

Introduction: Recap

Last week in our “Church Is” series we saw that the Church is God’s Community of Faith. As his community of faith, we are not to trust God ONLY for things like salvation, provisions, and protection but also for big hairy audacious transformative things as well. So let me ask, “What is your greatest dream for yourself? For Bay Point Church? If God is going to bring that dream into reality we need to fight off every doubt, all fears, and every shred of unbelief. We do this by preaching to ourselves (and to each other) and by clinging to the two essential elements of Abrahamic faith which we discovered last week in Romans 4:21. Paul said that Abraham was:

Fully persuaded that God was ABLE and WILLING to do what he had promised.

A Victorious Life

If you are a Christ follower this morning it’s all about growing a faith that enjoys the victorious life God wants us to have. Here’s my **Top 10** of what such a life looks like:

1. **“Knows Christ, the power of his resurrection and sufferings” (Philippians 3:10).**
2. **Confidently and consistently does the will of God “for the glory of God,” and the “praise of his glorious grace” (I Corinthians 10:31, Ephesians 1:6).**
3. **Always expects more from this infinitely great, gracious, and glorious God who is cosmically, even comically, greater than anything we encounter in this world AND is always “for us” (I John 4:4, Romans 8:31).**
4. **Lives in gratitude and gratuitously shares its time, talent, and treasure.**
5. **Walks perpetually in love, acceptance, and forgiveness.**
6. **Repeatedly overcomes sin and fallen desires.**
7. **Defeats every negative and pessimistic spirit.**
8. **Trounces bad attitudes, bad habits, and everything that oppresses the human spirit.**
9. **Is never intimidated from evil doers nor takes any sass from sass busses.**
10. **Knocks the devil out, keeps him out, and is eager to invade hell with squirt guns.**

A Victorious Faith

This life is possible IF we nurture a victorious faith. Don’t believe me? Listen I John 5:1-5:

1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 2 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. 3 This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

Born of God

Victorious faith begins the moment we put our trust in Jesus as Lord/Savior. We will develop the topic of saving faith next month but suffice it to say, the moment we trust Christ we are “born of God” and subsequently become his children/seed/offspring (John 8:39). In John 3, Jesus described this new birth as being “born again, born from above, and born of the Spirit.” Paul said that when this spiritual phenomenon occurs we are immediately “adopted” into God’s family and begin to relate to him as our “Abba” (Romans 8:15). The results of which are that we love the Father and demonstrate that love by loving his kids and obeying his commands. If you are not sure you are “born of God” yet

we'll give you an opportunity at the end of the message to become so. But if you are confident then get ready to revel in the victorious life.

Hell-In-A-Hand Basket

Before we do, I want to share with you how concerned I am by the fear and anxiety I see in many folks today. This post-modern, post-church, and secularized world we live in is hell-bent on eliminating God, relativizing objective truth, and eradicating our Judeo/Christian heritage. I believe these things are demonically motivated, with two chief goals in mind: (1) To remake man, not in the "image of God" but in the image of man whereby he becomes the autonomous "measure of all things" (ex. identity based in psychology not biology). (2) To subdue and defeat the church. Although the world seems to be on fire right now we need not to worry because we have a faith that overcomes the world.

Nika Faith

I believe it because the faith John talks about is not one that just saves us and gets us into heaven someday but empowers us to be victorious over ANY of the trials, tribulations, and temptations, this world throws at us. 4x in our passage John use the Greek term *nika* which means, "to overcome, have victory, conquer, or triumph over." Listen again to the four instances:

4 Everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

John loved the word *nika* so much he used it profusely in his letters to the Seven Churches in the Book of Revelation. So if the ...

1. Ephesians overcome their indifference they will "Eat of the tree of Life" (2:7)
2. Smyrnans overcome persecution they will get the "Crown of Life" (2:10).
3. Pergumumians overcome false teaching they get hidden manna (2:17).
4. Thyatirians overcome idolatry they get authority over the nations (2:26).
5. Sardisians overcome corruption their names will be etched into the BOL (3:5)
6. Philadelphians overcome the Synagogue of Satan they will become permanent residents in the "Temple of God" (3:12).
7. Laodiceans overcome ministry uselessness they will feast with Christ at his eternal banquet table forever (3:21).

Paul also used *nika* in 1 Corinthians 15:57:

Thanks to God, who gives us the *victory* by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus' resurrection not only gave us the initial shock-and-awe victory over sin, death, and the devil, but made every other victory in this life achievable. Paul celebrates this truth in 2 Corinthians 2:14:

Thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ.

If the word "*nika*" sounds familiar to you, it probably should. There's a shoe company that has leveraged this name for global success. However, the idea that we possess a faith that gives us victory over the world was stunning even for the early church to hear. One scholar tells us why:

The Greeks believed that ultimate victory could not be achieved by mortals, but only by the gods. They even had a goddess named Nike, the goddess of victory who aided Zeus in his battle against the Titans.

Conclusion: Defeat the Defeaters!

In direct contrast to what the ancients believed, God has turned the universe upside down by giving mere mortals like us the gift of faith. This gift means that we can not only “Fight the good fight of faith” (I Timothy 6:12) but win it. This gift means that whatever our personal struggles, issues, sins, addictions, and weaknesses are, we can triumph over them. This gift means that we can defeat the defeaters in our lives and we don’t have to live with, or languish in, them any longer. Faith in Jesus Christ IS the victory over world. So Church, as God’s Community of Faith, let’s start walking in this kind of victorious faith! Let’s start believing God for massively mammoth things for our church!

I would like to close the service today by praying for two groups of people. The 1st is for those I mentioned earlier, i.e., who are not sure they are “born of God.” The great promise of the Gospel is that if we believe with all of our heart that Jesus is Lord we will be! As we saw in our passage, this is the absolute first step in obtaining a victorious faith. The 2nd group is similar to the father mentioned in Mark 9:24. He asked Jesus to heal his son. Jesus responded, “All things are possible for those who believe.” Do you believe?” The father confessed, “Lord I believe, help my unbelief.”

Regardless of what group you in which you find yourself, pray with me. ...