***Authority in the Millennium

RV28-01***

Please turn in your Bibles to Revelation 2. This is the letter to Thyatira. As you know, in the city of Thyatira, there was a Jezebel-like woman who found a hearing among some of the church members for her teachings which were a combining of Christianity with paganism. Over the centuries, this combination resulted in what is today known as the Roman Catholic Church. This combination of paganism and Christianity will find its ultimate fruition in the tribulation period in the tribulation era in what the Bible describes as the harlot church. This will then be a world-dominating and a world-controlling religious organization.

The people who responded to this female religious leader were doing so because they were in the spiritual condition that we refer to as reversionism. That is reversionism from divine viewpoint, or backsliding from God's point of view. These people were in this condition because they lacked a well-developed spiritual maturity structure in their souls. Those who did possess such a structure of spiritual maturity rejected this woman's teachings. Those who accepted the woman's teachings were in a condition of spiritual immaturity. They lacked the edification that they needed because: number one – their minds did not possess the frame of reference of Bible doctrine viewpoint; number two – they were unstable in their emotions; and, number three – the Holy Spirit did not control their wills. This is what is characteristically true of a person in reversionism. His mind does not have God's point of view because that mind does not have doctrine. It has no principles to operate under. There is only human viewpoint. His emotions are up and down, and unstable. He can get very excited over something that is perfectly false, and will go along with it.

That's what was happening in Thyatira. Emotions which dominate the soul have a camera lens effect in that they invert everything, and they cause you to act in a way that is just the opposite of what you should do. If you get married in reversionism, you will pick the opposite person from the one that God has selected for you. If you make business deals and decisions when you are in reversionism, you'll make just the opposite decision from the one that you should make. If you invest your money in the Lord's work while you're in a status of reversionism, you will invest it in just the opposite direction from which God wants you to place it. Everything comes out backwards. It's a very serious condition. It's a very disastrous condition to a human being now, as well as in the future.

Negative volition toward Bible doctrine truth prevented the storing of divine viewpoint in the mentality of the souls of these people. Their minds were empty of divine viewpoint, and so their minds became a spiritual vacuum, sucking in human viewpoint to fill the vacuum. The perceptive mind, the learning functions of their mind, became completely darkened toward divine viewpoint reality in all areas of life. The spiritual blackout in their minds resulted in their being alienated, of course, from God and His guidance, because they were simply ignorant of divine viewpoint principles. The reason that they were spiritually ignorant was because spiritual callouses had been built up on the facets of their souls through their negative volition to God's truth. We looked at all this in detail as it is laid out for us in Ephesians 4:17ff.

Well, the resulting condition of this blackout in the mind, because of calluses upon the soul, was the condition of reversionism, and this in turn led to evil practices which were zealously pursued. Reversionism can only be corrected by the gradual removal of these calluses – this hardness upon the soul: through confession, first of all, of the known sins; and, then through positive volition to the intake of doctrine.

**Born Again**

This morning we begin at verse 26 where the Lord Jesus continues in this letter with the remarks, "And He that overcomes." The word "and" is the Greek proposition "kai," and it indicates a continuation of the letter. This part of the letter comes to the promised reward. He continues his remarks with this word. What He is directing this word to now is that there is a reward for certain types of believers. These believers are described, first of all, as those who overcome. The word "overcome" is the Greek word "nikao." The word "nikao" means "to conquer." It is in the present tense which means that this is the constant status of those who are in salvation. They are in a position of having conquered. It is active voice which means that it is something that they personally possess. They are actually indeed themselves conquerors. It is in the participle mood which is a way of expressing a statement of a principle.

We will not take too much time on this because this phrase has been repeated in these letters, as we have studied them, at the end of each letter. We will observe, however, once more, that 1 John 5:5 gives us the definition of who an overcomer is, so that we know precisely of whom he is speaking: "Who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God." So the "nikao" can be equaled to the Christian – the genuine born again believer. He is the one who is referred to here as the overcomer. They have overcome Satan and his world of evil, which had previously enslaved them.

