

1 John 4:4 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

[INDEX FOR ALL VERSES ON 1 JOHN](#)

[1 John 4:1](#)
[1 John 4:2](#)
[1 John 4:3](#)
[1 John 4:4](#)
[1 John 4:5](#)
[1 John 4:6](#)
[1 John 4:7](#)
[1 John 4:8](#)
[1 John 4:9](#)
[1 John 4:10](#)
[1 John 4:11](#)
[1 John 4:12](#)
[1 John 4:13](#)
[1 John 4:14](#)
[1 John 4:15](#)
[1 John 4:16](#)
[1 John 4:17](#)
[1 John 4:18](#)
[1 John 4:19](#)
[1 John 4:20](#)
[1 John 4:21](#)

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND HIS CHILDREN
Click chart to enlarge
Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
Another Overview Chart - [1 John](#) - Charles Swindoll

BASIS OF FELLOWSHIP		BEHAVIOR OF FELLOWSHIP	
Conditions of Fellowship	Cautions of Fellowship	Fellowship Characteristics	Fellowship Consequences
Meaning of Fellowship 1 Jn 1:1-2:27		Manifestations of Fellowship 1 Jn 2:28-5:21	
Abiding in God's Light		Abiding in God's Love	
Written in Ephesus			
circa 90 AD			
From Talk Thru the Bible			

STUDY GUIDE

1 JOHN 4

What is this? On the photograph of the Observation Worksheet for this chapter you will find handwritten 5W/H questions (Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?) on each verse to help you either personally study or lead a discussion on this chapter. The questions are generally very simple and are stated in such a way as to stimulate you to observe the text to discern the answer. As a reminder, given the truth that your ultimate Teacher is the Holy Spirit, begin your time with God with prayer such as Psalm 119:12+[a](#)

"Blessed are You, O LORD; Teach me Your statutes." (you can vary it with similar prayers - Ps 119:18, 26, 33, 64, 66, 68, 108, 124, 135, 171, etc) The questions are generally highlighted in yellow and the answers in green. Some questions have no answers and are left to your observations and the illuminating/teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. Some qualifying thoughts - (1) Use "As is" - these are handwritten and will include mistakes I made, etc. (2) They may not be the best question for a given verse and my guess is that on some verses you will think of a far superior 5W/H question and/or many other questions.

Dr Howard Hendricks once gave an assignment to his seminary students to list as many observations as they could from Acts 1:8. He said "So far they've come up with more than 600 different ones! Imagine what fun you could have with 600 observations on this passage. Would you like to see Scripture with eyes like that?" (P. 63 [Living by the Book](#) - borrow) With practice you can! And needless to say, you will likely make many more observations and related questions than I recorded on the pages below and in fact I pray that the Spirit would indeed lead you to discover a veritable treasure chest of observations and questions! In Jesus' Name. Amen

Why am I doing this? **Mortimer Adler** among others helped me develop a questioning mindset as I read, seeking to read actively rather than passively. Over the years I have discovered that as I have practiced reading with a 5W/H questioning mindset, it has yielded more accurate interpretation and the good fruit of meditation. In other words, consciously interacting with the inspired Holy Word of God and the illuminating Holy Spirit has honed my ability to meditate on the Scripture, and my prayer is that this tool will have the same impact in your spiritual life. The benefits of meditation are literally priceless in regard to their value in this life and in the life to come (cf discipline yourself for godliness in 1Ti 4:8+.) For some of the benefits - see Joshua 1:8+ and Psalm 1:2-3+. It will take diligence and mental effort to develop an "inductive" ([especially an "observational"](#)), interrogative mindset as you read God's Word, but it bears repeating that the benefits in this life and the rewards in the next will make it more than worth the effort you invest! Dear Christian reader let me encourage you to strongly consider learning the skills of [inductive Bible study](#) and spending the rest of your life practicing them on the Scriptures and living them out in your daily walk with Christ.

Although Mortimer Adler's advice is from a secular perspective, his words are worth pondering...

Strictly, all reading is active. What we call passive is simply less active. Reading is better or worse according as it is more or less active. And one reader is better than another in proportion as he is capable of a greater range of activity in reading. (Adler's classic book [How to Read a Book is free online](#))

[John Piper](#) adds that "Insight or understanding is the product of intensive, headache-producing meditation on two or three verses and how they fit together. This kind of reflection and rumination is provoked by asking questions of the text. And you cannot do it if you hurry. Therefore, we must resist the deceptive urge to carve notches in our bibliographic gun. Take two hours to ask ten questions of Galatians 2:20+ and you will gain one hundred times the insight you would have attained by reading thirty pages of the New Testament or any other book. Slow down. Query. Ponder. Chew.... (John Dewey rightly said) "People only truly think when they are confronted with a problem. Without some kind of dilemma to stimulate thought, behavior becomes habitual rather than thoughtful."

"Asking questions is the key to understanding."

--Jonathan Edwards

That said, below are the [5W/H questions](#) for each verse in this chapter (click page to enlarge). This is not neatly typed but is handwritten and was used for leading a class discussion on this chapter, so you are welcome to use it in this "as is" condition...

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1 John 4:4 You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He Who is in you than he who is in the world:

Greek - humeis ek tou theou este (PAI) teknia kai nenikekate (2PRAI) autous hoti meizon estin o en humin eho en to kosmo:

KJV 1 John 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

NET 1 John 4:4 You are from God, little children, and have conquered them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

CSB 1 John 4:4 You are from God, little children, and you have conquered them, because the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

ESV 1 John 4:4 Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

NIV 1 John 4:4 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.

NLT 1 John 4:4 But you belong to God, my dear children. You have already won a victory over those people, because the Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world.

NRS 1 John 4:4 Little children, you are from God, and have conquered them; for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

NJB 1 John 4:4 Children, you are from God and have overcome them, because he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

NAB 1 John 4:4 You belong to God, children, and you have conquered them, for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

YLT 1 John 4:4 Ye -- of God ye are, little children, and ye have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you, than he who is in the world.

MIT 1 John 4:4 You are from God, children, and you have overcome the anti-Christ's, because greater is the one who is in you than the one in the world.

GWN 1 John 4:4 Dear children, you belong to God. So you have won the victory over these people, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

BBE 1 John 4:4 You are of God, my little children, and you have overcome them because he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

RSV 1 John 4:4 Little children, you are of God, and have overcome them; for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

NKJ 1 John 4:4 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

ASV 1 John 4:4 Ye are of God, my little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

- **are:** 1Jn 4:6,16 3:9,10 5:19
- **and have:** 1Jn 2:13 5:4 Ro 8:37 Eph 6:10,13 Rev 12:11
- **greater:** 1Jn 4:13,16 3:24 John 10:28-30 14:17-23 17:23 Ro 8:10,11 1Co 6:13 2Co 6:16 Eph 3:17
- **than:** 1Jn 5:19 John 12:31 14:30 16:11 1Co 2:12 2Co 4:4 Eph 2:2, 6:12
- [1 John 4 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

1 John 2:13-14+ I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have **overcome** ([nikao](#) - perfect tense pictures permanence of the victory over) the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father. I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have **overcome** ([nikao](#) perfect tense) the evil one.

