

STUDY 6

REVELATION'S ANCIENT DISCOVERIES

Revelation's Source of Spiritual Power

by Mark Finley

Today there's a new revolution in psychoactive drugs. Soon there'll be a pill for every problem. Will we find all our answers in pharmaceuticals? Certainly psychoactive drugs are on a roll. One big reason is the Prozac phenomenon. After this anti-depressant went on the market, people began telling remarkable stories of how their lives had changed dramatically after taking the drug. And that made a lot of people wonder—if a pill can do all this, do we still need God? Do pills do what God cannot? Are psychoactive drugs going to make God obsolete?

Let's take a closer look at exactly what God does in an individual's life. Let's see how the Holy Spirit works in our minds and compare that with what psychoactive drugs do. I think you'll be amazed. There is a divine power which provides radical, life-transforming changes!

Let's turn to the book of Revelation. Did you know that believers have one dominant image in the book of Revelation? They're characterized in one way more than any other: God calls them OVERCOMERS. Although Revelation

pictures hard times and cataclysms in the end time, with evil powers like the dragon and beast warring against God's people, believers OVERCOME. Believers are delivered. Believers WIN! God's instructive, illuminating refrain starts near the beginning of Revelation:

Revelation 2:7 - "To him who OVERCOMES I will give to eat from the tree of life."

Revelation 2:11 - "He who OVERCOMES shall not be hurt by the second death."

Revelation 2:17 - "To him who OVERCOMES I will give some of the hidden manna to eat."

Revelation 2:26 - "He who OVERCOMES . . . to him I will give power over the nations."

Revelation 3:5 - "He who OVERCOMES shall be clothed in white garments."

Revelation 3:12 - "He who OVERCOMES, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God."

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Revelation 3:21 - “To him who OVERCOMES I will grant to sit with Me on My throne.”

The book of Revelation pictures believers as victors who overcome adversity and evil. We see the same theme later in the book. Speaking of Satan, the accuser, the enemy, **Revelation 12:11** says, “They OVERCAME him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.” At the end of the book, this same picture emerges. God promises in **Revelation 21:6-7**: “He who OVERCOMES shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.”

In various places, Revelation pictures believers joyously celebrating before God’s throne.

They’re pictured as having gone through great tribulation and coming out *triumphant*.

Believers overcome

even in the worst of times. That’s part of Revelation’s message, friends. It’s telling us that we weak, sinful human beings can be overcomers. We needn’t be intimidated by the forces of evil in this world.

Yes, we may be weak, handicapped by our heredity, by our family of origin, by our environment. But Scripture still offers us hope that we can be overcomers and rise above these things. I’ve seen God radically transform people around the world—their lives changed forever:

Drunkards become sober.

Thieves become honest.

Money-grabbing businessmen

become unselfish, compassionate husbands and fathers.

Angry, bitter people become renewed in spirit.

Prostitutes and lust-filled men become transformed.

Hearts filled with hatred become filled with love.

It’s a miracle—a miracle of God’s grace! What God does in human hearts and lives is remarkable. The Apostle Paul shouts it in these words: “If any man [or woman] is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” **2 Corinthians 5:17**.

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How does it happen? How does God transform our lives? The Bible calls this experience “the new birth” or being “born again.” To be born again means to be radically transformed from deep within by the power of the Holy Spirit. It means to have a new way of looking at things, a new power operating in your life, new desires, new impulses, new joy and peace in your life.

The human mind cannot understand it, but we become overcomers through the Spirit. We’re born again, powerfully changed, with a new power working in our lives. The Spirit has uprooted anger, bitterness, lust, and addictions and replaced them with love, joy, peace, and longsuffering.

The Spirit’s power liberates us from the bondage of habits that destroy our souls. **2 Corinthians 3:17** puts it this



way: “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” The Spirit’s power frees us from the chains of sin which bind us while drug medication deals only with symptoms. If a person is depressed, certain pills may ease that depression. But no psychoactive drug can show you WHY you’re depressed, what lies behind your anger, or what contributes to your anxiety. In our rush to just medicate the mind, we forget that pills don’t give us the wisdom or insight we need to deal with our problems and grow through them. But the Holy Spirit works in us to do precisely that. He’s the Spirit of revelation, and His revelations can produce dramatic results.

One more thing God’s Spirit does is fill up our lives with good things. Look at **Galatians 5:22-23**: “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control.” Those good qualities the Holy Spirit reproduces inside us. That’s how we keep growing. The Spirit moves us down a path that leads to abundant life—everlasting life. Pills can’t do that. Pills may be a temporary help, but the Holy Spirit sticks with us for the long haul. He’s not an artificial additive. He fills us with good character qualities. And being filled with the

Spirit produces no side effects. There’s no down side.