So today the world is filled with people who are not overcomers – those who have not overcome Satan's evil. They are subject and enslaved to Satan's will. Then those who are overcomers have overcome Satan's authority and they have broken his authority through Christ, and they have overcome the world of evil that Satan has imposed upon them. They have overcome the enslavement to Satan's human viewpoint thinking. Those who have been born again are the overcomers.

But then we throw in this word "kai" again, because He is indicating to us that this reward goes people who have two qualifications. One is to be an overcomer in terms of being a born again believer, but then you have to have a second thing. Along with being a "nikao," you have to be somebody who keeps something. The word "keeps" is the Greek word "tereo." "And he that overcomes and keeps up my works." The word "keeps" here means simply to do or to observe. It is present tense which means that these things are constantly performed. It is active which means the individual believer performs these things himself. It is participle again – a spiritual principle which is being laid out for us.

**Keep Christ's Commandments**

The things that they keep are called works ("ergon"). The word "ergon" is a noun and it means "a deed" – something that one does: "Doing the works of God." These works are qualified specifically here by the word "My:" "My works," Jesus Christ says. In the Greek language, He puts that special word "My" in there. It's the personal pronoun "ego" in the possessive case so that it is "My works" in contrast to whose works? Well, in contrast to the works of this Jezebel-like woman. In this particular case, the issue for these Christians is: whose works are you following? Are you following the leadership of this woman whose works are evil, and whose work represents reversionism? Or are you following the works of Jesus Christ whose work represents spiritual maturity? This stresses the contrast with the Jezebel woman's works, which many were performing, and these works of Jesus Christ that are His will for the believers as expressed in Bible doctrine. That is the will of God.

We have this spelled out for us in John 6:29: "Jesus answered and said unto them, 'This is the work of God: that you believe on Him whom He has sent.'" That's what it means to do the work of God. That, of course, starts with believing the gospel. But then it continues, if you are going to do God's work, to believing all that He has commanded. That is what is recorded in the New Testament Scriptures. The will of God is recorded in New Testament Scriptures. It is this that we are to follow if we are to do the works of the Lord. You do this, indeed, if you are in love with Him. For this reason, John 14:23 says, "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If a man loves Me, he will keep My words.'" That's how you do the works of Jesus Christ. You keep His words: "My father will love him," and so on. So if you love Jesus Christ, you will do His works, and you do His work by keeping His words; that is, His commandments.

**Bible Doctrine**

Those who were negative toward Jesus Christ in Thyatira were keeping not the words and the commandments of Jesus Christ, but they were keeping the words and the commandments of the Jezebel-like woman. So they were doing her evil works rather than God's divine good works. Remember that what is taught here to us concerning these believers in Thyatira, of course, applies to us. That's why we have this letter – for our illumination and for our understanding. So Jesus Christ is making a promise of a reward that's coming up in the future to those who: first of all, are born again people; and, then secondly, of that group of born again people, those who are keeping the deeds of Jesus Christ. And the keeping of the deeds of Jesus Christ depends upon being obedient to Bible doctrine which expresses His point of view.

**Until the End**

How long are you supposed to do this? Well, you do this, He says, "Until." The Greek word for "until" is "achri." This is a preposition indicating the extent of time for observing the works of Jesus Christ, and the extent of time, He says is, "To the end." This is the Greek word "Telos." "Telos" is a noun which indicates the terminal point for observing the works of Jesus Christ. If you are a born again person, and if you observe the works of Jesus Christ up to a certain point which is described here as "the end," then there will be certain fantastic consequences which will accrue to you.

**The Reward**

"The end" here refers to one of two things: one – your personal physical death as a believer; or, two – the return of Jesus Christ in the rapture to catch you up to be up in the Lord's presence. "The end," in either case, is when you check in before Jesus Christ. That is what is referred to here as "the end." The reward promised to believers who, to the end of their earthly life experience, keep functioning on Bible doctrine principles is what is in view here. This reward does not go to all believers, and that's going to be a little shocking to some people. The reward that He's going to describe for us in a moment does not go to everyone.

