

Victory Is a Man

by Chip Brogden

Victory is not something we achieve through spiritual warfare methods, but rather it is a Person - Christ - who has already overcome the enemy and is our Victory.

Scripture: Romans 6:4, 1 Corinthians 1:30, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 1:19, Ephesians 2:6, Colossians 2:10, Colossians 3:1

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

Description

Chip Brogden emphasizes the importance of seeking Christ above all else, as God's desire is for us to have revelation into His Son. Victory is not found in methods or techniques but in Christ Himself, who is our Victory. By being seated with Christ in heavenly places, we overcome not by our own efforts but by abiding in Him. Victory is not about fighting battles but resting in the finished work of Christ, understanding that His overcoming is our overcoming.

Transcript

Everyone who looks does not see. Everyone who hears does not listen. What are we looking for? What is it that we need to see? What would God reveal to us? There is but one desire of God for us, and that is that we may see Christ. God does not reveal one hundred, one thousand, or one million things to us. He is pleased to give us His Son, and He delights for us to look only to Him. Not even the things He gives, but to Him who is the Gift. We may pray for revelation into a great many matters, but only one thing is important to God, that is, that we may have revelation into the Son.

If we know the Son, if we possess the Son, if we see the Son, we know and possess and see all that God has and is, for He has deposited all of Himself into His Son, and all of His Son He deposited into us.

As we progress we begin to ask for and seek spiritual "things" in order to have a victorious Christian life. We learn to do this from watching what everyone else is doing. We seek many blessings from God. We pray many prayers and make many requests. Sometimes it seems we are given what we ask for, and sometimes it seems we are unchanged. So we struggle on, always searching for something out in space a thousand miles away that will change us from being defeated to being victorious.

The whole problem is that we view victory as something out in the twilight zone of the Spirit, while we are struggling along here on Planet Earth, toiling and sweating as we wrestle and fight against a powerful adversary. To us, victory is something we do not have, something we cannot see, something we are not

experiencing, something that we must search for and diligently seek out until we find it. The routine of daily life becomes old. We hope to find the victory we seek in a new book, or a tape, or a teaching, or a ministry, or a church, or a group, or a video, or a seminar, or a special speaker, or a website, or a special discipline, or a spiritual regimen. We go through them one by one, and some of them even seem to work short-term, but eventually they will sit on the shelf in the recesses of our mind, collecting dust and never being put into practice beyond the initial excitement of having learned a new thing or riding the wave of the latest spiritual fad.

God does not give us a thing called victory. Instead, He gives us His Son to be our Victory. Christ is Victory. It is not a question of going forth to war in the name of Jesus and claiming the victory in advance. May I say that Victory does not depend upon whether you "claim" anything or not. Victory is a Man! Overcoming is entering into Victory Himself, being clothed with Victory, sharing in the Life of One Who overcame. Thus, our victory is bound up in the Lord Himself. It is not a separate grace or gift which He grants to certain ones who learn some principles of spiritual warfare.

People are looking for a technique or method by which they may work out a victory on behalf of Christ. Not surprisingly everyone has their own way of waging warfare. Some emphasize intercessory prayer, and believe the secret is in getting hundreds of people praying for the same thing. Others lean towards praise and worship. Some stress binding and loosing. Others believe the key is in locating and naming certain spirits which supposedly control different parts of the world. Still others think there must be some prophetic act to be performed or declaration to be made.

Here is the problem with virtually all of these things: they are just that - THINGS - methods, techniques, teachings, strategies, but they are not Christ. Victory is not this, that, or the other. It is not some spiritual thing. Victory is a God-Man. The one in Christ is seated with Him in the heavenly places. If we see ourselves in Him then we cannot help but understand that since the battle is already won, and Victory is ours, then we do not need a method or a technique designed to "get" a victory which we already possess.

The problem with a spiritual warfare "method" is it deceives us into thinking we have something with which we may overcome the enemy. We do not. If yours is a "method", then the method will fail. There are no methods for Salvation, for Christ is Way. He does not show us the way, He is Way. Similarly, Christ is not present with us in order to show us a way to victory. He is Victory. If we have any hope of overcoming by taking a little piece of Christ and incorporating it into our spiritual warfare program then we have failed before we have begun.

We must realize that our grounds and basis for victory is Christ. The many schemes, plans, formulas, and strategies that we devise in order to gain some sort of advantage over the enemy are but wood, hay, and stubble. Why do we seek such methods? Because we have not seen ourselves seated with Christ in the heavenly realm.

WINNING THE WAR BUT LOSING THE BATTLE

Let us look at some spiritual warfare methods. There is a distinctive amongst these methods, that is, darkness is glorified, darkness is talked about, darkness is exalted. Such teachings are, for the most part, enemy-oriented. Where is the revelation of Christ? It is not to be found. Instead, we are often told to seek revelation into satan, the demons, the works of darkness, and how we may overcome them.

