

Word of the Kingdom Conference 2009  
Thursday February 5<sup>th</sup>  
Session One  
To Him Who Overcomes

1). 1Co 3:11 ¶ *For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

a). Here in 1 Corinthians 3 we have a picture of the process of Judgment that will take place for every Christian at the Judgment Seat of Christ following the resurrection/rapture of the Church.

b). We see a foundation laid, 'which is Jesus Christ', which would have to refer to the finished work of Christ on the cross of Calvary – the point and the means of our eternal salvation. As works which will endure can only be accomplished in the spiritual realm, and operating in the spiritual realm is exclusively the province of the eternally saved, we can clearly see why this is to be our foundation, our starting point.

c). From the point of our eternal salvation onwards we have the potential to produce works in the spiritual realm that will be performed through faithful obedience – works in response to our faith, bringing our faith to completion, just as we see through the example of Abraham in - Jas 2:20 *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. 24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.*

d). This type of work, according to our opening scripture, would be identified with gold, silver and precious stones and will endure when tested by fire and will receive a reward.

e). And by comparing scripture with scripture we would know that the reward to be received is our inheritance - Col 3:23 *And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.*

f). And that our inheritance has to do with a future salvation, the salvation of our soul - Heb 1:14 *Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?*

g). Then if we compare v25 of Colossians 3 and v15 of 1 Corinthians 3 we see that 'he who does wrong', he who does works apart from faith, will have his works burned and he 'will be repaid for what he has done' – will get exactly what he deserves for his unfaithfulness – which will be to 'suffer loss'.

h). And the only thing in the possession of the one eternally saved at this point that could be lost is his soul/life for the Age to come.

i). Again by comparing scripture with scripture we can see that which can be gained at the Judgment Seat is also that which can be lost - 1Pe 1:9 *receiving the end [goal] of your faith--the salvation of your souls.*

j). Mr 8:36 *"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?*

k). Mt 25:30 *'And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

l). And this is a possibly uncomfortable truth we see repeated so many times in scripture – Ro 8:13 *For if you live [in this present time] according to the flesh [works done apart from faith] you will die [lose your life for the Kingdom Age]; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body [now, in this time – thereby performing works in accordance with faith], you will live.[gain your soul/life for the Kingdom Age]*

m). Lu 9:24 *"For whoever desires to save his life [now] will lose it,[then] but whoever loses his life [now] for My sake will save it.[then]*

2). Now as we consider this picture of the events at the Judgment Seat recorded in 1 Corinthians Chapter 3 we will realize that we need to combine this with the Apostle John's eyewitness account of the Judgment of the Church recorded in the Revelation of Jesus Christ - Re 1:20 *"The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.*

a). The 7 churches 'which are in Asia' picture for us the complete 'Church', all Christians from this dispensation, standing before the Lord in Judgment. And as we would expect from all other related scripture, it is their works that are to be judged - Re 2:1 ¶ *"To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: 2 "I know your works,*

b). What is particularly significant for us here of course is the fact that what John records is not something like what will take place, it is an account of the very event itself.

c). John, moved through time and space from Man's Day on earth into the Lord's Day in the heavens, witnesses first hand, the Judgment of the Church that remains yet future. And so because the event has already occurred, it must occur just as it is recorded.

d). Now the account in Revelation does not detail the exact process of each Christian's judgment, we do not see the testing by fire of each one's work as recorded in 1 Corinthians, but this is certainly alluded to in the description of the One to whom all judgment has been given, who is described as follows –  
Re 1:14 *His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;*

e). If we then take this image from the end of the verse and the One it describes and consider it in conjunction with an incident on the night of the Lord's betrayal, we will get the overall idea - Lu 22:61 *And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." 62 So Peter went out and wept bitterly.*

f). Here in a type we see the disciple who denied his Lord, a work in antithesis to faith, subjected to a look from the One whose eyes will be 'like a flame of fire'. As a result of this look, searching out the thoughts and intents of the heart, the awful realization of what he has done then drives Peter from the lighted courtyard of the High Priest's house into the darkness outside where he 'wept bitterly' - Mt 22:12 *"So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. 13 "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