I realize that we get sloppy in our talk some time as we rejoice in what our future and destiny is as Christians. We sort of talk as if the promise, which is coming up here, is going to be true of all of you in this room. It may be, and I hope it is true of all of us, but it is not necessarily true of a lot of Christians. It is not only necessary to be born again. It is necessary to check out in eternity with a spiritual maturity structure fully developed and fully functioning. If you check out of this life without a spiritual maturity structure in your soul at maximum productivity up there at super grace living – the mountaintop experience, what He promises here is not to you. So, you might as well forget it. It might be a good idea, if you have any suspicion that you're not going to be up at this level, that you just get your mind and your soul and everything about you acclimated to the fact of what's waiting you out there, because you can just avoid a lot of really big disappointment. The reward is not promised to just believers, but to the faithful spiritual maturity type believer.

So, what is this reward? Verse 26: "And he that overcomes (the believer) and he that keeps My works until the end (spiritual maturity structure super grace type), to him." Here in the Greek you have this word "autos." The words "to him" are an emphasis. It is the Holy Spirit's way of stressing that the Lord Jesus is talking about this particular type who have these two qualifications that we've looked at – not to anybody else. This word limits out of the mass of all of God's people. It takes a segment, and it says, "This group, and to them as individuals, "To him, and to him alone" is what it means.

**Authority**

Then it says, "I will give." The word "give" is the Greek word "didomi." This word means simply to present one with something. This, of course, fittingly, is in the future. That's the future tense. It is sometime in the future. What is that future point? Well, it's the point when you reach the end: either physical death; or, the rapture. This is active voice. The Lord Jesus himself is going to do the giving. It's indicative mood. It's a statement of fact. To this type of believer of the super grace category, a certain thing will be given which He calls "power." This is the Greek word "exousia." "Exousia" is better translated as "authority." It is power in the sense of governing authority. It is the right to act in a certain way. It is the right to be in charge.

This authority which is delivered to the super grace Christian is "over" something. This word "over" is "epi." It is a preposition which indicates the location. This is the place where this is applied to. And what is it applied to? It is applied to what is called here "the nations. The Greek word is the "ethnos." This is a noun, and "ethnos," in the plural, means "gentiles." Of course you can see how we get our English word "ethnic" from that, referring to different nationalities and national qualities. The "ethnos" here refers to the nations, and they refer to the gentiles as national groups.

The nations of the world are going to come under divine judgment. There's no question about that. The Bible makes that very clear in Matthew 25:32. Jesus Christ, when He comes the second time to this earth, is going to do this. It is not when He comes in the rapture, but when He comes to this earth a second time: "And before Him shall be gathered all the nations." Here you've got the "ethnos." It's in the plural so it means the gentiles. That's how you should translate that: "They should be gathered all the gentiles. And He (Jesus Christ) shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.

This separation will be on the basis of individuals within the nation. He indeed will take the United States of America. That is a nation. He will separate the individuals within the nations. He will separate the gentiles. That's what he's doing. He will separate the gentile sheep from goats. It doesn't matter what nation you're in. You will be separated as a gentile. This, of course, does not mean, therefore, that God is going to look at a nation and, say, "Okay, United States, you're a sheep nation; and, Russia, you're a goat nation." It is not in terms of the whole nation. That's why you have to translate this properly as gentiles. He is going to separate the gentiles one from another, whatever nation they belong in.

There are going to be an awful lot of sheep, indeed, in the United States, and there are going to be an awful lot of goats, I can guarantee you, in Soviet Russia and all the rest of the communist countries, no matter what you want to pretend otherwise. That will pan out. But nevertheless, it will be a division on the basis of an individual decision-making by some authority – somebody who has the right to do that.

**The Spiritual Maturity Structure**

So, isn't this interesting? We're talking about those of you who are here right now who fall into the category of the overcomers. You have recognized Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and by faith have trusted him as personal Savior. And secondly, you have made it your business to take doctrine into your souls and to permit God the Holy Spirit to build edification through that doctrine so that you have built a structure of spiritual maturity with all the facets – the five basic qualities that that involves in spiritual maturity: being grace-oriented; having a mastery of the details of life so that you're in command of material possessions; having a relaxed mental attitude so that you are free of mental attitude bitterness; having the capacity to love – to love the people that you should love in terms of God, in terms of your a marriage partner, and in terms of other people around you; and, to have the quality of inner happiness within your soul – the quality of stability and peace.