1 John 5:4-5+ For whatever is born of God **overcomes** ([nikao](#) - present tense) the world; and this is the victory that has **overcome** ([nikao](#)) the world—our faith. 5 Who is the one who **overcomes** ([nikao](#) - present tense) the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

BELIEVERS HAVE OVERCOME THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST

Hiebert on 1Jn 4:1-6 - These verses show no close connection with what follows and are best viewed as an elaboration of the reference to “the Spirit which he hath given us” in 3:24. The conflict now presented forms the final aspect of the conflicts that mark the Christian life which John has been depicting since 2:18. He has already dealt with the conflict between truth and falsehood (2:18–28), the conflict between the children of God and the children of the Devil (2:29–3:12), and the conflict between love and

hatred (3:13–24). This section points to the supernatural character of this conflict as ultimately involving “the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.” It sets forth the crucial importance of the proclamation of a sound Christology for assurance and victory in the Christian community... Having set forth the criterion for testing the spirits (vv. 2–3), in these verses John states the criterion for testing those through whom the spirits speak. In verses 4–5 he states the criterion establishing the moral origin of these individuals. In verse 6a he points out the audience reaction to the speakers as a further indication of their nature. The last half of verse 6 summarizes the discussion. The criterion for establishing their origin (1Jn 4:4–5). In verse 4 John reminds his readers of the identity of the true people of God; in verse 5 he points out the identity of the false prophets. ([1 John 4:1-6](#))

Westcott - In the verses which precede (1Jn 4:2, 3) St John has considered the teaching of spirits as the test of their character. He now regards the subject from another point of view and considers the teaching of spirits as the **test of men**. ([1 John 4 Commentary](#))

You are from (ek) God, little children (teknon), and have overcome (nikao - perfect tense pictures permanence of the victory over) **them** - **You** is emphatic giving the idea “You, yourselves, and no one else” and is contrasted with the **world** and its anti-Christian teachers. **Little children** is John's way of tenderly addressing believers and he further assures his readers that their spiritual origin is **from God** making them genuine believers. Given the onslaught of false teachings in the church today, believers do well to never forget their divine heritage and live in the light of that truth. Who is **them**? The false prophets and false teachers of which there are **many** (1Jn 4:1+).

Simon Kistemaker adds this note on **you are from God** - The pronoun **you** stands first to give it emphasis in the sentence. The writer wants to tell the Christians: “You, yes you, are from God. That is, the readers ought never to forget their divine heritage. They are not only special people, born of God and called “children of God” (1Jn 2:29; 3:1, 9, 10); they are also different from those people who belong to the world. ([New Testament Commentary](#))

Steven Cole says **you are from God** points to their “**new birth**.” Christianity is not just a matter of subscribing to certain creeds or correct doctrines, although that is essential. It is a matter of being born of God so that you receive new life from Him and become His child. This **new birth** is absolutely essential if you want to be able to understand and hold to the truth. This is so important that John repeats the phrase “**from God**” in 1Jn 4:1, 2, 3, 4, 6 (twice). By way of contrast, the false teachers and those who follow them are “**from the world**” (1Jn 4:5, twice). Without the **new birth**, a person is incapable of understanding or obeying God's truth. Jesus said to the unbelieving Jews (John 8:43, 47), “*Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word... He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God.*” Jesus was using **hear** in the same way that John uses **listen** (1Jn 4:6). It refers to hearing in the sense of both **understanding** and **obeying** the truth. ([Spiritual Discernment 1 John 4:1-6](#)) (Bolding added)

Ray Stedman on **little children** - it is not by accident that John uses this title, **little children**, for that is the name that indicates the trust -- the childlike trust of one who believes the Word of God. Now, you don't have to fully understand it; simply accept it, trust it, and act on it. You will discover that all the wisdom and greatness and superior intelligence of God is imparted in that simple word, and, though it may appear foolish to others, it is wiser than men. He who in childlike faith trusts the Word to guide him through life, acting upon it, regardless of how widespread are the opinions of men who speak contrary to it, will find that he will be safely kept through all entrapping errors. ([God is Greater - 1 John 4:4-6](#))

Thro' many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath bro't me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home.

John Trapp on **you... have overcome them** - In your Head, Christ, and by the help of his Holy Spirit, your sweet inhabitant, whereby ye are more than conquerors, because sure to overcome and triumph.

John Stott on **you... have overcome them** - This ‘overcoming’ is not so much moral (as in 1Jn 2:13–14, where the same word occurs) as intellectual. The false teachers have not succeeded in deceiving you. Not only have you tested them and found them wanting, but you have conquered them by decisively repudiating their teaching. You have not succumbed to their blandishments or believed their lies. Hence, no doubt, they ‘had found themselves obliged to depart’ (Ebrard), as 2:19 declares. (See [The Letters of John: An Introduction and Commentary - Page 157](#))

*"The battle has thus been decided, even if it is not yet over.
By faith Christians participate in this victory and are thus
placed in a position to overcome the world for themselves."
-- Walther Günther*

David Smith - The faithful are God's delegates (ek = out of, from [God] - see his comment on 1Jn 4:5-note), bearing their Master's commission and continuing His warfare (John 20:21), and they have shared His victory.

*We need diligently to study God's Word
in dependence on the Holy Spirit for understanding*

Steven Cole on **overcome them** - John means that his hearers have resisted the false teaching. The reason that they have overcome is not only that they are **from God**, but also that with the new birth, they also received the Holy Spirit ("the anointing," 1Jn 2:27-note), Who indwells them. He is **greater than he who is in the world** (Satan, who inspires the false teachers). Even though the Gnostic teachers may have been intellectually superior to John's "**little children**," the presence of the indwelling Spirit gave his readers the ability to discern and thus avoid the errors of the false teachers. How does the Spirit preserve us from error? It is not enough to be a spiritual ignoramus and say, "*the Spirit will protect me from error*." The Spirit protects us through God's Word, which reveals the truth about the person and work of Christ (1Jn 4:2-3). **The Word is the measure by which we test the spirits**, but as Calvin points out (p. 230), "except the Spirit of wisdom be present, to have God's word in our hands will avail little or nothing, for its meaning will not appear to us." So we need diligently to study God's Word in dependence on the Holy Spirit for understanding (**Ed**: See Inductive Bible Study Calls for Continual Dependence on the Spirit of the Lord). Then we will be able to overcome false teachers. ([Spiritual Discernment 1 John 4:1-6](#)) (Bolding added)

Danny Akin - The Greater Spirit, the Holy Spirit, is in you, and He is greater than he who is in the world. Is the world strong? Yes, but our God is infinitely stronger! Are false prophets wise? Yes, but our God is infinitely wiser! Is Satan great? Yes, but our God is infinitely greater! And this one who is infinitely stronger, wiser and greater now and forever "is in you!" By a true and faithful confession of Jesus as Messiah, as Savior, I declare that "I am God's". In response, God gives Himself to me by His Spirit and takes up residence in me and in each and everyone who calls Jesus, "Lord". Amazingly the God who can live anywhere desires to live inside of you and me! I now move forward in a life of loving, sacrificial service, like my suffering, Servant Savior (note what follows in 1Jn 4:7-21) confident, blessed with supernaturally given assurance that I am His and that I fight a battle in which victory is mine for the taking. **John Piper** applies this truth beautifully in a two-fold manner: 1) Do not take credit for your listening ear or your confessing heart or your correct view of Christ. Give credit to the Spirit who is in you, and give God the glory. 2) When you are threatened by any deception of the evil one – any temptation, or discouragement, or anxiety, or cowardice – remind yourself that "he who is in you is greater than he that is in the world." Almighty God abides within you. Trust him. For this is the victory that overcomes the world, your faith (5:4) in the sovereign indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. ([Test the Spirits to See Whether They Are of God](#)).

Overcome (3528)(**nikao**) means to conquer, to be victorious or to prevail in the face of obstacles. **Overcome** describes the quality of a true saint who may stumble and fall but who God always picks up and who continues onward and upward in the power and motivation of the victory Christ has won for us on the Cross. John uses the perfect tense for **overcome** which pictures the permanence of our victory over the antichrist spirit! Hallelujah! Victory in Jesus! When He died on Calvary and rose from the dead three days later, he achieved and assured effective, eternal victory over the evil one! (Hallelujah again!)

Webster (1828) says **overcome** means to conquer; to vanquish; to subdue; as, to overcome enemies in battle. To surmount; to get the better of; as, to overcome difficulties or obstacles. To gain the superiority; to be victorious.