3). The detail contained in 1 Corinthians 3 is implicit in Revelation Chapters 2 and 3 and vice versa.

a). This being so we will realize that the works identified in Revelation would describe both the works of 'gold, silver and precious stones' and those of 'wood, hay, straw' that we find in Corinthians.

b). The works of faithful obedience – the very works that we were created in Christ to walk in – gold, silver and precious stones - Eph 2:10 *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

c). And the works of disobedience, those done apart from faith – wood, hay straw - those works done as a result of walking in the flesh rather than the Spirit,

that would result in loss - Ro 8:1 ¶ *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*

d). And that those who are addressed in the 7 letters in Revelation would be all Christians from this dispensation, both the overcomers and those who have been overcome. Those who will receive the reward and those who will suffer loss.

4). And here in the first of the 7 letters, that to the church of Ephesus, we can see this laid out for us -

a). Re 2:1 ¶ *"To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: 2 'I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; 3 'and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. 4 'Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 5 'Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place--unless you repent. 6 'But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."*

b). V1 begins with the addressee and a description of Christ as Judge taken from Chapter 1 pointing to the judicial nature of what is about to take place.

c). V2 then begins with the familiar statement, 'I know your works' and the works that are then identified are those we would associate with faithfulness, the works of gold, silver and precious stones, so that the Lord's comments, with regards to them, would be to those who are overcomers, the ones who will have produced such works, the ones who will receive the reward.

d). 'Your labor', 'your patience', 'you cannot bear those who are evil', 'have tested those who say they are apostles...and found them liars', 'you have persevered and have patience', 'labored for My name's sake', 'not become weary'

e). Labor = Greek – 'kopos' = a cut, i.e. (by analogy) toil (as reducing the strength), literally or figuratively; by implication, pains:--labour, + trouble, weariness.

f). Patience = Greek – 'hupomone' = cheerful (or hopeful) endurance, constancy:--enduring, patience, patient continuance (waiting).

g). Persevered = Greek – 'bastazo' = perhaps remotely derived from the base of 939 (through the idea of removal); to lift, literally or figuratively (endure, declare, sustain, receive, etc.):--bear, carry, take up.

h). Weary = Greek – ‘kamno’ = apparently a primary verb; properly, to toil, i.e. (by implication) to tire (figuratively, faint, sicken):--faint, sick, be wearied.

5). V4 then begins with the word ‘nevertheless’, and what follows is then directed to those who are overcome rather than being overcomers - Re 2:4 *"Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.*

a). The act of leaving, or stepping back from ‘your first love’ would be an act of unfaithfulness and would correspond to a work of wood, hay and straw. For those who would take such a step and continue in it, disqualification at the Judgment Seat and the loss of the soul/life is all that would await them.

b). In Ephesus being the first of the 7 churches, ‘which are in Asia’, presented in Revelation, we may see a beginning point for works accomplished apart from faith, which if unchecked, would ultimately lead to the conclusion found with the church of Laodicea, the 7<sup>th</sup> of the 7.

c). Following the condemnation regarding the leaving of the first love comes a call to repentance - Re 2:5 *"Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place--unless you repent.*

d). The call to repentance would be immediately for the 7 literal churches in Asia who would be the first recipients of the letter, to call them back from the direction they were heading.

e). And following after them it would be for all Christians during the 2000 years of this dispensation who might follow a similar direction.

f). But the call to repentance would also serve as a warning for us, making plain that leaving our first love remains a very real possibility. And the assurance that we can be forgiven if we turn from that direction.

g). In the command, ‘repent and do the first works’, we have not only the remedy for those who have started to walk away, but also the means by which we can remain faithful and not drift away in the first place.

