

Adam Sandiford

This week's message is titled "The word of their testimony," And the scripture reading is revelation 12:10 to 12. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say, now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night has been hurled down by triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. Therefore rejoice you heavens and you who dwell in them, but low to the earth in the sea, because the devil has gone down to you. He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short. Just to let you know, there is a brief audio drop out at about the three minute mark.

Don Smith

Good morning, everyone. Thank you so much for tuning in again. In this world, Jesus said you will have trouble But take heart, I have overcome the world. And we do have trouble. But even though we have trouble, we can claim the victory that was claimed in the book of Revelation when John reminds all of us that they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives, so as even to shrink from death. So I want to spend just a couple of minutes talking about this today we live in really difficult days, but maybe not so difficult, that we go back to the first century and notice how Christians lived every day and how difficult it was wrong, basically said that they are controlling the world. And that Caesar whatever Caesar was in control at that time, basically said he is Lord. And Jesus comes in on the scene and demonstrates over and over Again, what lordship means service, goodness, love and sharing. So I want to spend some time talking about this today that we can claim this great passage of scripture today, just like we did, or those did in the first century, that we can overcome the way they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of our testimony, and that we don't love our lives so much so as even to shrink from death. I mean, we're so fortunate that we live in a time that we live in today, we really don't have any hassle about being Christians. In fact, there's a lot of love and respect for Christians throughout Canada and throughout a lot of the world. But in these difficult days, I think that we need to be reminded of how we can overcome the way they overcame the blue Be Here we get together.

When we have a candlelight Christmas Eve service, we celebrate the birth of Jesus. And that's wonderful. And I mean no offense by this. But the birth of Jesus does not forgive us of our sins. And then we love Easter. We love the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead and we can have an Easter service and people love that the resurrection (who doesn't love the resurrection), and that we know that death is not the end. We know that Jesus was raised from the dead. In fact, Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live even though they die. And yet, whoever lives and believes in me will never die. We love the resurrection. But the resurrection of Jesus does not forgive us of our sins. And if there is a religious day throughout the year, that many of us avoid, it is Good Friday. And often, the reason why we avoid it is because sometimes Good Friday has been an examination of a crucifixion. And that's really not what Good Friday is about. Good Friday is not about how Jesus died. But Good Friday is about the fact that Jesus died and that at his death, our sins are now forgiven. And there's so many scriptures all throughout the New Testament, or Paul's in many other people, help us to remember that we can overcome by the blood of the Lamb. It was at his death, his shed blood that our sins are forgiven, so that nothing that happens in this world can supersede that, even though we're going through difficult days with the virus.

In other situations, the reality is our sins are forgiven in Christ Jesus, and we believe in the resurrection. So let me share with you some scriptures that we all know fairly well about the blood of Jesus, even before Jesus died, when he was celebrating Passover with his disciples, and when he was taking the wine representing his blood that would be shed. He said, this is the blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. Or in First Peter chapter one verses 18 and 19. We are reminded of what Peterson for it's not with perishable things such as silver gold, that we had been redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to us by our forefathers, but by the precious blood of Jesus, A lamb without spot and without blemish. Paul continually talks this way as well in Colossians, 1:19 and 24. God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in Christ, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, things on earth, and things on heaven by making peace through his blood shed on the cross. Matthew 26 and 28. This is the blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins or Ephesians, one seven, in Christ, we have redemption, salvation, through his blood, the forgiveness of since Ephesians two. Remember that one time, you were separate from Christ and excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope, and without God in this world, but now in Christ Jesus, you who are once far away, have been brought near by the blood of Christ on first john chapter one. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another in the blood of Jesus cleanses us of all sin. So when john writes in the revelation, he constantly reminds us, I've not only the resurrection, but it's because of the blood of Christ, that our sins are forgiven. Revelation one five to him who loves us, and frees us from our sin by his blood. Or chapter five and verse nine, and they sang a new song. You are worthy to take the scroll open it seals because, Because you are slave, and with your blood, you purchased all of us, or the scripture that we've used today, Chapter 12 and verse 11. They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives, even to the point of death. And then if you'll permit me just one more scripture dealing with this again in the book of Colossians, where it says that God made us alive with Christ. He forgave us, all our sins, have been canceled the written code with its regulations that stood against us. He took our sins away, nailing them to the cross, and having disarm the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, try something over them by the cross. They thought The crucifying Jesus meant that they were. But it was just the opposite. That Christ gives his life for all of us, even those who would crucify him.