Wuest comments on **nikao** in the perfect tense writing that this speaks "of a past completed victory, and a present state of being a conqueror. That is, the saints to whom John refers were not taken in by the heresies of the false teachers, and were in a settled state of victory over them. They were confirmed in their attitude against heresy and had their eyes wide open to its source and nature. The reason why they thus gained a complete victory over the false teachers and their heresies is that God the Holy Spirit who indwelt them is greater than that fallen angel Satan who is in the world system of evil." ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used by permission)

Hiebert says "the perfect tense "have overcome," implies a definite time when they faced these speakers with their alluring message, but, having tested their teaching, they have effectively rejected the messengers with their message, resulting in a state of being victorious over them. Their victory over these agents of Satan is grounded in the victory over the prince of this world which Christ won on Calvary (John 12:31–32; 14:30; 16:11). ([1 John 4:1-6](#))

Wiersbe - The word **overcome** is a favorite with John; he uses it in 1 John 2:13–14+ with reference to overcoming the devil. He uses it seven times in Revelation to describe believers and the blessings they receive (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21). He is not describing a special class of believers. Rather, he is using the word **overcomer** as a name for the true Christian. Because we have been born of God (1Jn 5:4-5), we are overcomers. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

Paul uses the derivative word **hupernikao** in Romans 8 to describe believers as "**more than conquerors** through Him that loved us." (Ro 8:37KJV+). We are conquerors because of Christ's victory at Calvary and we are now in Him and He in us forever and ever! Amen.

There are 28 uses on **nikao** in the NT (4 verses use **nikao** twice). Note that most of the uses are by the apostle John - The NAS

renders **nikao** as -- come off victorious(1), conquer(1), conquering(1), overcame(2), overcome(11), overcomes(10), overpowers(1), prevail(1). Lk 11:22; Jn 16:33; Ro 3:4+; Ro 12:21; 1Jn 2:13; 4:4; 5:4, 5; Re 2:7, Re 2:11, Re 2:17, Re 2:26; Re 3:5, Re 3:12, Re 3:21; Re 5:5; Re 6:2; Re 11:7; Re 12:11; Re 13:7; Re 15:2; Re 17:14; Re 21:7

As Jesus alerted His soon to be persecuted disciples

These things (Ed: Always ask "What things?" - forces you to read the preceding context - See Jn 13:1-16:32 esp Jn 14:23) I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world (**kosmos** - see definition below) you have tribulation (**thlipsis** = Notice this is a promise!), but **take courage** (present imperative = command to do this continually, only possible as we rely on the Spirit, not on self!); I have overcome (**nikao**) the world." (Jn 16:33+)

Comment: Note that in Jn 16:33+ **nikao** is in the perfect tense which pictures the permanence of our Lord's victory over this evil world system and its evil ruler! Glory! We enter experientially into His victory by faith and obedience. "Trust and obey, there is no other way to be happy (blessed) in Jesus, then to trust and obey." (John Sammis)

Spurgeon comments: May we be happily ignorant of what it is to be vanquished by the powers of evil, and remain like the British drummer boy who did not know how to beat a retreat, for he had never had any use for such a thing. May we not know the dishonor and misery of being overcome of evil, because divine grace continually giveth us the victory. When we are overcome of evil, even for a moment, it discovers the sad weakness of our spiritual life. We must be babes in grace and sadly carnal still, if sin is allowed to master us. If we were stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might we should overcome the world itself by faith: did not John write unto young men (from his sermon Overcome Evil with Good)

In the next chapter John explains that overcomer is not some elite subgroup of Christianity but that every believer is an overcomer ...

For whatever is born (perfect tense = speaks of the permanence of our new birth! Away with doubts about our eternal security) of God overcomes (present tense = continually) the world; and this is the victory that has overcome (aorist tense - speaks of completed action at a point in time -- surely an allusion to the Cross [Jn 16:33] and our faith in Christ's finished work of the Cross) the **world** -- our faith. And who is the one who overcomes (present tense = continually) the **world**, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (1Jn 5:4-5)

Comment: This is a rhetorical question by John. His point is that every believer is an overcomer regardless of whether one feels like it or not! Dear afflicted, storm tossed saint of the Most High God, you can know that no matter how "defeated" you might feel now, when all has been said and done, you will overcome all evil opposition in Christ. And all God's people cry "Glory to the Lord. The Lord reigns forever and ever. Amen!"

Listen to this great old song ([Only the Overcomers](#)) by Harvest, and as you listen may God's Spirit revive your heart and enable you to not give up but to press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Amen

William Barclay - The Christian need not fear the heretic. In Christ the victory over all the powers of evil was won. The powers of evil did their worst to him, even to killing him on a Cross, and in the end he emerged victorious. That victory belongs to the Christian. Whatever things may look like, the powers of evil are fighting a losing battle. As the Latin proverb has it: "Great is the truth, and in the end it will prevail." All that the Christian has to do is remember the truth he already knows and cling to it. The truth is that by which men live; error is ultimately that by which men die. (Daily Study Bible)

WHY IS EVERY BELIEVER AN OVERCOMER?

Because ([hoti](#)) - Whenever you encounter this term of explanation pause and ask what the author is explaining? Most of the time the answer will be relatively straightforward but at times (especially in Pauline writings) the answer may not be as obvious. In this case the believers are overcomers because He Who is in you is greater. This is the secret of their (and our) victory!

A T Robertson on **because** - The reason for the victory lies in God, Who abides in them (1Jn 3:20, 1Jn 3:24; Jn 14:20; Jn 15:4). God is greater than Satan, "he that is in the world", the prince of this world (Jn 12:31; Jn 14:30), the god of this age (2Co 4:4), powerful as he seems.

Because greater is He (Holy Spirit) **Who is in you** than **he** (Satan/demons) **who is in the world** (**kosmos** - 1Jn 5:19) - **Greater** (**meizon**) is used 3x by John (1Jn 3:20, 4:4, 5:9) and in context speaks of God's superiority in every way, especially His greater power that assures the believer's triumph over false teachers and all evil forces. And remember that Satan has no power except that which God gives him. Of whom does **He Who** speak? It could refer to Christ in them (Col 1:27+) but in the context of John's speaking

about the Spirit in 1Jn 3:24+ and testing the spirits in 1Jn 4:1-2, it most likely refers to the Holy Spirit in them (and the anointing on them - 1Jn 2:20,27+), and Who is superior to the spirit of the antichrist (1Cor 6:19-20+, cp Ro 5:5, 2Cor 1:22, Gal 4:6) Every believer can experience personal victory over the evil spirits through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. We overcome the world because He overcame the world (John 16:33-see [note](#))! **He who is in the world** refers to Satan and his evil henchmen, including his "front men" the false teachers that were assailing the saints in John's day (and ours).

*There is no neutrality in
this warfare!*

MacArthur - True believers have nothing to fear, for even Satan's hosts with their perversions can't take them out of the Lord's hand. Here, as in 2:18-27, protection against error or victory over it are guaranteed by sound doctrine and the indwelling Holy Spirit who illumines the mind. (See [MacArthur Study Bible - Page 1941](#))

A true believer is saved, safe and secure by God's Spirit.

We are as safe as God is strong!

--Danny Akin

Danny Akin - There is what we could call "a divine irony" for those who believe in and follow after Jesus. The opposition of Satan, the world system that daily assaults us, false teachers that seek to seduce us, faulty worldviews that attempt to confuse us, and our own sinfulness that yearns to enslave us; they are all divinely ordained to fail. Why? Because of the glorious truth of verse 4, "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." We have a Champion, a Victor, a source of Power that all of these enemies of hell combined are no match for.