All of these characterize spiritual maturity, and all of these have been developed to a fantastic degree as you have walked with the Lord, and as you've been positive to His truth and positive to His leading of you on the basis of that truth. "Positive means that you have applied it in your circumstances, and you have applied it in your situation in whatever contacts of life, including applying it when it comes time to exercise your right as a citizen who votes. You have divine viewpoint principles, and you are capable of, therefore, applying those divine viewpoint principles when it comes time to casting your voice for someone to take political authority within the society in which you live.

**My Cup Runneth Over**

All of that, maximized in its development, will then put you into the position that James describes as the person to whom God gives more grace. You have built capacity into your soul with the spiritual maturity structure that you have received here. God has given you capacity. He has poured His grace in. And, finally, the grace has risen and risen. Then you get to super grace, and the grace keeps pouring in, but now it's flowing out. It is pouring in, and it's flowing out, and you are a marvelous human being. You are indeed what the world likes to call beautiful people, because the grace of God is overflowing, and this is what the psalmist said, of course. He said, "My cup runneth over." You have a cup now that has capacity. That's what spiritual maturity edification is all about. Super grace means that the grace is pouring out as fast as God is pouring it in. And you're the kind of a person then that is making an impact on society. You are making an impact in terms of eternity. You are finding that you have all those basic qualities in your soul that God can honor and that God can use.

**Governmental Ruling Authority**

Those of you who've got that, God says that, "I will find you to be a person that I can trust to put into governmental ruling authority," because that is what this verse speaks of. You people will have the authority to rule the gentile world.

To rule over the nations of the world has always been the ambition of tyrants of one kind and another. It certainly has been, in religious realms. Looking at it from a religious frame of reference, this has been the ambition of religious groups from the time of Nimrod on. The greatest expression of this kind of domination of the temporal powers by religious powers is, of course, to be found in the Roman Catholic Church. To this very day, the popes of the Roman Catholic Church claim such temporal authority over the nations of the world. One of the three tiers on the papal crown represents the fact that the Pope has authority over all nations. That means he has the final voice. He has the final say as to who shall be king; who should be president; who should be prime minister; and, who shall govern a nation. He has final say over all the people who will be ruling authorities, and he has final say over what those nations will do.

**Henry IV**

That's a little hard for us to imagine in our day, particularly with our American system of constitutional republic type of government. But the truth of the matter is that in the Middle Ages, the battle between the Roman Catholic Pope (and the papacy of the Roman Catholic Church) and temporal civic powers finally came to a head. It was a gradual battle. In the world of the Middle Ages, the time finally came where the pope rose to the point of absolute supremacy. It was such supremacy that in the year 1077, Henry IV, ruler of the Holy Roman Empire, could come into direct confrontation with Pope Gregory VII. Pope Gregory VII was determined to bring the power of the papacy to the epitome of its effectiveness; to bring the position of the Pope to maximum power; and, to bring the position of the church to supreme dominance over all the nations of the world. Pope Gregory VII and Henry IV came to a head on conflict over who was in final command within the matters of the temporal realm. It resulted in Gregory VII excommunicating Henry IV, and putting his empire under interdict.

What that means to a Roman Catholic who has been excommunicated, which the pope has the authority to impose upon any Roman Catholic, is that if he dies under the status of excommunication, he will go directly to hell. He won't even get a stopover in purgatory. He just zaps right in. He can never be saved. He can never have any hope whatsoever. He is doomed. And when a nation is under interdict, that means that everybody who dies in that nation suffers the same consequence.

Now, this lined up the forces. There was no question that here was a confrontation, and the issue is going to be settled. Just how powerful was the papacy over the authority of the Holy Roman Empire? When the word went out that Henry was under excommunication, and his empire was under interdict, the devotion to the papacy and the fear of the religious powers that the papacy claimed to exercise in behalf of God overcame their fear of the emperor. And the political leaders and the people flocked to the Pope and deserted Henry. Henry, realizing the hopelessness of the situation, offered to come to Rome to seek absolution from the Pope, and to have the excommunication removed.

