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In our 4th part of “The Church Re-Defined,” we take a look at the true, victorious Church in the earth. Jesus clearly stated that His Church would prevail against the “gates of satan’s power!” Matthew 16:13-19 ...*I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail (will not be victorious) against it (the Church).*

A few qualifiers for a victorious Church...

- 1. Contend for the faith from a position OF victory not FOR victory.** To “contend” is to struggle and compete for a prize. (Jude 3) The Church MUST contend for relevance in a culture slipping into spiritual darkness. And the Church’s victory begins with me!
 - John 16:33 *Jesus said, “I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have perfect peace and confidence. In the world you have trials, distress and frustration; but be convinced, confident and courageous! I have overcome the world. I have conquered it for you.”*
 - **Lesson:** Just as David did not submit to Goliath’s threats (1 Samuel 17:40-54), so the Church must walk in the confidence and power of the Holy Spirit. We are following our God who is Himself a Warrior (Exodus 15:3). Pray for the Church to be brave and bold in this turbulent season of history.
- 2. Built on the rock of obedience.** In Matthew 7:24-29 Jesus tells us to build our life (and church) on the rock, which simply refers to actively obeying His Word. In doing this, we experience protection and victory over the storms of life.
 - Mark 4:35-41 ...*Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace, be still (Be quiet)!” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.*
 - Deuteronomy 28:1- 14 *Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth...*

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- **Lesson:** God's blessings in our lives are the result of obeying God's Word and His principles. Pray that a dark world sees God's Presence on His people!
3. **A house of prayer for all nations.** In Isaiah 56:6-7, speaking about the Gentile world joining Israel in the worship of the One True God, Isaiah boldly prophesies that, "My House will be called a House of prayer for all nations." Although this is primarily a reference to God's House as a place of worship for people from every country, it can also refer to God's House (His people) standing in prayer *for* all the nations of the world.
- In Matthew 21:12-17 and Mark 11:17 we read that Jesus quoted Isaiah 56:7 and cleansed the Temple of its worldliness and greed. When He finished, the blind and lame came to Him and were healed and children began to proclaim His praise!
 - **Lesson:** When the Church is in prayer for the nations of this world, great blessings and miracles follow! Pray for the Church to live out God's priorities at home and abroad.
4. **Focused on bringing deliverance, hope, and power to a desperate, broken world.**
- In Luke 4:16-21 Jesus quotes Isaiah 61:1-3 as a basis for His ministry on earth, *...He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed;...*
 - 1 John 4:17 *Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.*
 - **Lesson:** The true Church must have an outward focus to be the expression of Christ. Pray that the Church will restructure itself to be "as He is in this world."