Westcott - The ground and the assurance of the victory of Christians lie in the Power by which they are inspired (c. 1Jn 3:24). The strength of men (the indwelling Spirit) is proportional to the vital force of which they are the organs.

*Unless the Spirit of wisdom is present, there is little or no profit
in having God's Word in our hands.*

-- John Calvin

Ray Stedman on why they overcame - not because they had a superior intelligence. You'll notice that it says nothing about them being smarter than the teachers. Nor was it because they had been subjected to intense training in the cults. There is no word about that either. Nor is it that they had been supported and bulwarked by clever arguments with which they were able to answer the errors of the teachers. Nor was it their broad theological knowledge. There is none of this. John says, "you overcame them because greater is he that is in you than he who is in the world." In other words, it was not anything these Christians had that delivered them, it was the One who dwelt within them. It was the greatness of God that kept them straight. It was the fact that God was greater than the spirit that was at work behind the teachers of error. This is what will keep us straight today. ([God is Greater - 1 John 4:4-6](#))

THOUGHT - Recall that Jesus gave us His example to follow (1Pe 2:21, 1Jn 2:6) of how we practically are to overcome the spirit of the antichrist. Specifically Jesus overcame the temptations of the Devil in Mt 4:1-11 (Lk 4:1-13) because He was full of the Holy Spirit (Lk 4:1, cp Lk 4:14, Acts 10:37-38) and filled with the Word of God (Mt 4:4, 7, 10) which is the sword of the Spirit. (Eph 6:17). We are to do likewise - be continually filled with the Spirit and the Word! See Filled with the Spirit and the Word

Kistemaker on **He Who is in you** - There are two forces that oppose one another: the Holy Spirit opposes the spirit of the antichrist. Through his Spirit, God lives with his children and is greater than the evil one. He keeps them in the truth of his Word and strengthens them to overcome temptations (compare 1Jn 3:9). ([New Testament Commentary - James, Epistles of John, Peter, and Jude](#))

David Guzik - The believer has a resource for victory, the vital presence of the indwelling Jesus, which makes victory always possible - if we will rely on He Who is in us instead of relying on ourselves. This understanding gives great confidence and spiritual power (**Ed**: His power flowing through us!). For those walking in this truth, victory is assured - they have overcome them. It is a positive statement, not a wishful hope.

Westcott - Elsewhere 'the word of God' (c. 1Jn 2:14), 'the unction received from Him' (1Jn 2:27), 'His seed' (1Jn 3:9) is said to 'abide' in believers, as here He himself is in them.

Pulpit Commentary asks how did they overcome the false prophets/teachers? They suggest it was "By refusing to listen to the false teachers (ch. 10:8) the sheep have conquered them: the seducers have "gone out" (1Jn 2:19), unable to hold their own within the fold."a

For an up tempo "musical interpretation" of John's encouraging words listen to MercyMe's song from 2014..[Greater is the One](#)

[Living Inside of Me](#)

*"There are two great forces at work in the world today:
the unlimited power of God and the limited power of Satan."*

-- Corrie ten Boom

Henry Morris - The devil may be "the god of this **world**" (2Co 4:4+) and have a multitude of demonic spirits under his control (Eph 6:11,12+), but the Holy Spirit who indwells every believer is the omnipotent God. As long as we neither "grieve the Spirit" nor "quench the Spirit" (Eph 4:30+; 1Th 5:19+), we can take great comfort in knowing that through the Spirit and His Word we can "overcome the wicked one" (1Jn 2:14+).

*Pleasure, profit, preferment
are the worldling's trinity.*

-- John Trapp

Earlier John had given his readers "warning signals" about the **world**...

Do not love (present imperative) the **world**, nor the things in the **world**. If anyone loves the **world**, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the **world**, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the **world**. 17 And the **world** is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever. (1Jn 2:15-17+)

See (aorist imperative) how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the **world** does not know us, because it did not know Him. (1Jn 3:1+)

Do not be surprised (present imperative) brethren, if the **world** hates you. (1Jn 3:13+)

John Piper - The Christians to which John is writing have conquered the false prophets. They have conquered them in that they have not been swept away by their deception (1Jn 2:14+, 1Jn 2:26+). The prophets have attacked with their defective views of Christ, and the Christians have stood firm. They have not yielded. They have conquered. They have remained orthodox and loyal to the Son of God incarnate in the man Jesus Christ. How? How did they conquer? The foe was not merely human. Satan himself, the god of this age, empowered the false prophets, and he is extraordinarily subtle and deceptive. How did they conquer? Not by their native intelligence, not by their own strength. They are but "**little children**." John says they conquered because he who was in them is greater than he was in the world. In other words they conquered by the power of the Holy Spirit. So the great assumption of 1Jn 4:2+ and 1Jn 4:6+ is made explicit: The Holy Spirit is more powerful than the satanic forces of deception and blindness. And every believer owes his orthodoxy to the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit. If we stand with Christ, listening receptively and confessing loyally, it is because the Holy Spirit is greater than all other forces in the world and has made us to conquer the blindness and hardness of our own hearts and the deception of the enemy. ([Test the Spirits to See Whether They Are of God](#))

World (2889) (**kosmos** related to the verb **kosmeo** = to order or adorn, to put in order [Mt 25:7 = "trimmed"], to adorn literally [1Ti 2:9], to adorn figuratively [Titus 2:9+]) means essentially something that is well-arranged, that which has order or something arranged harmoniously. **Kosmos** refers to an ordered system or a system where order prevails. The meaning of world in any given passage must be determined from the context. For example, in John 3:16 "**God so loved the world** (**kosmos**) that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." In that passage world refers simply to planet earth inhabited by men, women and children in desperate need of a Savior. As used in the present passage **kosmos** describes the **world** not as a neutral influence but as an "evil force", the inveterate, incorrigible, intractable, intransigent, irrevocable enemy of God and of every believer. **Kosmos** includes the ungodly (unsaved) multitude, the whole mass of men alienated from God and hostile to Him and His Son Jesus Christ (See also [Earth Dwellers](#), a related term used by John in The Revelation of Jesus Christ). This meaning of **kosmos** describes the system of values, priorities, and beliefs that unbelievers hold that excludes God. E.g., Just mention the name "**Jesus**" in a positive sense (instead of like we sadly often hear it - as a curse word! cp Acts 4:12) in a secular setting! You can "feel" the hackles rising up on the back of their necks!

Marvin Vincent says **kosmos** is "The sum-total of human life in the ordered world, considered apart from, alienated from, and hostile to God, and of the earthly things which seduce from God."

D Edmond Hiebert - Because of the fallen nature of the human race, the term (**kosmos**) predominantly has an ethical import, the human race in its alienation from and opposition to God... (And so **kosmos**) does not refer (when used with its ethical meaning) to the material creation but rather to the mass of unredeemed humanity as an egocentric world-system that is hostile to God. It is "a mighty flood of thoughts, feelings, principles of action, conventional prejudices, dislikes, attachments, which have been gathering around human life for ages, impregnating it, impelling it, molding it, degrading it" (Liddon). Its central aim is **self**-enjoyment and **self**-aggrandizement in disregard of or in open hostility toward God. To cultivate the world's friendship

(James 4:4-**note**) implies conformity to its principles and aims. To be controlled by the spirit of worldliness is wholly incompatible with loyalty to God; it makes them guilty of spiritual adultery." ([1 John 4:1-6](#))

Martin Luther understood this verse writing "Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing..."

A Mighty Fortress sung Steve Green

Incredible Solo!

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great, and, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing;
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing:
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth, His Name, from age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us:
The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure,
One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers, no thanks to them, abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours through Him Who with us sideth:
Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;
The body they may kill: God's truth abideth still,
His kingdom is forever.