The pope said, "I'm sorry. I can't. I'm on my way someplace." I think he was going down to Augsburg: "And I can't meet you here." So Henry pursued the Pope and met him at a city called Canosa in the dead of winter. And for three days, the mighty empire of the Holy Roman Empire in 1077 stood outside of the gates of the residence where the Pope was staying at that time on his journey. And for three days in the dead of winter, barefooted, and with the flimsiest of garments on him, stood the emperor waiting to have an audience with the Pope to seek his forgiveness and to remove the excommunication.

On the third day, Gregory VII permitted Henry IV to come in and to receive the removal of the excommunication ban; the removal of the interdict on the nation; and, to give him absolution. Was there any question in anybody's mind as to who was in charge of the world at the time? Was there any question as to who is the ruling authority over the nations of the world?

Now I want to tell you something. Take a look at the person next to you. You're sitting next to Gregory VII, come the future. That's Gregory VII that you're looking at, because this is precisely where you are going to be. The time is going to come when you will call the plays in just such a supreme authority, and in just such a supreme way. And there will be no appeal from your decision. What you decide and what you declare, that is what will be imposed. That is for the simple reason that you will have gone out into eternity as a super grace type of believer, and that you will have now been completely freed from the old sin nature. Your soul will be in complete alignment with the soul of Jesus Christ the God-man. You will be perfectly in tune with His thinking; with His will; and, with His feelings, and your actions will be the identical actions that Jesus Christ would have made. You will indeed come to complete functioning in the name of Jesus. That's what it means to function in the name of Jesus – to pray in the name of Jesus: to ask what He would ask; to do what He would do; and, to think what He would think.

So, the power over the nations of the world has been something that religious figures such as the papacy has long desired. And we know that in the early part of the tribulation period, the Roman Catholic Church under Satan will indeed rule over the nations of the Western Confederacy, and over the antichrist himself. The world is coming back to another Gregory VII. The world is coming back to another Henry IV. In Revelation 17:3, we read. "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness, and I saw a woman (that is, the religious system) sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." The scarlet-colored beast is the political power. "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and bedecked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand (the cup of the Mass) full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a name written, 'Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth.' And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered with a great wonder:" "Mystery Babylon, the Mother of Harlots, and the Abominations of the earth."

You know enough about Babylonian mystery religions to know what he's referring to there. He is referring to that system of religion that Nimrod began, and which was then amalgamated into the Roman Catholic Church. That's what you see described there in that Scripture. The antichrist, however, in the middle of the tribulation, is going to pull a Henry IV, because after Henry got his forgiveness, he went back and started fighting the Pope again in another way. He was now fully back on his throne in full power. He did exactly what the antichrist is going to do in the future. In Revelation 17:15-16, we're told, "And He said unto me, 'The waters which you saw where the harlots sits are the peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues (that is, over the realm of the antichrist that she has dominated), and the ten horns which you saw upon the beast (these political leaders), these shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire.'" The antichrist is going to give the word. He's going to lead out, and the political powers are going to turn upon the world church of the tribulation period and shake off her control. But in the early part of the tribulation, the religious factor will rule the political factor on the world scene.

The ruling authority over the gentile nations then is promised to this particular spiritual maturity super grace type of believer. We have this promised by the Lord himself on occasion. In Matthew 19:28, "Jesus said to them, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you that you who have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, He also shall sit upon 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel.'" He is speaking here to the apostles. Then 1 Corinthians 6:2, we have a statement that again relates directly to the people here today: "Do you not know that the saints (that is, the saints of the Body of Christ, the church) shall judge the world. And if the world shall be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matter? Don't you know that you shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?" Here you have stated in a passage of Scripture that you Christians will judge the world; you will rule over it; and, you will even be judging angels.

