

## Victory Over the Devil, the Five R's: Rejoice

7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Easter, May 24, 2009

Today we are concluding our series, Victory over the devil, the Five R's, by looking at our last "R" word, Rejoice.

We've repented of sin; we've renounced the lies the devil would tell us; by God we've reclaimed what we've lost and we've been refilled with the Holy Spirit as we've yielded our sinful will and hearts to him. And in all this we've been proclaiming our victory we have over the devil because of Jesus. What's left? Just one thing to carry from here: Rejoice!

The word rejoice as it is used in the New Testament is from the Greek word χαίρω (*chairō*) and it means to be glad; to be delighted.<sup>1</sup> What can we be glad about? What can we be delighted about? For that, let's go to our Epistle reading today, 1<sup>st</sup> John chapter four, verses one through six.

The quickest way for you to find 1<sup>st</sup> John in your Bible you brought with you this morning (a-hem!) is probably to start at the end of the New Testament and work backwards. In that case, 1<sup>st</sup> John is the 5<sup>th</sup> book from the end. You'd start with the last book, Revelations, which was written by the last living disciple, John, and records the visions Jesus gave him regarding end-of-world things. Before Revelations is the book of Jude, written by Jesus' bother, then comes 3<sup>rd</sup> John, then 2<sup>nd</sup> John, then 1<sup>st</sup> John.

1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> John, as well as the Gospel of John and the book of Revelations were all written by the disciple John. This is the one who took care of Jesus' mother Mary after Jesus told him to from the cross. John was the only disciple to die a natural death – all the other disciples and apostles were put to death for believing in Jesus as their savior.

So why do we rejoice? We rejoice because of what John tells us in these verses. Once again, we're looking at chapter 4, verses 1 to 6, especially verses 4, 5, and 6:

*Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to*

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<sup>1</sup> Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Greek (New Testament): 5897 χαίρω

us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

What do we have to rejoice about? There are three ‘biggies’:

One, Jesus – God Himself – has come to us in the flesh! Two, we have overcome the spirit of the evil one that would lead us to deny Jesus is God by the power of the Holy Spirit given to us; and three, the Holy Spirit that is in us is greater than the evil one that is in the world!

Let’s take this apart just a little, and then talk about some application.

First, digging into a little Greek here, you can make a note in the margins of your Bibles next to verse two about Jesus coming in the flesh, that in the original language this is not a reference to a past event, but rather an ongoing continuance. In other words, it’s not that Jesus came in the flesh once as a past event, and isn’t in the flesh anymore, it means, “Jesus came in flesh and blood, remains flesh and blood, and will remain flesh and blood forever.”

Think about that for a moment! The creator of the universe, the designer and author of all there is became a man, forever. He has fingers and toes, teeth and tonsils, knee caps and elbows and hair on His arms. He became one of us without giving up His God-hood so He could save us, and then give us victory over the devil!

Let’s look at the second thing to rejoice about – we have overcome the spirit of the evil one by the power of the Holy Spirit. The way the Greek works with this wording is similar to the way it works with Jesus coming in flesh and blood. It’s not, Jesus overcame the evil one once for us and that’s that, but rather, ‘we have this victory and it is decisive, and it continues.’ And it’s ours! It’s ours because Jesus gives it to us, and it’s ours today, tomorrow and forever.

Do you know what Jesus tells us about those who have this victory? He says of them:

“I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.” – Rev. 2:7

They will never need to worry about going to hell. – Rev. 2:11

“ I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.” – Rev. 2:17

“ I will give him authority over the nations.” – Rev. 2:26

“I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and His angels.” – Rev. 3:5

“I will make him a pillar in the temple of God.” – Rev. 3:12

“I will give him right to sit with Me on My throne.” – Rev. 3:21

“He who overcomes will inherit all this {heaven}, and I will be his God and he will be My son.” – Rev. 21:7

Good morning, victors! Good morning, overcomers! Good morning, those who live in the ongoing victory over the devil given to us by Jesus!

Finally, the third thing to rejoice about is also from verse 4 – the Holy Spirit who is in us is greater, more powerful, than the devil who is in the world. Does this mean we are never going to sin? No.

What it means is even though we do sin, the power of forgiveness following repentance and confession is more powerful than the hold the devil would like to have on us. What it means is the victory we have over the devil is ours now and forever. What it means is the five R’s are always there for us.

*Metanoia* – Repent

*Arneomai* – Renounce

קָנָה “qanah” – Reclaim

*Plérōō*, (play-row) – Refill

χαίρω (*chairō*) – Rejoice

When life is hard, the Five R’s; our victory

When questions are more plentiful than answers, the Five R’s; our overcoming.

When joy is overtaking us and we’ve got the world on a string, the Five R’s; our strength.

In times of happiness, in times of trial, in seasons of despair and in seasons of hope, the Five R’s; our steady rock instead of the shifting sand the devil offers.

Rejoice!

Would you pray with me please?

Heavenly Father, thank You for claiming us as Your own through our adoption into Your family. Lord Jesus, thank You for coming to us and delivering us from the power the enemy of our souls wants to have over us. Holy Spirit, thank You for filling us again and again, and giving us Your powerful indwelling in this world.

Help us to not forget that when we sin, there is grace for the repentant; power for the renouncer; hope for the reclamer; joy for the refilled and delight in our Triune God for

worshippers rejoicing for all You've done, still do, and will continue to do despite the best laid plans of the evil one.

Lord Jesus, keep us firmly held in Your nail scarred hands until the day You return to take Your overcomers to the place You've been preparing for us. To You and You alone be all glory, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever, Amen.