From ([1537](#)) ([ek](#)) a primary preposition denoting origin (the point whence action or motion proceeds), from, out (of place, time, or cause, literal or figurative. Out of, from, by," suggesting "the source from which something is done," is sometimes rendered "by means of," e.g., Luke 16:9, RV, "by means of (the mammon of unrighteousness);" AV, "of;" 2 Cor. 1:11, "by (the) means of (many)."

1 John 4 has 8 phrases that begin with **"from"** ([ek](#)) - 1 John 4:1, 1 John 4:2, 1 John 4:3, 1 John 4:4, 1 John 4:5, 1 John 4:6

Greater Than 1 John 4:4: "Greater is He" (KJV).

INTRODUCTION: Have you ever met a great person? No matter whom you have met in this life, there's someone even greater for you to know. Jesus Christ is described in Matthew 12 as being:

1. Greater than the Temple (Matt. 12:6). He was a living temple who would be destroyed, yet rebuilt in three days as an eternal habitation for His people. He is our indestructible, everlasting sanctuary.

2. Greater than Jonah (Matt. 12:41). Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days, then emerged to save an entire city from judgment, but Christ was in the belly of the earth for three days, then emerged to save an entire world.

3. Greater than Solomon (Matt. 12:42). Solomon was the wisest man in history, but in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

CONCLUSION: Don't be too easily impressed by supposed greatness in this life. You know Someone even greater—and His grace is greater than all your sin.

No Match For God by Herbert Vander Lugt - He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. —1 John 4:4 - During the 1930s, a missionary in a primitive African village saw firsthand the conflict between the power of the kingdom of evil and the omnipotence of God. According to author Calvin Miller, a witch doctor had warned the missionary that the tribal god would destroy his school. A bolt of lightning fulfilled his threat. Convinced that the voodoo spirit would not have the last word, the missionary publicly proclaimed that the God of the Bible would strike the witch doctor's totem with lightning that night. To the utter amazement

of the village people, that's exactly what happened! They saw this as evidence of the superior power of the missionary's God. In the book of Exodus, Moses and Aaron could have been intimidated by Pharaoh's magicians. Their demonic power was clearly evident when their rods became serpents. But God reassured His servants and reminded them of His superior power when Aaron's rod-turned-serpent devoured the other serpents. The power of Satan is demonstrated as he works through unbelief and false religious systems. But when we walk with God, we need not be afraid. The devil and all his forces are no match for God. ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

The devil prowls and seeks his prey,
His power can't be denied;
But God is greater, and we know
He's always by our side.
—Sper

The power of Christ within you is greater than
The power of evil around you.

D L Moody - The Only Complete Victor

This brings me to the fourth verse of the fourth chapter of the same epistle: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world." The only man that ever conquered this world—was complete victor—was Jesus Christ. When He shouted on the cross, "It is finished!" it was the shout of a conqueror. He had overcome every enemy. He had met sin and death. He had met every foe that you and I have got to meet, and had come off victor. Now if I have got the spirit of Christ, if I have got that same life in me, then it is that I have got a power that is greater than any power in the world, and with that same power I overcome the world.

Notice that everything human in this world fails. Every man, the moment he takes his eye off God, has failed. Every man has been a failure at some period of his life. Abraham failed. Moses failed. Elijah failed. Take the men that have become so famous and that were so mighty—the moment they got their eye off God, they were weak like other men; and it is a very singular thing that those men failed on the strongest point in their character. I suppose it was because they were not on the watch. Abraham was noted for his faith, and he failed right there—he denied his wife. Moses was noted for his meekness and humility, and he failed right there—he got angry. God kept him out of the promised land because he lost his temper. I know he was called "the servant of God," and that he was a mighty man, and had power with God, but humanly speaking, he failed, and was kept out of the promised land. Elijah was noted for his power in prayer and for his courage, yet he became a coward. He was the boldest man of his day, and stood before Ahab, and the royal court, and all the prophets of Baal; yet when he heard that Jezebel had threatened his life, he ran away to the desert, and under a juniper tree prayed that he might die. Peter was noted for his boldness, and a little maid scared him nearly out of his wits. As soon as she spoke to him, he began to tremble, and he swore that he didn't know Christ. I have often said to myself that I'd like to have been there on the day of Pentecost alongside of that maid when she saw Peter preaching.

"Why," I suppose she said, "what has come over that man? He was afraid of me only a few weeks ago, and now he stands up before all Jerusalem and charges these very Jews with the murder of Jesus."

The moment he got his eye off the Master he failed; and every man, I don't care who he is—even the strongest—every man that hasn't Christ in him, is a failure. John, the beloved disciple, was noted for his meekness; and yet we hear of him wanting to call fire down from heaven on a little town because it had refused the common hospitalities.

Jon Courson - 1 John 4:4 The walls of the submarines which descend two miles in the Mariana Trench of the Pacific Ocean are constructed of thick steel plates to withstand the tremendous pressure placed upon them. But guess what the pictures taken from such heavily protected submarines reveal? Fish swimming two miles below the surface of the water with scales no thicker than that of any other fish. How can this be? The answer is simple: the pressure on the inside of those fish is equal to the pressure of the water around them.

That's the beauty of Christianity. Some people erect massive walls to insulate themselves from the attacks of the enemy—only to find themselves filled with the frustration of isolation. The key is not to put up massive walls to protect you from the enemy—but to realize the One inside you is greater than whatever pressure threatens to attack you.

When we understand that He that is in us is greater than any temptation, problem, trauma, or difficulty which could come against us, we can move through life freely. (See [Jon Courson's Application Commentary](#))

You're in a battle—a spiritual battle. You're not wrestling with flesh and blood. Your enemy is not the IRS, not your mother-in-law, not the Democrats, not the Republicans, not your nosy neighbor, not your boss. No, the devil is your enemy. He is the one you're up against.

Therefore, yours is a spiritual battle. And unless you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you're going to lose it. See, the devil laughs at our schemes, he mocks at our organizations, he ridicules our good intentions—but he fears the Spirit of God in a holy Christian. In your war life, you need to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Hope for the World - James Scudder

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. John 16:33

Several Christian legislators were taking a walk one evening. Their conversation, as was typical of this group of men, turned toward the state of the world and the ills of American society. They had just concluded that the world was swiftly headed downhill. Soon, they happened by a tiny chapel, where the sounds of a familiar hymn filled their ears. Then, they mouthed the words:

There is a fountain filled with blood Drawn from Immanuel's veins; And sinners plunged beneath that flood, Lose all their guilty stains.

Suddenly, their sorrow turned to joy. They realized that in spite of all the troubles in the world, they possessed greater hope: faith in Jesus Christ. Then, their discussion centered on the Second Coming. Their faces broke into smiles. They rediscovered their source of hope, their reason for living.

Like those congressmen, I, too, grow distressed with the world around me. I see the onslaught of ungodly values in our culture. I get discouraged when I see how very few people, even Christians, care about God.

But, then God gently reminds me that He is greater than the problems in the world. The aging apostle John gave us this encouragement: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." (1 John 4:4)

Just when the world seems to fall in around us, we must remember that God is in control. We must cling to the hope of His Coming, when everything will be made right.

...Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 1 John 4:4

James Smith -THE WINNING SIDE

"Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

I. Who is He that is in the World? The spirit of antichrist (no Christ) manifested in those who: (1) Despise His Name. (2) Neglect His Word. (3) Avoid His people. (4) Delight in worldliness. (5) Make light of sin.

II. Who is He that is in Us? The Holy Spirit of God (vv. 12, 13). God dwelleth in us. (1) The Spirit of wisdom. (2) The Spirit of truth. (3) The Spirit of power. (4) The Spirit of holiness.

III. How is He Greater? (1) As light is greater than darkness. (2) As truth is greater than falsehood. (3) As the king is greater than the subject. (4) As the Creator is greater than the created.