When are you going to do this? Well, this takes place during the 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ over the earth after his Second Coming to the earth. The Thyatira Christians who lived under the iron rule of the Roman Empire were given this amazing promise that they would, in effect, someday be governing that iron empire which now governed and persecuted them. Believers in the body of Christ, the church, share the millennial authority which Jesus Christ possesses over the whole world. Because you are the bride of Jesus Christ, you therefore share his authority in the millennium. This, remember, is the literal earthly kingdom over which you will be ruling. Today, the Christians are hated by Satan's world. They are ridiculed as simplistic fools. For this reason, we want to remind you that Christians should not cut out even though we are portrayed as simplistic fools. The truth of the matter is that Christians have as much duty today as they ever had for influencing society with divine viewpoint principles.

**Freedom**

Christians are to exert a force in society for the thing that God gave to protect and preserve society. Remember that that is morality. Morality in society is the bottom line. It is very critical. When the children of Israel crossed out of Egypt into that wilderness area, and, for the first time in over 400 years, experienced freedom again as a people after those long, dark centuries of slavery, the first thing that God came and brought to them was that he led them to Mt. Sinai; sent Moses to the top; and, he came back down with the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments form the basic code of freedom. That is why he gave the code of the Ten Commandments– for freedom. They were the basic code of morality upon which all civilization must be built if civilization is to survive.

**Morality**

We live in the time when Satan dominates the nations of the world and where Satan is in charge of the nations of the world. Satan does not function on the principles of morality. When nations function on the principles of morality, then they are subject to God, and they are subject to divine blessings. For Satan to be able to detach men from being subject to God; to secure their allegiance to him; and, to establish his control over them, he must cause a society to violate the principles of morality. Morality provides freedom.

So biblical morality is the basis upon which we must seek to preserve a national entity. We secure freedom in a nation, and we secure freedom personally during the era of the angelic warfare on the basis of morality. You can see that this is the issue in our nation today. It's very important that you understand that, and that you keep that clearly in mind, because there is a great fear going through the liberal elements of our nation and of our government. That fear is becoming very deep-seated. The president ... is particularly fearful of what is taking place. He has called a special task force, and they have been having a conference in the White House on what to do about people like you who are oriented to divine viewpoint. The reports are going out. What does this administration fear? This administration fears that biblical Christians are going to get together and they are simply going to look at candidates. It doesn't matter whether that candidate is an atheist; whether he's a Jew; whether he's a Muslim; whether he's a Baptist; whether he's a Berean; whether he's a Catholic; or, who or what he is. There's only one issue that's important: "Do you subscribe to the principles of biblical morality, and will you conduct yourself in office on those principles?" Because if you do, then you will turn our nation around from the destructive course upon which it is now found.

If you have study the doctrine of warfare with us here, or if you have listened to the tapes, you understand that principle. You know very clearly what the Bible lays forth upon the responsibilities of a nation for defending its sovereignty. Morality is one of those principles. You go down all the principles of the Ten Commandments, and these are basic principles of freedom. And they express themselves in various ways. The Ten Commandments are ten basic principles for freedom. These are going to be in full force in the millennium. That is why it's going to be the earth's golden age. And all of you who are born again believers, and those of you who check out of this life at super grace level (not the rest of you – only the super grace level type) are going to have ruling authority. You are going to be the politicians of the millennium. And you are going to be given this kind of authority that you will be sharing with Jesus Christ.

"He that overcomes, and he that keeps My works (the spiritual maturity, super-grace type) unto the end." This is not those of you who start off well, and then you drop off before you come into the Lord's presence. "To him will I give authority over the gentiles." You are going to exercise it, and you're going to exercise it with Jesus Christ.

The nature of your authority is very fascinating. The kind of authority you're going to exercise is very fascinating indeed. He goes into the rest of that in verse 27. It's totally the opposite of the kind of authority that is represented today. That is why what has been done to us for over five decades by liberal thinking has got to be stopped. We must come to a kind of authority that is exercised on the basis of the integrity of God without compromise and without apology. The kind of authority you are going to exercise is going to be just exactly that kind. We'll look at that in greater detail next time…

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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