For instance, we have been told that we must discern the names of the principalities and powers over certain areas in order to bind, rebuke, and cast them out. How does this method glorify darkness? It does it by getting people to seek revelation into other "things" apart from Christ. When we engage in this pursuit we are no longer praying for the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, we are instead praying for the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of satan. Since God does not reveal anything to us apart from His Son, from whence comes the "revelation" of satan?

As Christians we use a lot of spiritual phraseology without understanding what it really means. For instance, we say, "The battle is already won." What does this mean? If we take it for what it says, it means that there is no fighting left to do, and we are already victorious. It means either victory has been handed to us, or we have already fought the battle and won. Both of these have, in fact, been done for us in Christ. We have been handed a victory, and we have also already fought a battle in which we obtained the victory. On the one hand, we did nothing at all for it, and on the other hand we have already fought the battle: yet not we ourselves, but through Christ. Since Christ overcomes, and I am in Him, I overcome as though I fought the battle myself.

This ought to be good news to us. But for the most part our Christian experience is more along of the lines of winning the war but losing the battle. Some have accepted this situation as inevitable so long as they live on the earth. They do not see victory on this side of heaven. They want to believe that Christ has really overcome the devil and destroyed all the works of the enemy, but then they look at their own failures and defeats and wonder why they are losing the battles if they have already won the war. Well, that is a good question. Here is another question to consider: if the war is already won, why are we still fighting battles at all? Why wrestle when we can stand?

Can you see the difference between wrestling for a victory that I do not have, and standing in a Victory that is mine already? How can we see the difference in our experience? It is quite easy to mark where we are and see if we are living and walking in the truth. When we fight according to the flesh we have no choice but to wrestle. But when the enemy is spiritual, we wrestle by **STANDING**, not by fighting.

If I see victory as something that I have to wrestle the devil for then I will be under great stress of spirit, soul, and body, looking for the devil under every rock and in every dark corner. At the slightest discomfort or annoyance I will presume the adversary is out to get me again. I will become obsessed with darkness, demons, and devils. The more you swat at a hornet the more likely you are to be stung. And sure enough, the more attention I pay to the devil, the more diligent he is to harass me.

I will experience lots of failures and very few victories. Whatever victory I do experience is fleeting and brief. Just when I think I have bound the devil he gets loosed again, and I am in for yet another round. Around and around we go. He goes, and comes, and goes, and comes. I resist, he flees, and comes again. My dreams bother me by night and flashing thoughts disturb me by day. Since I am fighting the devil I have to take time out to "come against" every single thought. I have to answer every single accusation. The tiniest temptations become huge weights. I have little joy, no peace, no real confidence. Only fear: fear of failing, fear of giving ground to the devil, fear of what he might throw at me next.

This is what many people call spiritual warfare. It is not. What I have described is wrestling as a flesh and blood person who is following flesh and blood rules. For...

VICTORY IS A MAN, NOT A METHOD

When God is pleased to reveal His Son to us, we will learn that Victory is not a thing, but a Person; that Victory is not an experience, but a Man; that God does not give me a thing called victory, but has given me His Son in the place of victory in order to be my Victory. Then Victory will never be future-tense and far-away, but Ever Present and Now. For Victory is Christ. And Victory lives within you. Thus, Victory has nothing to do with the devil, and everything to do with Christ. Since most Christians have more faith, assurance and reverence for the devil than they do for the Lord Jesus, it is easy to see why so many are defeated.

God revealed His Son to me only after I had failed as a pastor, when my church was closed, when I had thrown away all my books and tapes and magazines and notes on spiritual warfare and was left with nothing but Christ. I had looked for victory in spiritual warfare by focusing my attention on the devil, but God never taught me anything about spiritual warfare, nor did He reveal anything to me about the devil. He taught me concerning His Son. God did not show me how to be victorious, He merely revealed His Son to me as Victory. Having done this, it was sufficient to make me victorious.

I remember the day when it happened. I was sitting in my backyard one morning with my Scripture translations opened to Ephesians and two texts before me. The first was:

"And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all" (Ephesians 1:19-23).

I was thankful for this passage, but it did not register much with me. Praise the Lord that Christ is risen from the dead and is exalted far above every principality and power, demon and devil. This I can agree with. This I can believe in. But I found no comfort for me in my particular battle. I did not doubt the Lord Jesus' victory, I doubted MY victory.

So I did not understand the significance of the first passage until I read the second passage before me:

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6).