Unlock Your Potential - See [A Fresh Word for Today: 365 Insights for Daily Living - Page 53](#)

Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. (1 John 4:4, NASB)

Michelangelo worked on forty-four statues and completed fourteen of them. The unfinished ones are in a museum in Italy—the unfulfilled potential of a great genius. What's sadder to see are people who could become masterpieces—if only they were developed. You say, "How do I discover and develop my gifts?" First, look up. Find somebody who's a little bigger and a little better than you are, then spend time with them. That's what Joshua did with Moses and Timothy did with Paul. It's still God's way.

Next, give up. You've got to be willing to give up what you are, in order to be what you can become. Abraham gave up his home to seek a better country. Moses gave up the riches of Egypt to identify with the people of God. Paul gave up the comfort of being a Pharisee to pay the price of being an apostle. Every achiever has a "give up" story. Nothing comes free.

Finally, show up. If you want to win the game, you must face your opponent! Jephthah said, "I have opened my mouth unto the LORD and I cannot go back" (Judges 11:35). In spite of his terrible family background and his personal problems, he became Israel's youngest judge and finished up with the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11.

GOD CAN DO IT FOR YOU, TOO—IF YOU'LL LET HIM.

The Standoff - When a local bookstore rearranged its shelves, I noticed an increase in the number of titles relating to sorcery and witchcraft. In fact, the religion section had become a virtual "standoff" between light and darkness. Christian titles flanked one side of the aisle, while roughly the same number of occult books lined the other side.

Sometimes we may think of God and Satan in the same way I thought of the books in that bookstore. We see them as opposing but equal forces with the same unlimited power. However, God is God and Satan is not. God is stronger than any force of darkness. He does what He pleases (Ps. 135:6), while Satan's power is limited to what God allows. When Satan supposed that misfortune would make Job curse God, God told Satan, "Behold, all that [Job] has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person" (Job 1:12). Satan had to play by God's rules.

Because God is in charge over everything, as Christ's followers we don't need to be paralyzed by fear of Satan's power over our lives or the lives of the believers around us. He tempts us and tries to influence us, but the Bible assures us, "He who is in [us] is greater than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). - By Jennifer Benson Schuldt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

All hail the pow'r of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all! —Perronet

The powers of evil around you are no match for the power of Jesus within you.

James Smith - THE DIVINE INDWELLING.

"But wilt thou my guest be,
In this poor heart of mine?
Thy guest! Is this for me?
In that pure heart of Thine!"

"Ye in Me, and I in you" (John 14:20), is a deep and mysterious saying, yet one of the most precious truths in Revelation. Let us look briefly at—

I. The Unfolding of this Doctrine. The revelation grows and intensifies as the ages pass, from the Garden of Eden to the Paradise above.

1. GOD IN THE GARDEN (Gen. 3:8). Calling in mercy on a self-ruined man.
2. GOD IN THE BUSH (Exod. 3:4). Seeking to prepare a deliverer for His people, and also declaring that "I am come down to deliver" (v. 8).
3. GOD IN THE PILLAR (Exod. 14:24). Judging the Egyptians and guiding His redeemed ones in the wilderness.
4. GOD IN THE TABERNACLE (Exod. 40:34, 35). Filling it with His glory and communing with His people (Exod. 25:22)
5. GOD IN THE TEMPLE (2 Chron. 7:1-3). As the Lord of hosts and the defender of His people as a nation.
6. GOD IN CHRIST (2 Cor. 5:19). Reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses. "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16). Surely this is grace upon grace, yet this is not all.
7. GOD IN YOU (1 Cor. 6:19). Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you (1 Cor. 3:16). God in you that ye might be witnesses for Him. This is God's final revelation to the ungodly world. Chosen "that we should show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

II. The Nature of this Indwelling.

1. CHRIST IS FORMED IN US BY THE HOLY GHOST (Gal. 4:19). As the Divine Spirit overshadowed Mary, so that Jesus the Saviour was begotten within her; by the same Spirit is He formed and revealed in us (Gal.

1:16).

2. CHRIST IS IN US AS THE FATHER WAS IN HIM. "I in them, and Thou in Me" (John 17:23). The Spirit of the Father dwelt in Him.

3. HE IS IN US AS THE SAP IS IN THE VINE (John 15:4). The source of life and fruitfulness (Eph. 3:16, 17).

III. The Results of this Indwelling.

1. A LIFE OF FAITH. "Christ liveth in me, and I live in faith, which is in the Son of God" (Gal. 2:20, R. V.).

2. A LIFE OF WELL-PLEASING. "God worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). We are not sufficient of ourselves even to think (2 Cor. 3:5). God in us by His Spirit so moving on our will that we delight to do His will, finding our pleasure in pleasing God (Heb. 13:20, 21).

3. A LIFE OF VICTORY. "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). The spirit of Antichrist is in the world moving the ungodly to will and to do of his pleasure; but the Spirit of God is in you, able to make you more than conquerors (Rom. 8:37). He that wrought effectually in Peter and was mighty in Paul (Gal. 2:8), the same may be effectual in us for the glory of His own Name (Col. 1:29).

Greg Laurie - HE IS GREATER

He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. (1 John 4:4)

The devil can gain a foothold on your life in many ways. One way is through drugs. Sadly, we are seeing a real revival of drug use today. Another way you can open the door to demonic power is through dabbling in occult activities that are so fashionable in many circles. You may think of some of these activities as innocent fun, but even if they only crack the door to demonic activity just a little bit, it can invite disaster. It doesn't take much.

Now, can demons tempt Christians? Absolutely. Can demons harass us? Without question. Even the great apostle Paul spoke of a demon power that would come and buffet him (see 2 Corinthians 12:7). But God won't let you face more than you can handle. He always will put His hedge of protection around you.

When Jesus comes into your heart, it isn't a timeshare plan where He occupies the heart part of the time and the devil part of the time. No, Jesus takes control and He is there to stay.

But if you are not a Christian, if Christ is not living in your heart, you are open game for the devil. Maybe you're not a drug addict or an occultist. But I will tell you this...you're still a sinner. Every one has sinned and broken God's commandments (see Romans 3:23).

Reach out to Jesus now. He is greater than the devil. He will forgive you, transform you, and start you on a life path beyond what you have ever dreamed. Solomon had it right when he declared, "The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day" (Proverbs 4:18, NIV).

Martyn Lloyd-Jones - THE CROSS AND THE WORLD

. . . greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 1 JOHN 4:4

What is a Christian? Paul tells the Colossians that a Christian is a person who has been translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. I no longer belong to the world—I belong to the kingdom of Christ, the kingdom of light, the kingdom of glory, the kingdom of God. Here I am, and the world has nothing to do with me. I am not of it. I am in this other kingdom. Oh, I am still existing in this world, but I no longer belong to it. I have been translated. And my citizenship is now in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, and we know that we shall ever go on and be with the Lord. He, by dying on the cross, separates me from the world, puts me into His own kingdom, introduces me to God, and makes me a child of God and an heir of eternal bliss. He delivers me from the world. He died so that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He does more—He gives me a power that is greater than the world. Listen to John: ". . . greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world," and "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," our faith in Him (1 John 4:4; 5:4).

And thank God, He gives us occasional glimpses of that other world, that real world, that pure, holy world that is yet going to be. This old world can never be improved and reformed. He will set up a new world: "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13). A renovated cosmos, a perfected universe, with glory everywhere. The glory of the Lord shall cover everything as the waters cover the seas.

I am still existing in this world, but I no longer belong to it.

Warren Wiersbe - in his introduction - The Strategy of Satan

- [Strategy of Satan by Warren Wiersbe](#) - borrow the book or listen to the 2 hr 36 min [audiobook free of charge](#)
- Table of Contents, the introduction and Chapter One ([Pdf source](#))
- See also my article on [Schemes of the Devil](#)

What This Book Is About And How You Should Use It

This book is about Satan and the strategy he has to wreck your Christian life and (if possible) destroy you.