h). Simply, it is ‘do the first works’ – the works already identified in verses 2 and 3 – labor, patient endurance, perseverance, not growing weary – and these we will look at in more detail later.

i). V6 then cites another commendation - Re 2:6 *"But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*

j). And because of the commendation we would have to see this to be connected with faithfulness and therefore the works of gold, silver and precious stones.

k). The letter to the Church of Ephesus then concludes with an admonition to spiritual understanding and a promise concerning rulership, the reward of the inheritance, for those who will be overcomers - Re 2:7 *"He who has an ear, let him*

*hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. "*

l). Within the timeframe of John's witness of the Judgment of the Church taking place, the promise given, in conjunction with the other overcomers' promises, constitutes the reward given to those who have overcome.

m). And then within the timeframe of this dispensation the promise, along with the other promises and other related scripture, would be the incentive to all Christians to continue properly running the race of the faith in order to realize the reward at the Judgment Seat.

n). With some variation on the theme, this is the pattern after which all of the letters to the 7 churches, 'which are in Asia', are written.

6). And because the portrayal of the 7 churches also provides us with a dispensational history of the Church we can also distinguish a progression in unfaithfulness that begins with leaving the first love, as we have seen in Ephesus, and concludes with a complete disregard for the reward of the inheritance, as we see in Laodicea - Re 3:16 *"So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. 17 "Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' --and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—*

a). By the end of this dispensation the majority of Christians are overcome by, 'the world, the flesh and the devil', with their focus on the things of this world and success from the world's viewpoint, rather than being focused on the world to come, and success with respect to that from God's viewpoint.

b). Something also contained in the final warning in the Book of Hebrews Heb 12:16 *lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. 17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.*

7). As we consider all of this we will realize that the issue of works of gold, silver and precious stones and works of wood, hay, straw emanate entirely out of issues of faithfulness or unfaithfulness respectively.

a). Either we will believe what God has said in and through His Word about Christ in His coming glory in respect of the 7<sup>th</sup> Day and thereby organize our lives to the intent that we can participate in that Day with Him – taking serious note of the conditions involved - 2Ti 2:5 *And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.*

b). Or we will not believe what God has said – and our unbelief will not necessarily be expressed through our words – but most certainly through our

actions. We will choose what is easy and comfortable for us rather than submitting ourselves to the truth of scripture.

c). Jas 1:21 *Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

d). We can thank God that if we are following the former we have great encouragement to continue.

e). And if we have allowed ourselves to go with the latter we still have opportunity to repent and do 'the first works'.

8). In the time that we have left this afternoon we shall look at those works of faithfulness, the works of gold, silver and precious stones as they relate to the trials of this life - Jas 1:12 *Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

a). Endures = Greek – 'hupomeno' – the same word translated 'patience' in Revelation 2:2

b). Temptation = Greek – 'peirasmos' = a putting to proof (by experiment (of good), experience (of evil), solicitation, discipline or provocation); by implication, adversity:--temptation, X try.

i/ And who according to scripture are those who love Him? –

Joh 14:21 *"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.*

c). Now look at what we find in - Re 2:10 *"Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

d). In both our scripture from James and that from Revelation we have the 'crown of life' given as a reward for patient endurance during a time of testing which clearly shows that we are looking at the same thing from two different perspectives.

e). Let's look carefully at the words from revelation – 'Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer' – and the reason we are not to fear is that in this suffering we are being tested, and that which is being tested is our faith.

f). We could see this in relation to - Php 4:6 *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

g). And - Pr 3:5 *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. 7 ¶ Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil.*

h). And our faith, according to Revelation 2, will be tested for ‘10 days’ – a complete period of time.

i). If we will ‘be faithful unto death’ then we will receive ‘the crown of life’.

j). Now this not only denotes the period of our life on earth as a Christian, but also the complete period of time that is required that we might die to our flesh in the area of our faith that is being tested – trusting God in the midst of trials.

k). It is a self evident truth that our choosing to be faithfully obedient to the word of God is never an issue until being obedient to the word requires us to do something we don’t want to do. It is only here at the point of intersection between our will and God’s will that the genuineness of our faith can be proven.

