

The Victory

by A.B. Simpson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith and the divine indwelling in overcoming the forces of evil and achieving victory in our spiritual conflicts.

Scripture: 1 John 1:7, 1 John 2:14, 1 John 2:26-27, 1 John 3:8, 1 John 4:4, 1 John 5:4

Topics: "Victory in Christ", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

A.B. Simpson emphasizes the theme of victory in Christ, asserting that believers enter spiritual battles with the assurance of triumph because of the greater power within them. He outlines key elements of this victory: the battle belongs to the Lord, the cleansing power of Christ's blood, the authority of God's Word, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and the importance of faith. Simpson encourages Christians to recognize their identity in Christ and to rely on divine resources to overcome the adversary. Ultimately, he calls for a deeper understanding of the indwelling presence of God and the transformative power of faith in the believer's life.

Transcript

You . . . have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world. (1 John 4:4.)

We enter this conflict with the prestige of victory. We meet the enemy as a conquered foe. This is the high standpoint of faith. This is the only ground where the child of God should meet temptation. You have overcome them!

The elements and resources of our victory are unfolded with as much fullness as the resources of the foes.

I. THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John 3:8.) The battle is not ours but God's. Christ is the leader in the conflict. From the beginning it has ever been so. When the battle first began in Eden it was the seed of the woman that was to bruise the head of the serpent. And, ever since, God has recognized the great conflict between good and evil as a personal issue between the Prince of Darkness and the Son of God. When He came to earth as the captain of our salvation, He met the adversary in single combat and overthrew him once for all. And now He still comes

to lead us in triumph and overcome for us and in us. Let us enter every conflict with the confidence that the Lord is fighting for us, and that we are simply following His banner and fighting His battle.

II. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

The next element of victory and weapon of warfare is the blood of Christ. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." (1 John 1:7.) "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony," must ever be the battle cry in the conflict between good and evil. Not by ethical principles, social culture, and moral example, do we overcome the forces of evil. The crimson banner of Calvary must lead the conflict and claim the victory. The great fact of sin must be recognized and met by atonement and sacrifice. The death of Christ must be reproduced in the death of the believer to self and sin. The old life of nature is not capable of reaching the divine ideal. It must die and be superseded by a heaven-born life, by the nature of God Himself, implanted in the soul through the resurrection life of Christ within. And so the blood of Christ, which signifies and sets forth the idea of sacrifice and crucifixion, as signally sets forth the idea of the new life imparted to us from the very life of our risen Lord. The blood is evermore the life, the life shed for us, the life breathed in us. And, as we enter into the deep, full meaning of the cross, sin loses its power, and Satan can no more reach us than he can reach the risen, ascended Lord Himself.

III. THE WORD OF GOD

God's Word is the weapon of our warfare. "I have written unto you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one." (1 John 2: 14.) It is through the Word of God that the power of the blood is applied to our soul. Believing the Gospel we enter into the enjoyments of its blessings and come under the power of divine grace. It is the Word of God upon which faith rests its claims and from which it draws its comfort and inspiration to purify the heart and transform the life. It is the Word of God that detects the subtleties and snares of the devil's temptations, exposes the false spirits that have gone forth into the world, and enables us to overcome all the wiles of the wicked one. "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." It was by this weapon that Christ overcame in His threefold conflict with the enemy in the wilderness; and by it we are established in the truth and the Word of God abides in us, that we shall overcome the wicked one and be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. As for him, the Psalmist could say, "By the words of your lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." Beloved, are you armed with the Word of God? Is it for you the supreme test of truth and error, of right and wrong, the manna of your soul, the guide of your life, and the sword of the Spirit, before which Satan cannot stand?

IV. THE ANOINTING OF THE SPIRIT

This is our safeguard against the adversary. "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which you have received of him abides in you, . . . and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, you shall abide in him." (1 John 2: 26, 27.) It was the Holy Ghost that led Christ into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil and it is He that still guides and guards us in our spiritual conflicts. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." The true antagonist of the spirit of evil is the spirit of good. As the devil is the counterfeit of the Holy Ghost, so the Holy Ghost is the conqueror of the devil. Good reason has he to dread his divine victor, and well may we take refuge under the guardian wing of the blessed Comforter, if we would be safe from the dragon's power. Just as the burnished covering on the plumage of the seafoal preserves it

unstained as it plunges into the brine, so the anointing of the Holy Ghost protects us from the defiling touch of the serpent and carries us unspotted through all the pollution of a sinful world. Hence we are never safe until we receive the seal and anointing of the Holy Ghost. Do not go forth into the conflict without it. Having received the Lord Jesus as your Savior, accept the Holy Spirit as your Keeper, Comforter and Guide, and learn to put Him between you and everything you meet. So shall He prove "a wall of fire round about, and . . . the glory in the midst," and sheltered beneath His feathers we shall ever sing:

I am safe from all danger

While under His wings.