Four persons in the Old Testament had a direct confrontation with Satan. From their experiences we will learn

the targets Satan aims at in your life;
the weapons he uses to attack you;
the purposes that he wants to achieve; and
the defenses God has provided for you.

Please keep in mind that this book is a manual of arms for the Christian soldier. It is not a devotional reader for the believer who has gone AWOL. It is a deadly serious guidebook for the dedicated Christian who is on the battlefield and wants to know how to win.

Please do not speed-read these pages. Read them carefully, especially the many quotations from God's Word. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand and assimilate these truths. There is no "padding" in these chapters. These studies represent the essentials—the rock-bottom fundamentals—of what God has taught me about the Christian warfare through many years of studying and battling. I have proved these truths in my own life and ministry.

No doubt Satan will do everything he can to keep you from benefiting from this book. He will distract you and detour you. He will seek to confuse you, or perhaps make you critical. He will arrange interruptions. I suggest you ask the Lord for his help and protection as you study these pages. "Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). Positionally, you are in Christ and delivered from the power of Satan.

For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.
Colossians 1:13

My aim in this book is to help you experience this victory practically.

The truths in these pages will do you no good unless they are put into practice. Satan enjoys seeing Christians get a head-knowledge of victory without a heart-experience, because this lulls believers into a false security, and Satan finds them an easy prey. It is not the reading of truth, or even the enjoying of truth that brings the blessing. It is the doing of the truth. Therefore, determine with the Spirit's help to put these truths into practice. Remember: you are not fighting for victory, but from victory, for Jesus Christ has already defeated Satan!

When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities [Satanic powers], He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him [Christ]. Colossians 2:15

Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast out. John 12:31

And they overcame him [Satan] because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death. Revelation 12:11

Now, on to victory!

Related Resources:

- [Multiple Resources Related to Satan](#)
- [Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible \(DDD\)](#) - borrow this book - see page 722-728
- [Wayne Grudem's Systematic Theology](#) - PDF - scroll down to p343 - Chapter 19 - Angels and p356 - Chapter 20 - Satan and Demons

Warren Wiersbe writes that "The danger on the battlefield is that we do not take the enemy seriously and therefore fail to put on all of the armor. By faith, you put on the armor through prayer, which must be done at the beginning of every day. Never underestimate the **strategy** and strength of the devil." (Borrow [With the Word : The Chapter-by-Chapter Bible Handbook](#))

Warren Wiersbe makes an important point about dealing with the devil...

I was watching an electrician install a complex control panel. I said to the man, "It just amazes me how you fellows can calmly work on those lines with all of that power there. How do you do it?" The electrician smiled and said, "Well, the first thing you have to do is respect it. Then you can handle it."

Satan is a dangerous enemy. He is a serpent who can bite us when we least expect it. He is a destroyer (Rev 12:11; Abaddon and Apollyon both mean “destruction”) and an accuser (Zech. 3:1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Rev. 12:9, 10, 11). He has great power and intelligence, and a host of demons who assist him in his attacks against God’s people (Eph 6:10ff). He is a formidable enemy; we must never joke about him, ignore him, or underestimate his ability. We must “be sober” and have our minds under control when it comes to our conflict with Satan.

A part of this soberness includes not blaming everything on the devil. Some people see a demon behind every bush and blame Satan for their headaches, flat tires, and high rent. While it is true that Satan can inflict physical sickness and pain (Luke 13:16; Job 1:8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 - see especially Job 1:22!), we have no biblical authority for casting out “demons of headache” or “demons of backache.” One lady phoned me long distance to inform me that Satan had caused her to shrink seven and a half inches. While I have great respect for the wiles and powers of the devil, I still feel we must get our information about him from the Bible and not from our own interpretation of experiences. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

Warren Wiersbe gives us “A word of caution here: never discuss things with Satan or his associates. Eve made this mistake, and we all know the sad consequences. Also, never try to fight Satan in your own way. Resist him the way Jesus did, with the Word of God (Mt 4:1-11, **Ed**: Lk 4:1-11, 14+ - note that Jesus as fully man was giving us an example to follow and fended off the Devil’s attacks by being filled with the Spirit and filled with the Word! See [Filled with His Spirit/Richly Indwelt with His Word](#) - If you are not [memorizing the Word of God](#) [see also [Memory Verses by Topic](#)], you are disregarding and discarding one of your primary weapons against the Devil, the “sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.” - Eph 6:17+). ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

Satan - Warren Wiersbe

Origin. Satan is a rebellious angel who was judged by God and fell from holiness to wickedness (Isa. 14:12–15). The angels who fell with him make up his army of spirits opposed to God and God’s people (Eph. 6:10–13; Luke 11:18). Because Satan is a created being, he is not equal to God; though he possesses tremendous wisdom and power, Satan is always subject to God’s will.

Nature. He is a liar and murderer (John 8:44); an adversary (1 Pet. 5:8–9); the god of this age (2 Cor. 4:4); the ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 1 John 5:19); a deceiver (2 Cor. 11:3); a destroyer (Rev. 9:11; Abaddon means “destruction”); and a counterfeiter of God (Matt. 13:24–30, 36–43; 2 Cor. 11:13–15). The word Satan means “adversary,” and devil means “slanderer, accuser” (Zech. 3:1–5).

Works. Satan can seek to deceive your mind (Gen. 3:1ff.; Matt. 16:21–23; 2 Cor. 11:3); snatch away God’s Word (Matt. 13:19); attack your body (Job 2:4–7; 2 Cor. 12:7); control your will (1 Chron. 21:1ff.; 2 Tim. 2:26); destroy your possessions (Job 1:13ff.); hinder your work for the Lord (1 Thess. 2:18); make you proud (1 Tim. 3:6–7); cause persecution (Rev. 2:10); and tempt you to sin (Matt. 4:1ff.). When you have sinned, he can accuse you and discourage you (2 Cor. 2:6–11). You must claim God’s forgiveness by faith (1 John 1:9).

Defeat. In His life, death, resurrection, and ascension, Christ defeated Satan and his evil hosts (John 12:31–33; Eph. 1:15–2:10; Col. 2:13–15). God’s people must recognize the devil and know when he is at work (2 Cor. 2:11); respect him, because he is powerful and subtle (1 Pet. 5:8); and resist him with the Word of God and prayer (Matt. 4:1–11; James 4:7; Eph. 6:17–18). The believer must wear the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:10ff.) and use the spiritual equipment. There is overcoming power in the blood of Christ (Rev. 12:11) and the power of the Spirit (1 John 4:4).

“Nor give place to the devil” (Eph. 4:27). In Ephesians 4:17–32, Paul names some sins that can give Satan a foothold in your life: lust, lying, anger, stealing, corrupt speech, evil speaking, an unforgiving spirit, bitterness, malice, and so forth. Any sinful thing that belonged to your old life can be used by the devil to ruin your new life, so be sure to keep your heart clean before the Lord.

Future. Satan still has access to heaven (Job 1–2; Zech. 3) but one day will be thrown out (Rev. 12:7–12). When the Lord Jesus comes to establish His kingdom, He will cast Satan into hell, the lake of fire, where he will be tormented forever (Rev. 19:11–20:3). Hell was prepared for Satan and his angels, but people who reject Christ and believe Satan’s lies will suffer in hell with him (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:11–15).

Bill Bright - You’ve Already Won

“Dear young friends, you belong to God and have already won your fight with those who are against Christ because there is someone in your hearts who is stronger than any evil teacher in this wicked world.”¹ JOHN 4:4

I am afraid of Satan,” a young minister once told me.

“You should be afraid of Satan,” I responded, “if you insist on controlling your own life. But not if you are willing to let Christ control

your life. The Bible says, 'Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.'"

My friend lived in a city where one of the largest zoos in the world was located.