Ephesians 3:16 talks about being “strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man.” You can be strengthened with the mighty power of God inside you! You can be different than you are! You don’t need to struggle with the same habits over and over again. When life presses you down, when you struggle with impulses which seem uncontrollable, when you feel too weak to try - remember the Apostle Paul’s words, “Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” **Romans 8:37**. God has called you to be a winner, not a loser. Our willpower is weak, but when we surrender our will to Him, He gives us power directly from His throne.

My own Dad Jim Finley was born to a problem family in the New York City slum called “Hell’s Kitchen.” He picked up bad habits, left home, joined the Navy and was going down the wrong road in life when he dropped to his knees and gave his heart to Christ. Dad didn’t just get out of Hell’s Kitchen. Hell’s Kitchen got out of him. My father truly escaped from his old life because he truly made a commitment, heart and soul. That’s how we become OVERCOMERS. **R**

Our heavenly Father has so much He longs to teach us! Think of each seminar session as one in a series of steps leading upward—a series of “lessons from heaven.” May we learn our lessons well, so we in turn can teach others. God’s Word, the Bible—our Textbook for this seminar—offers **Learning Unlimited!**

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1. The Holy Spirit is more than an *essence* or *influence* or *power* or *force*—He’s a Person! For the Bible speaks of “the _____ of the Spirit” and warns us, “_____ not the Holy Spirit of God”—attributes that could never be applied to an unconscious force. (ROMANS 8:27, EPHESIANS 4:30)
 2. If we want a Spirit-filled Christian life, we must understand that the Bible says God gives the Holy Spirit “to those that _____ Him” and keep His Commandments through love. (ACTS 5:32. COMPARE JOHN 14:15-17)
 3. One ministry of the Holy Spirit Jesus pointed out is that “He will *convict* [other versions may say *convince*] the world of _____,” giving us a sense of right and wrong. (JOHN 16:8)
 4. The Holy Spirit was powerfully poured out on the Day of Pentecost, but He was present and active long before—even at Creation, for the Bible says, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. . . . And the _____ of _____ was hovering over the face of the waters.” (GENESIS 1:1-2)
 5. God knows we face many troubles and temptations, but He offers many great promises “To him who _____,” and wants us to be “_____ with _____ through His Spirit in the inner man.” (REVELATION 2:7, EPHESIANS 3:16)
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Your Name: _____ Date _____

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Genesis 1:2** The Holy Spirit of God was present at Creation.
- Acts 5:3-4** Peter in the Bible equates the Holy Spirit with “God.”
- 2 Cor. 3:17** Paul in the Bible equates the Holy Spirit with “the Lord.”
- Romans 8:27** The Holy Spirit has a mind.
- 1 Cor. 2:11** The Holy Spirit knows and understands the things of God.
- Ephesians 4:30** The Holy Spirit is not a mere power or force but a Person who can be grieved.
- John 16:13-14** Jesus referred to the Spirit with personal pronouns like He and His—not “it.”
- John 14:26** God sends the Holy Spirit to be our divine Teacher.
- Acts 5:32** God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey Him.
- John 16:8** God’s Holy Spirit convicts us—in our hearts—of sin.
- John 3:3-8** The Holy Spirit brings about the new birth, when one is “born again.”
- Eze. 36:26-37** The Holy Spirit transforms our character, giving us a new heart.
- 1 Cor. 7-11** The Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts, equipping us for God’s work.
- Genesis 6:3** The Holy Spirit “strives” with us, leading us to do right.
- John 16:13** The Holy Spirit guides us into all truth.
- Ephesians 3:16** Through His Spirit, God will strengthen us with might in our inner being.
- Romans 8:37** In all problems, we can be more than conquerors through Him who loves us.
- Rev. 3:12** God gives many breathtaking promises “to him [or her] who OVERCOMES.” (See also Revelation 2:7, 11, 7, 26, 3:5, 3:21, 21:7, etc.)
- 2 Cor. 5:17** A person who comes to Christ is a new creation—all things have become new!
- Gal. 5:22-23** The fruit of the Spirit can fill our lives, our characters, with all good things.
- 2 Timothy 1:7** God hasn’t given us a spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind.
- Romans 8:14** As we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us, we become sons and daughters of God.
- Galatians 6:8** “He who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”
- Romans 8:11** We need not fear death, for Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit, will resurrect His faithful people.
- Revelation 19:1** Through all eternity we’ll praise God for His miraculous power of deliverance.