So let's bring it back to us today. So yes, we're going through difficult days. You may have relatives, grandparents who were involved in the Second World War, or the Vietnam conflict, life and death situations, they understood war. And they understood people giving their lives for what they believe to be so very, very important. But when it comes to our salvation, it comes to our relationship with God. It's the blood of Jesus that cleanses us from all of our sin. So, yes, we go through difficult days, but we remember what john said. In the revelation they overcame by the blood of the Lamb. And then the word of their testimony, which means they spoke about this. They spoke about Jesus, they spoke about the fact that Jesus was crucified. But that crucifixion brings us into a relationship with God through His blood. And they preached boldly about this, even though they were told not to. So some of you may have read the scriptures before, but even before Jesus was crucified, he talks to people at Pentecost and he says, men and men and women of Israel, listen to this. Jesus of Nazareth. This is Peter preaching now, this is Peter preaching. Men of Israel. Listen to this. Jesus of Nazareth was a man credited to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which he did. among you, as you yourselves know, he was handed over to you by God set purpose for knowledge, and you with the help of recommend put him to death by nailing Him to the cross. But God raised Him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, for it was

impossible for death to keep its grasp on him. So on the cross, Jesus shed his blood for our forgiveness. Three days later, he is risen from the grave, and he goes to be with the Father, but reminding us that he is still with us. And that one day, with the great resurrection takes place, we will be with him. But until that time, we remember the words, John, that they overcame by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. So people began to preach and I'm Pentecost, they began to pray. preach. And when all the people heard this, they asked, Well, what do we do? And their response by Peter was Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for their mission of your sins, and you'll receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. And this promise is for you and for your children. And for all who are far off for Gentiles, and for all the people throughout all the generations. It's it's for us. So they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony and they were told not to speak, the Roman authority, were told not to speak about this anymore. And when they were told that, they said, No, we're going to listen to God rather than you. So in Acts chapter four, beginning of verse 12, after Peter and John had had had helped people Had have healed people always through the name of Jesus. And they were preaching about Jesus and they were told not to preach any longer about Jesus.

And here's what they said, salvation is found and no one else. For there's no other name under heaven by which we must be saved. And when they saw the courage of Peter and John, in realize that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished, and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. But since they could not see the man who had been healed standing there, pardon me, but since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and they confer together. What are we going to do with these men? they asked everyone living in Jerusalem, those they have performed a notable study. And we cannot deny it. But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them to speak no longer to anyone in his name. Then they call them in again, and commanded them not to speak or teach at all, in the name of Jesus, but Peter and John replied, which is right in God's eyes, to listen to you, or him. You'd be the judges. As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard. Rome was trying to say, to all of the world, we are under control, when all along those who are being persecuted, those who are going through difficult times because they were Christians. They knew who owns the world. And controls the world. And they know the one, two who Christ came, God the Father, God, the Son, God, the Holy Spirit, Christ coming not only into the world, but Christ coming into our life back then, and even today. And if yours later, the world is still here, that message will still be the same. The message that John spoke in Revelation, chapter 12, and verse 11. They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives so much so as even to shrink from death. It's still as valid today as ever. Our sins are forgiven, because Christ gave his life for us. But not just that. It's not the fact that that's what happened only. It's the fact that Jesus said I love you, I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. It's Christ to comes to live in our life, and so on uncertain times comes like it is right now, we're not sure what's going to happen. We can claim what John claimed in a world that was out of control in the first century. They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives so much as even to shrink from death. So the book of Hebrews is also an interesting book, The, the Hebrew writer who we don't know who that is, is writing to Christians, who are probably going through some persecution. They're exhausted, they're worn out. They're not exactly sure if they can hang in there. And the writer of Hebrews reminds them They're not alone, that God is with. And that death is not necessarily the end. And that we're not just living for ourselves, but for the generations that will come after us.

