

LOOKING DOWN KEEPS ME LOOKING UP

What do you get if you take a common comma, reverse it and turn it 90 degrees counter clockwise? If you said "Why you end up with one of the most recognizable trademarks in the world today, the Nike swoosh."; then congratulations. Okay, may you need to modify the comma just a bit before you end up with the Nike swoosh but you get the idea. The design is simple, it cost Phil Knight \$35.00 (that is what he paid the Portland State University student who was doing freelance work for him back in 1972) and it represents one of the foremost shoes available in the realm of sports. I think a lot of people wear Nike shoes because the shoes are advertised as having features which give the wearer a competitive edge. I think too a lot of people wear Nike shoes because they think Nike shoes are cool.

I like to see people in Nike shoes. Not because I am a Nike shoe fan and not because I own stock in the company but because every time I see the swoosh or the word Nike it reminds me of something.

"Nike" was the Greek goddess of victory. That is supposedly why Knight chose her to represent his company. He wanted to say to the world "we strive to make shoes that assist athletes in their quest for victory". In fact the image of Nike the goddess appears on all Summer Olympic medals. But, besides being a Greek goddess, "Nike" is also a Greek work. It is defined by my Greek Dictionary this way – *a word meaning **conquest; (figuratively) the means of success:-- victory. It also denotes to prevail or overcome.*** John used it in his first epistle in chapter five where he said:

for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory (nike) that has overcome the world, even our faith. 1John 5:4

John uses it again in the book of Revelation as he records the promises of the Lord to the seven church of Asia Minor. The promises recorded there are as follows:

To him who overcomes (nikao), I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God. Rev 2:7 to the church at Ephesus

He who overcomes (nikao) will not be hurt at all by the second death.

Rev 2:11 to the church at Smyrna

To him who overcomes (nikao), I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name

written on it, known only to him who receives it. Rev 2:17 to the church at Pergamum

To him who overcomes (nikao) and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations-- 'He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery' --just as I have received authority from my Father. I will also give him the morning star. Rev 2:26-28 to the church at Thyatira

He who overcomes (nikao) will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels. Rev 3:5 to the church at Sardis

Him who overcomes (nikao) I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name. Rev 3:12 to the church at Philadelphia

To him who overcomes (nikao), I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. Rev 3:21 to the church at Laodicea

So when I see the swoosh or the word "Nike" my mind goes to the promises of God. The promise that because I have been born of God I overcome the world. And the wonderful promises recorded in Revelation which encourage us to persevere to the end that we might receive rich rewards from the hand of Him who sat down with His Father on His throne. Enjoy the swooshes of life.

Terry McCall, Minister of Discipleship