"What do you do with lions in your city?" I asked.

"We keep them in cages," he replied.

"You can visit the lion in its cage at the zoo," I explained, "and it cannot hurt you, even if you are close to the cage. But stay out of that cage, or the lion will make mincemeat out of you."

Satan is in a "cage." He was defeated 2,000 years ago when Christ died on the cross for our sins. Victory is now ours. We do not look forward to victory, but we move from victory, the victory of the cross.

Satan has no power except that which God allows him to have. Do not be afraid of him, but do stay away from him. Avoid his every effort to tempt and mislead you. Remember, that choice is up to you.

SUPERNATURAL POWER

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 1 JOHN 4:4

GOD'S POWER IS AVAILABLE POWER. We are supernatural people, born again by a supernatural birth, kept by a supernatural power, sustained on supernatural food, taught by a supernatural Teacher from a supernatural Book. We are led by a supernatural Captain in right paths to assured victories. The risen Savior, ere He ascended on high said, "All power is given unto Me. Go ye therefore." Again He said to His disciples: "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you." . . . The power given is not a gift from the Holy Spirit. He himself is the power. Today, He is as truly available and as mighty in power as He was on the day of Pentecost. . . . We have given too much attention to method, and to machinery, and to resources, and too little to the source of power.

Be strong!

We are not here to play, to dream, to drift.

We have hard work to do, and loads to lift.

Shun not the struggle -face it; 'tis God's gift.

Be strong!

Say not the days are evil. Who's to blame?

And fold the hand and acquiesce - oh, shame!

Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's name

Be strong!

J. HUDSON TAYLOR

STRONG SPIRITUAL WEAPONS - Joseph Stowell

FOR OUR STRUGGLE IS . . . AGAINST THE SPIRITUAL FORCES OF EVIL IN THE HEAVENLY REALMS. —
Ephesians 6:12

Paul states: "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes" (Ephesians 6:10–11). "Watch out!" is Paul's way of getting our attention. This is no time to relax. He calls us to stand firm and be on guard.

His words are not meant to traumatize our hearts. Instead, they are meant as a wake-up call to our souls.

We all have the tendency to slide into a comfortable Christianity. We attend worship services, participate in ministry activities, interact with fellow Christians, and enjoy the smooth, sometimes predictable, ride. Paul warns us not to get too comfortable. When we least suspect trouble, we can be a target. Our sense of security is only an illusion. We dare not coast through this world in a mirage of safety and happiness. We are involved in a battle.

So what is the answer? Must we live in fear? No. We are to ground ourselves in prayer and in His Word. We must put on the full spiritual armor He has given us (Ephesians 6:10–20).

Our struggle is against the devastating terror of the unseen systems of evil under Satan's control. We must train ourselves to be on guard and alert and to stand firm in the mighty power of the Lord. "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” (1 John 4:4).

Alert. Prayerful. Standing. Declaring. Fearless—but only with the knowledge that the advantage of the all-powerful God is on our side. We have been given mighty weapons to extinguish all of Satan’s wicked schemes. In the end, we must use them to be victorious.

Are you living in comfortable Christianity? How might you improve your soldiering skills?

Ezekiel 28:15 - Blackbeard

As a young man in the late 1600s, Edward Teach joined the crew of a British ship that was headed to the Caribbean. Much later in his nautical career, he managed to capture a merchant vessel and turn it into a 40-gun warship. Teach soon became known as Blackbeard—the most feared pirate in the hemisphere.

Blackbeard had some success as a pirate, but his “career” abruptly ended when he encountered a contingent of the British Royal Navy. In a desperate battle, he and his fellow pirates were killed, putting an end to their terrorizing exploits.

Long ago in the heavenly places, an angel fell into spiritual piracy. Lucifer was a cherub who stood in the radiant glory of God (Ezekiel 28:11-15). But his own self-love replaced love for his Creator. Desiring to be like the Most High, he led a rebellion and was cast out of heaven (Isaiah 14:12-15). Today he and his henchmen are doing whatever they can to commandeer the lives of human beings (Luke 8:12; 2 Corinthians 4:4).

Even so, we don’t need to be afraid. Satan is a dangerous enemy, but Jesus sealed his ultimate fate when He rose from the dead. And He has given us everything we need to withstand the devil’s attacks (Ephesians 6:10-18).— by Dennis Fisher

And though this world with devils filled
Should threaten to undo us;
We will not fear, for God has willed
His truth to triumph through us.
—Luther

He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. —1 John 4:4

No Match For God - During the 1930s, a missionary in a primitive African village saw firsthand the conflict between the power of the kingdom of evil and the omnipotence of God. According to author Calvin Miller, a witch doctor had warned the missionary that the tribal god would destroy his school. A bolt of lightning fulfilled his threat. Convinced that the voodoo spirit would not have the last word, the missionary publicly proclaimed that the God of the Bible would strike the witch doctor’s totem with lightning that night. To the utter amazement of the village people, that’s exactly what happened! They saw this as evidence of the superior power of the missionary’s God.

In the book of Exodus, Moses and Aaron could have been intimidated by Pharaoh’s magicians. Their demonic power was clearly evident when their rods became serpents. But God reassured His servants and reminded them of His superior power when Aaron’s rod-turned-serpent devoured the other serpents.

The power of Satan is demonstrated as he works through unbelief and false religious systems. But when we walk with God, we need not be afraid. The devil and all his forces are no match for God. By Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The devil prowls and seeks his prey,
His power can't be denied;
But God is greater, and we know
He's always by our side. —Sper

The power of Christ within you is greater than The power of evil around you.

Jesus Is Greater - Chinese communities in Southeast Asia and some villages in China celebrate the month-long Ghosts Festival. It is believed that during this time the spirits of the dead return to earth to roam among the living. So people burn joss sticks (incense) and phony money, prepare feasts, and perform in street theaters—all to keep the spirits happy.

As a child growing up in Singapore, I was taught to fear those ghosts. One year I had a fever during the festival, and I was told that I

must have bumped into some and offended them.

Now that I know what the Bible says about Jesus' power over the real spirit world of Satan and his demons, I have been freed from my former fears. Because I have placed my faith in Christ as my Lord and Savior, I realize that I don't need to try to appease or fight evil spirits by myself.

Jesus showed His power over the spirit world as He cast out demons (Luke 11:14-23). When He died on the cross for us and rose from the grave, Jesus triumphed over Satan and sealed his doom (Colossians 2:15; Revelation 20:10). The Bible assures followers of Christ, "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). By Albert Lee ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We need not fear the devil or demons. Our Lord Jesus is greater!

And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God has willed,
His truth to triumph through us. —Luther

The power of Satan is no match for the power of Jesus.

Shrike System - Read: Ephesians 6:10-18 | Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. —1 Peter 5:8 - The ancient sport of falconry used trained hawks or falcons in the pursuit of wild game. When the "educated predator" was allowed to fly, however, it often rose too high for human eyes to see. So a hunter often carried a small caged bird called a shrike. By watching the antics of the little bird, the man could always tell where his hawk was, for the shrike instinctively feared the predator and cocked its head to keep it in view.

Christians desperately need an alert perception similar to that of the shrike to detect their spiritual enemy. Our adversary, Satan, "walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). Our responsibility, according to the apostle Peter, is to be sober and vigilant. In other words, we're to be always on the alert.

It would be nice if God had giant sirens to warn us of an attack by the devil. But He doesn't operate that way. Instead, we must read the Bible regularly, meditate on its truths, maintain a prayerful attitude throughout the day, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Only then will we be sensitive to an imminent assault by the evil one, and be armed by grace to meet it. By Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The devil is clever, deceiving us all,
He cunningly causes the strongest to fall;
But we his sly methods are sure to discern
By making God's warnings our daily concern. —D. De Haan

He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. —1 John 4:4