by the time you’ve completed this study, you will have laid claim to all God has in store for you. Let nothing hinder you from living out your God-ordained purpose with both passion and freedom.

For His kingdom,

Tony Evans

SESSION 1

THE KEY TO OVERCOMING

COMMIT TO MEMORY

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).

CONSIDER

Before we move into a time of connecting, take in these key insights gleaned from Tony Evans and the *Living as an Overcomer* book. They set the stage for the rest of the session.

No matter where you live or where you come from, you've most likely seen the Nike swoosh logo. *Nike* is a Greek word that means "to overcome." It makes sense that a shoe company would be named with a word that means overcoming. After all, sports and athletics are all about overcoming. Whether it's overcoming your opponent by scoring more points or overcoming your own fears and limitations through pushing yourself, athletics are built around this concept. Overcoming appeals to all of us, because like it or not, we all face challenges in life that put us in a position of either accepting defeat or needing to overcome.

That could be why Jesus repeatedly used the term *overcome* when he instructed John to communicate His messages to the seven churches in the book of Revelation. They were all about what kept the believers in those days stuck. They needed to know what and how to overcome in order to live with full commitment

to Christ. Whether the challenge of temptation, the challenge of personal sin, or the challenge of aligning their spiritual priorities with God's, these churches had a lot to overcome.

I think you'll see that these churches' experiences were not too far removed from where Christians are in the world today. Thousands of years have passed, but the problems and distractions that drew these people away from God are similar to the problems and distractions we struggle with now. Our focus over these eight sessions, then, will be on walking into the full realization and experience of spiritual freedom through this process of learning how to overcome.

You can find many mentions of the number seven in the Bible, and in Revelation, it comes up regularly. Seven is the number of completeness and fullness. It often means something has reached full expression. It can also signify perfection. And in Jesus' messages to these seven churches, we can infer that He wants them all to be complete, fulfilled, and not lacking. Why? Because He's given a series of unique messages cumulatively arriving at the number seven as though to say if they collectively overcome in these seven areas, they will overcome completely and perfectly.

Seven times Christ says the same exact thing when He addresses the churches in Revelation: "He who has an ear, let him hear." Even though they all have their own uniqueness, problems, pressures, and burdens—as do we—the message to each church boils down to the same solution: Jesus says the person who has an external ear needs to hear the internal message from the Spirit of God.

We've all talked to people who heard our words but didn't get our message, so we understand when Jesus suggests it's possible to have an ear and not hear, that it's possible to still not get the truth. He's saying that whoever has the capacity to receive the data ought to take heed to it, because the hearing with the ear has as its goal the heeding of the truth.

I'm sure you've heard the civil rights song "We Shall Overcome," a call to living victoriously over adverse injustices. Overcoming is not a small matter; it's a serious one.

When Jesus speaks of overcoming, He's not giving a motivational speech; He's giving people a kingdom perspective. A worldview that involves both a state and a standing. We know it's a state, because in 1 John 5, John says those who believe in Christ have overcome the world. They are within a stated position in

Jesus Christ. In other words, since Christ has overcome and we are His followers, we're already overcomers by our position in Him.

But God wants our state of being to be more than that. He wants our position to become our practice. That's why we who are believers in Christ can overcome the world (1 John 5:5). We are to do more than simply live in Christ's position of overcoming. We, too, are overcomers in our everyday lives.

Let me illustrate this with marriage. If a couple is married, they're legally married whether or not they're happily married. A legal status exists for all married couples. But there's also a relational practice available to every couple, to either take advantage of or neglect. Legal status in marriage does not automatically mean a happy marriage.

Every believer has been positioned as an overcomer because of their status with the One who has overcome, Jesus Christ. But it's up to every Christian to individually turn that position into a practice. It's up to you to make what is legal in heaven, literal in history. Doing so is the process we call "overcoming."

Please notice one more thing that has a major impact. Jesus says to hear what the Spirit of God says to the church, which is made up of individual people. But His address is to the individual person who has an ear. In other words, there's one message for the whole congregation, but you must decide whether you will individually pay attention to it and allow the Spirit to speak to you directly. Going to church—or even to a small group—won't send the truth of God deep within your spirit. Only when you choose to hear and apply His truth will the fruit of it—the ability to overcome—be made manifest in your life.

Excerpted from chapter 1, *Living as an Overcomer*

CONNECT

After praying together, respond to these suggestions or questions, remembering that sharing is part of connecting with others.

1. What motivated you to participate in a small group like this one?

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

3. How do you think you can best contribute to the overall health of this group and your time together?

CAPTURE

Settle back and watch Tony's video teaching, taking in what he's been led to share for this session. The next section will help you unpack what you hear.

CONCENTRATE

The following questions, suggestions, and Scripture passages are designed to guide your discussion in response to Tony's teaching in the video.

1. Read each of these verses: Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21. What is the common word or phrase repeated in each one?

2. According to our Commit to Memory Scripture this week—1 John 5:4-5—who has the ability to overcome the world?

3. What is the victory that gives us the ability to overcome?
4. Tony often defines faith as acting like God is telling the truth. In what ways does faith involve more than our feelings?
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.

CONVERGE

Explore how what you've learned in this session can converge with your daily life—in other words, how you can apply it. As you discuss the following, jot down personal notes and proposed action steps in the extra space provided.

1. In what situation did you feel you had faith, but then when you needed to act on that faith, you realized you didn't have as much faith as you thought?

2. What role does faith play in overcoming? Share in what area of your life you desire greater faith. What steps can you take to pursue it?

3. Read Revelation 21:7. This verse speaks of a special, uniquely intimate relationship between a believer and God. Describe how you know when you're experiencing a uniquely intimate relationship with God. Can you share a personal example of His powerful presence in your life?

4. Revelation 1:12-20 talks about a warrior Jesus who doesn't necessarily resemble the meek and mild Jesus we see in paintings and drawings. 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?

5. How does knowing these characteristics of Jesus revealed in Revelation 1:12-20 strengthen your faith and empower your thoughts regarding your own overcoming?

CONCLUDE

To close the session, first worship the Lord together in any way meaningful to the group, such as singing a song. Then before a final prayer, share any prayer requests or praise for answered prayer.

CONTINUE

This last section is for you to use on your own over the next week, proceeding through the five opportunities for reflection as you wish—perhaps one per day. Before you work through the Scripture and questions, ask the Lord to open your ears to truly hear His truth and for His help in applying it in your life. Then record what He reveals to you in the extra space provided.

1. Read John 16:33: “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.”

Reflect

What seems to steal your peace? Why do you think that happens?

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

Why are we to “take courage”? Based on what truth?

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

Reflect

In what specific situation do you need God’s power this week?

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 mindset and align it with God’s Word?

3. Read Revelation 1:14: “His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire.”

Reflect

Most of us think of Jesus as a meek and mild Savior like we saw in Bible story books or art pieces growing up. Jesus is a meek and mild Savior in many ways. But Revelation 1:14 lets us in on His warrior side. Is this a side of Jesus unfamiliar to you? How do you feel about this characteristic?

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?

4. Read Revelation 1:6: “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.”

Reflect

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

Are you fully living out this purpose and appointment in your life? If so, how so? If not, what’s holding you back?

In what ways can you adjust your thoughts, mindsets, and choices to better reflect the high calling you’ve been given in Revelation 1:6?

5. Review 1 John 5:4-5: “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?”

Reflect

What do you think it means that our faith has overcome the world?

If you're struggling under the circumstances or emotions of life, will increasing your faith help you overcome? How so?

How can you increase your faith? Be as specific as you can.

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