So when you're reading Revelation, it's a book dealing with Christians who are being persecuted. If you really want to hear a book about Christians suffering, it's the book of First Peter. But the Hebrew book is written to Christians who are exhausted, even though they have faith, they're getting tired, they're getting worn out, do I have enough faith that will sustain me? And so the Hebrew writer talks about this and says in chapter 11, around verse 32, about about having faith, Hebrews 11 chapter one says, Now faith is being sure of what we hope for, in certain of what we do. Do not see. Or maybe I can say, do not see just yet. But our time will come. And so the Hebrew writer reminds them not to give up. And here's what he says, By faith rehab, because she welcome the spies was not killed with those who are disobedient. And what more can I say I don't have time to talk about Gideon, Berek, Samson jetha, David, Samuel and the prophets, who through faith, conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gain what was promised, who shut the mouths of lions. quench the fury of the flames and escape the edge of the sword, whose weakness was turned to strength and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. Women receive back they're dead raised to life again. There were others who were tortured, refusing to be lead to be released, so that they might gain an even better resurrection. Some face jeers and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were put to death by stoning. They were sawed into they were killed by the sword. They went about and sheep skins and goat skins destitute, persecuted and mistreated. The world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains and in caves and holes in the ground. These were all commended for their faith. Yet none of them received what had been promised, because God had planned. Listen to this, something better for us. So that only together With us, would they be made perfect. You see, we live on this side of the cross. There were people who gave their life hoping that one day a Messiah would come, they waited for the Messiah to come. But some of them died horrible deaths even before Jesus was born. But they do it again, because of the promise that Christ would come. We live on the other side of the resurrection. We know that he came, we know that he lives in our life, we know that we can overcome what we're dealing with right now, which is really quite minor based on what some people in the first century lived with. But the statement that's made by john in Revelation is a statement that you and I can continue to claim for the rest of our lives in for the generations to come. That we can overcome overcoming Like they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives, even to the point of death. So let me conclude with the story.

My mother's father, my grandfather, Fred Whitfield was a longtime member of the Church in sarnia. And Fred had a brother, his name was john Whitfield. John was a preacher. And back in the 30s and 40s, he was a pretty significant preacher. He was called by many churches to come and preach. In fact, even as a young boy, I heard the stories of him speaking on the radio just when radio even became popular, and he would preach on many stations. He was welcomed in many churches in Ontario and some in the States. He became a very, very important man as far as preaching and teaching and he helped train Minister's to really do a good job. But as time went on, he became older. in churches no longer called on him. He was an older man. His wife had died. His family members had moved away. And he was on his own. And someone came across him at the latter stages of his life. He was living in a small room. He had a bed. He had something like a hot plate back in those days, a desk and that was it. He had no car. He couldn't get at it. Get out a word church. He was basically on his own. But if you were to ask you, is it worth it? You're ending up in your life in these ways, in this apartment this little place your family members are gone. You're all by yourself. Is it worth it? And without a doubt, he would say, it's absolutely worth it. Because we don't just live for ourselves. We live for the people around us, and for the generations who will come after us, so that you and I can say what john said, in the revelation that

we overcame. We overcame by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and that we did not love our life so much as even to shrink from death. We don't need to be afraid about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, we make our requests be made known to God, knowing that his peace surrounds us. So until next week, May this week be a week of study. Peace, in prayer, remembering that we can overcome by the blood of the Lamb, the word of his testimony, our testimony, and that we don't love our lives even to the point of death. Stay well, everyone.

Adam Sandiford

Thanks for listening to this week's sermon. The Beamsville Church of Christ meet Sunday mornings at 4900 John Street Beamsville, Ontario. We have classes for all ages at 9:30 and the worship service begins at 10:30. You can subscribe to podcasts through Apple podcasts, Google Play Music Store or your favorite podcast app. Just search for Beamsville. All our past sermons and more information about our congregation are available at [www.beamsvillechurchofchrist.ca](http://www.beamsvillechurchofchrist.ca)

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