Now I had read Ephesians through probably one hundred times, but something arrested my attention on that day. A beam of light struck me and the words seemed to leap up from off the page and slap me in the face. I stopped for a moment and read the first passage again, then the second passage. "...He raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named... And raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

Together, together, together, together...

For the first time in my life, I saw Christ, sitting at God's right hand. And I saw myself seated with Him. His victory is my victory. TOGETHER we were raised from the dead, TOGETHER we were set at the right hand of God in the heavenlies, TOGETHER we were seated far above ALL principality, and power, and

might, and dominion, and every name that is named! I began to laugh at my own stupidity. What is there left for me to do now that I am far above all these things? What is left for me to fight? I can find nothing to do now except to simply abide in Christ and allow Him to be my Victory, just as I allow Him to be my Salvation.

I did not come to this conclusion after years of study. I did not learn it from any Bible teacher. It came to me from out of the clear blue sky. There it was, right there in the Bible. How could I have missed this? I missed it because my eyes had looked, but had not seen. I had scanned over the verses with my eyes and memorized them, but they never struck me to the ground. They never took up residence within me. They were letters in a book, good letters, wonderful words, but nothing that lived or breathed in me. I did not see Christ in the Book until that moment.

I looked up from where I was sitting, and I do not think I was in the Spirit, and I do not think I had a vision, but it was as though I could see beyond the sky and all the way up into Heaven. Everything from the Cross through the Throne was spread before me. Now that I could clearly see myself seated with Christ everything fell into place. For if I was seated with Him, I had to have been raised with Him! And if I was raised with Him, I had to have died with Him! And if I died with Him, I had to have been crucified with Him!

Everything opened up before me in an instant. Whether I saw it in my mind's eye or with my heart I am not sure, but I saw Christ on the cross, and me crucified with Him (Galatians 2:20). I saw myself buried with Him by baptism into death (Romans 6:3). I saw myself raised with Him to newness of life (Romans 6:4). I saw myself ascended with Him, and seated with Him in heavenly places. I saw it backwards and forwards, upside down and rightside up. But I did not have the words to describe it. Even today I have a hard time explaining it. All I can say is, "I saw it." It sounds so plain and uninteresting that way, because I do not claim to have seen an actual vision, yet it was indeed a seeing. It was definitely a perceiving.

I finally realized that victory over the enemy would never be a problem ever again. From that day onward I understood that my victory was secured by Christ Himself, and there was nothing left for me to do or to obtain but to receive His finished work and accept His Victory as my victory. As surely as Christ does not struggle with the devil, as certain as His overcoming is, so certain is my overcoming with Him. I thank and praise God that today Christ is Victory.

CHRIST IS REST FROM OUR LABOR

By revelation I understood that we may "stand therefore" only when we have learned to sit with Christ, that it is more about rest and faith, and less about fighting and struggling. Seeing myself in Christ for the first time was like walking out of one room and into another, closing the door behind me. I got a glimpse into another world that was beyond me. Finally I saw the inconsistency of claiming Christ as my "victory", or even asking Christ to give me the "victory", and then battling my way through life as if I still had to do something to earn it. Because if Victory is MINE then there is nothing left to do but praise God for it and live out of it.

There is no higher place in the universe than to be seated with Christ in the heavenly places. Indeed, since Christ is larger than the universe, then to be seated with Christ is to be above and beyond all time and space and dimension as we know it. To be seated with Christ is to overcome as He has overcome. It is entering into His victory. It is not a fight to obtain victory, but a sitting down having already been made victorious. It is rest, but it is not "rest" in the sense that we do nothing. It means we have rested from our labors and now we work according to His power which works in us and through us.

God does not give us victory, God places us into Christ as our Victory. Since we are one with Him, it is nevermore a question of our ability, gifts, talents, or power. Everything we ARE is swallowed up and eclipsed and surpassed by everything HE IS. Today, in Christ, I overcome: but not because I am anything. On the contrary I am nothing. But since I am in Christ, Who is God's Everything, His overcoming is my overcoming. If the Head overcomes, so does the Body which is joined to the Head. If the Vine overcomes, so do the branches which are joined to the Vine. Can you see this? Take the weakest member and put it in union with the Head and they will go the way the Head goes. Take the weakest branch and put it in union with the Vine and it will go the way the Vine goes.

When we begin looking to the Son as the Sum of All Things then we are giving Christ the preeminence. We are entering into the very heart, mind, thought, intent, purpose, and plan of God - that Christ Himself would fill all things, that His glory would be reflected in all things. If our way is a method, then the method gets the attention, and the man who created the method gets the credit, and the people who put the method into practice get the glory. But if my "method" is Christ, then Christ gets all the attention, Christ gets all the credit, and Christ gets all the glory. In this way Christ is magnified, the heart of God is satisfied, and we ourselves are attuned to His Will in Christ.

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