9). Let’s look at seven verses from 1 Peter Chapter 1 that might help put this into context - 1Pe 1:3 ¶ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 ¶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials [‘peirasmos’], 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.*

a). Our scripture begins in v3 by detailing the purpose for our salvation and that which the resurrection of Jesus Christ has made possible for us, taking us through to the end of v5 where the goal of our faith, the salvation of our souls will be realized.

[re-read v3-5]

b). v6 shows what our attitude to this should be, ‘In this you greatly rejoice’, and then juxtaposes this to our being ‘grieved by various trials’.

c). Now these ‘various trials’ will inevitably cause us to be sorrowful as they can be extremely painful and debilitating – but they are for a season, and are there, when necessary, for a specifically stated purpose - *7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,*

d). And here we see it don’t we? The genuineness of our faith is being tested, after the same fashion that gold is proofed to reveal its purity – so that at ‘the revelation of Jesus Christ’, at His Judgment Seat, our genuine, tested faith,

will result in praise honor and glory for us. And as this faith is tested by fire this would bring us right back to where we started in 1 Corinthians 3.

e). Clearly then the trials we have to go through and the suffering that comes from them is not a negative, but a positive. And we must adjust our mindset accordingly.

f). And to have this mindset is not a natural part of our soulical nature, it can only come about through being transformed by the renewing of our mind –  
Ro 12:2 *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

g). Something that takes place through continually receiving the Spirit of God through the word of God.

h). These trials will always present us with the opportunity to be faithful in heart, mind and action to the revealed word of God, or to be unfaithful and follow the dictates of our flesh – and this again requires patient endurance –  
Heb 10:36 *For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise:*

10). From another perspective we can see this as child training - Re 3:19 *"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.*

a). Heb 12:5 *And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." 7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?.....11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. 12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, 13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.*

b). Ro 8:18 *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

11). Now in all of this we have a choice. We can submit ourselves to the child training, we can choose to bring ourselves in line with the word and thereby die to our flesh or we can try and seek out our best life now without considering our future Judgment.

a). And here we can see the opportunity to leave our first love.

b). This is not ceasing to believe in the Kingdom to come, although this could ultimately be the outcome.

c). But rather, it is in giving in to our flesh now because we don't really consider that the promises of God are worth the price we have to pay.

d). In effect we don't believe what He has said – this is Israel at Kadesh Barnea.

e). Now we may protest our innocence as much as we like, but in our choices, which no one else may see, the truth will be revealed.

f). And once we begin to walk down this road we become susceptible to the teaching of the doctrine of Balaam - Re 2:14 *"But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.*

g). And susceptible to the influence of 'that woman Jezebel' – Re 2:20 *"Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.*

h). In other words we will find ourselves drawn to a corrupt and perverted form of the scriptures that distort or deny the Word of the Kingdom. We can come to a place where we begin to listen to the voice of our enemy - Ge 3:1b.... *And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said,*

i). And this we almost have to do, as to do anything else would bring us face to face with our sin, and we will already be in hiding.

j). This why the scripture commands - Heb 2:1 ¶ *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.*

k). This is why we must be continually filled with the Spirit.

l). This is why we cannot ignore the opportunity to gather together to encourage one another to love and good works - Heb 10:24 *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*

12). Let us take full advantage of what God has provided for us here over the next few days and let us press on towards the prize.

a). As we close let the scriptures encourage us - Ga 6:8 *For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap [age lasting] life. 9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

b). Heb 12:1 ¶ *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,*

c). Ro 5:3 *And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*

d). 2Pe 1:3 *as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 5 ¶ But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

e). Heb 10:36 *For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.*