V. THE DIVINE INDWELLING

"Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." (1John 4: 4.) The interior life is what is meant by this. To most Christians their religion is external. It is a matter of their convictions, their creed, their intellect. It consists in what they believe and know. It is theology, doctrine, and religious discussion. Or perhaps it is ceremony, churchgoing, rites, religious worship, singing, praying, and performing acts of religious service, so-called. Or it may be more than this. It may have to deal chiefly with their conduct, their practical life from day to day, the things they do and say, or do not do or say; their acts of benevolence, their Christian work, service, so-called, for others, preaching, teaching, seeking to help and save. All this is good and has its place. But all this is external. The true secret of divine religion is this: "This says the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy; I will dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." This is the home that God is seeking. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit"; that is, in the depths of the human spirit, "for the Father seeks such to worship him." God is only longing to find a welcome and a home in human hearts. He is standing at the door and knocking, and ever crying, "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." "If man loves me," the Lord Jesus has told us, "My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." It is when God thus comes to dwell within and undertakes to work out our life from the interior, that He is able to do "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us."

The great question therefore, is, Where do we meet God? Where does He reside? Is He for us a God in heaven, or the God in the heart? Is the throne of His omnipotence within the secret place of our being? Then, indeed, it is true, "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." Enthroned in the depths of our being, God and our heart are in such perfect alliance that nothing can come between them. He is instead of every evil thing, every unholy presence, every threatening danger, nearer to us than our own very consciousness, a very present help in time of trouble. Beloved, have you learned the secret of the interior life? Have you become the temple of the Holy Ghost? Is God more real to you than the facts of your own consciousness and the operations of your own soul?

VI. FAITH IS THE VICTORY

"This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4.) It is through faith that we become united to the Son of God, that we become the subjects of the cleansing blood, that the truth becomes effectual in our lives, and the Word of God abides in us, that the anointing is received, and the indwelling presence of the

Holy Ghost is constantly and joyously realized. Faith is the spiritual sense which brings us into contact with the unseen and the divine. It is a sort of sixth sense opening to us a new world of external realities which others cannot see or know. Just as a man who has never had the sense of smell is ignorant of a whole world of sweetness, so a soul without faith can never come in contact with the divine realities of the world to come, and bring them to bear as a personal matter upon our life and conduct. Therefore faith unites us with divine omnipotence, and it is true, "All things are possible to him that believes," as much as it is true that "All things are possible with God." Therefore faith is represented by a military figure as the "shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." The shield covers the soldier so that the darts do not reach him. So faith hides behind the person of Christ, and all the blows fall upon Him.

There are two kinds of shields constantly referred to in the figurative language of the Bible. There is the buckler as well as the shield. The buckler is a shield which is so attached to the arm that it cannot be lost. It is fastened to the soldier. Through the thickest of the conflict he finds it still there, even should his fingers cease to grasp it. So there are two kinds of faith. There is our faith, which we may easily lose, and there is the faith of God, which holds and keeps us. This is one of the deepest secrets of the Christian life, that Christ within us becomes the power of an overwhelming faith. There is nothing more wonderful than that spirit of trust, which, through the darkness and the light, clings and fears not, but knows by an unspeakable instinct that He will not fail us, that He loves and leads and keeps, and will carry us through. Sometimes the thought comes to us, what if we should lose this trust; what if our confidence should fail! What if in some dark and dreadful hour we should be stricken with panic and sink in despair, and lose our confidence? This would be dark and terrible indeed! Perhaps we have come to such an hour. The writer once came to such an hour, and in the darkness of that dreadful moment, when Satan seemed to have destroyed by one fell blow, all his faith, he became afraid even to pray, and sinking in desolation he could only cry, "What shall I do? I cannot even trust!" It was then that for the first time he learned the faith of God, for, as he sank in the depths of his desolation and helplessness, there stole over his heart such a strange, new sweetness, such a sense of God's love, God's arms, God's overshadowing presence, and a trust that could not die, that he looked up and loved, and leaned, and rested with a simplicity at which he could only wonder and weep, and say, "How blessed! How safe! How good God is! How wonderful His love, His trust, His presence!" And so, beloved, we must lose our faith to find His, and when we find it, we have something that Satan cannot steal, and that the world can neither give nor take away.

Therefore, it is against our faith that Satan hurls his fiercest darts. Therefore it is the "trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire." Therefore it was of Peter's faith that Jesus said: "I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not." Therefore, we are exhorted in view of the devil's rage and hate, "whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." Therefore, again, we have the admonition: "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which has great recompense of reward." "The just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

Lord, give us such a faith as this,

And then whate'er may come,

We'll taste even here the hallowed bliss,

Of our eternal home.

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