

**W**HEN THE MASTER HATH GOTTEN THE BETTER OF HIS enemies, the disciples must not despond. “And how,” tell me, “hast Thou ‘conquered the world?’” “I have told you already, that I have cast down its ruler, but ye shall know hereafter, when all things yield and give place to you.” But it is permitted to us also to conquer, looking to the Author of our Faith, and walking on that road which He cut for us. So neither shall death get the mastery of us. “What then, shall we not die?” saith some one. Why, from this very thing it is clear that he shall not gain the mastery over us. The champion truly will then be glorious, not when he hath not closed with his opponent, but when having closed he is not holden by him. We therefore are not mortal, because of our struggle with death, but immortal, because of our victory; then should we have been mortal, had we remained with him always. As then I should not call the longest-lived animals immortal, although they long remain free from death, so neither him who shall rise after death mortal, because he is dissolved by death. For, tell me, if a man blush a little, should we say that he was continually ruddy? Not so, for the action is not a habit. If one become pale, should we call him jaundiced? No, for the affection is but temporary. And so you would not call him mortal, who hath been for but a short time in the hands of death. Since in this way we may speak of those who sleep, for they are dead, so to say, and without action. But doth death corrupt our bodies? What of that? It is not that they may remain in corruption, but that they be made better. Let us then conquer the world, let us run to immortality, let us follow our King, let us too set up a trophy, let us despise the world’s pleasures. We need no toil to do so; let us transfer our souls to Heaven, and all the world is conquered. If thou desirest it not, it is conquered; if thou deride it, it is worsted. Strangers are we and sojourners, let us then not grieve at any of its painful things. For if, being sprung from a renowned country, and from illustrious ancestors, thou hadst gone into some distant land, being known to no one, having with thee neither servants nor wealth, and then some one had insulted thee, thou wouldest not grieve as though thou hadst suffered these things at home. For the knowing clearly that thou wast in a strange and foreign land, would persuade thee to bear all easily, and to despise hunger, and thirst, and any suffering whatever. Consider this also now, that thou art a stranger and a sojourner, and let nothing disturb thee in this foreign land; for thou hast a City whose Artificer and Creator is God, and the sojourning itself is but for a short and little time.

St John Chrysostom, *Homily LXXIX On Saint John’s Gospel*, 2–3  
Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, Volume XIV

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