

# The Triumphal Procession

by George Kulp

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*In 'The Triumphal Procession', George Kulp emphasizes that believers are always led to victory through their faith in Christ, who has conquered sin and death.*

**Scripture:** Joshua 5:13, Psalm 60:12, Isaiah 54:17, Romans 8:37, 1 Corinthians 15:57, 2 Corinthians 2:14, Philippians 4:13, Colossians 2:15, 1 John 5:4, Revelation 12:11

**Topics:** "Victory In Christ", "Eternal Peace"

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## Description

George Kulp preaches on the triumphal procession led by Christ, comparing it to a victorious Roman army returning to the city after a conquest. He emphasizes that as believers, we are part of this triumph, always victorious in Christ, regardless of the battles we face. Kulp encourages the congregation to remember their identity in Christ, to endure hardships as good soldiers, and to trust in God's plan for victory. He reminds them that God uses their testimonies to save others and that true success in ministry lies in faithfulness to God, not in visible results. Kulp concludes by pointing to the eternal peace and rest awaiting believers, where they will march triumphantly into the Celestial City.

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## Transcript

2 Cor. 2:14,15, 16 -- "Thanks be unto God, who always leadeth us in triumph and maketh manifest through us the savor of his knowledge in every place. For we are a sweet savor of Christ unto God, in them that are being saved, and in them that are perishing, to the one a savor of death unto death, and to the other a savor of life unto life." Paul was a student and a scholar. He was acquainted with the history of the nations around him, the most prominent, the most powerful, the most intellectual.

He could quote from their poets; he was acquainted with their laws; he knew their history and customs. He had in mind, when he uttered the words of our text, a triumphal Roman procession and entrance. Rome would send forth her armies against those who dared to question her power, her authority, her rights of conquest. They would go out along the Appian Way; they would go by the thousands and tens of thousands, and never give up until the object which they desired to attain had been accomplished.

They would never give up until they had achieved victory. They may have been gone for months, for years; they may have been defeated again and again; their enemies may have been numerous, but Rome was only satisfied with one thing, and that was victory. After they had been gone for months or for years, and victory had been gained, they would come back, and the army would camp outside of the city; then the Roman Senate, grave and reverend seigniors, would vote them a triumphal entrance.

The city would be decorated in holiday attire; seats would be erected for the Senators and other authorities of the government; the city would be decorated with laurel and pine, and the private homes of the citizens would bear evidence of the gratitude of the occupants towards the soldiers. On the day of the entrance, the Roman soldiers would march down through the city; the gates would be thrown open, and the army would come marching. in. The parade would be led by a large band of musicians furnished by Rome.

They would be followed by young men leading animals peculiar to the country that had been conquered. These were decorated with the laurel and with the pine. The horns of the animals that were to be sacrificed would be gilded with gold. After them would come the spoils on floats, the best things the conquered countries could produce. Then after them would come a chariot, a magnificent affair decorated with silver and gold drawn by pure white horses and they would be covered with garlands.

In that chariot would be seated the conquering general, on his head a crown of laurel, which afterward would be replaced by a crown of gold, and in his hand a scepter meaning victory. Then after him would come the prisoners, the common soldiers and the priests. These priests would be swinging golden censers, and in the censers would be fire, upon which was thrown incense, making a sweet savor among the prisoners, a savor of life unto life with some, and of death unto death, for others, while others would by decree of the conqueror be set free.

Then after them would come the soldiers of the conquering army. These soldiers carried with them laurel and pine and also trophies of victory. As they marched along the streets by the stands which had been erected, on which sat the citizens of Rome and the Senators, these latter would proclaim the victories which had been won, and the countries which had been conquered and the battles that had been fought. They would march along until they came to the triumphal arch. Here the soldiers would take to one side the prisoners that had been condemned to death.

After they had reached the Capitol Hill, the crowns would be awarded, and the day would be over. Paul had this in view. He had no idea that we were called to defeat. No man who knows God is ever truly defeated. If a child of God fails, it is because he has not availed himself of the capital which God has provided, because he does not realize the sufficiency of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul never forgot who he was. In writing to some he called himself "a prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ," and in writing to others he called himself "the slave of the Lord Jesus Christ."

He never failed to tell that he belonged to Jesus, and to witness for Him was his delight. As the Psalmist could say a thousand years before him, "The Lord is My God," so Paul could say, "The Lord is MY strength; I can do all things through Christ strengthening me. He would stand before even his enemies and say, "The life which I now live I live by the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ who loved me and gave Himself for me;" "My life is hid with Christ in God." He remembered his relation to Jesus and, because he did, he endured hardness as a good soldier of the Lord.

He had the victory when he was shipwrecked on the deep; he had the victory when facing a howling mob at Ephesus, or in whatever place of peril he might be. He never lost sight of the fact that he belonged to God. He was not marching on to victory, He marched IN victory. Difficulties might gather round him; darkness might settle down upon him, swords might be lifted up against him, but on these he could read, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." Lions might be on every side and roar, but he had the victory.

A roar hurts nobody. I remember going into battle once and the bullets hissed as they passed. and the Major said, "Never mind them, boys, they are by you when you hear them." Oh, it is true, it is possible to live in victory down here right in the midst of the battle. There can be no victories without battles. Hear it, get ready to shout over it, God's Word declares it: Christ is leading us to triumph. Through this old world, Christ is leading a triumphal procession, and He makes them always to triumph in Him.

I like to think about it; there are men and women in the procession who were picked up out of the highest society, some from the lowest. They have all been in the mire and the clay, but as you look at them, you cannot see any mire and clay on them; you cannot see the pit from which they have been dug. They have been washed white. I like to look at them, Paul says, "I am God's branded man," I look back over the procession, and see an Abel who had the testimony that God was pleased with him.

I see a Noah of whom God said that he was perfect in his day and generation. I see an Abraham who left folks and home and went out not knowing where he was going, but he had confidence in the Guide. I see a David who valued his relation to God more than he did his crown, I see a Matthew who sat at the seat of customs, a woman out of whom went a legion of devils. I see folks who were gathered up from all sides. There is John Bunyan, the swearing tinker; Newton, the pirate slave stealer; Jerry McCauley, the river pirate; men whom God picked up from an awful life of sin and used in the salvation of souls.

These are all alike, for they have all been saved through the blood of Jesus Christ, and sing the same song, "Unto Him that loved us and washed us in His most precious blood, unto Him be glory and honor and power and dominion for ever and ever." To be in that triumphal procession is to triumph with Christ.

His victories are ours and our victories are His. Some years ago, Admiral Dewey waited for the dispatch that would tell him war had been declared between this country and Spain. Soon the tidings came, and Dewey sailed around Correggio, went to Manila Bay, engaged the Spanish fleet, and the news came back of the glorious victory in Manila Bay. What did we say? We said, "It was our victory." What did we do? We brought out our flags, put them up, and said, "It is our victory."

I love to look at the conflict which Jesus had with the enemy in the wilderness where He defeated the devil and defeated him for you and me; and at the victory He gained on the cross when He conquered death, and to say He conquered death for you and me. He went down into the grave; He burst the bands asunder, and arose gloriously triumphant. He conquered the grave for you and for me. I look back at that scene when on Olivet He lifted His hands in blessings on His disciples, then ascended to where the angelic hosts of God sang Him welcome home. He led captivity captive, and His victory was ours because He conquered, you and I shall conquer. Because He lives, we also shall live. In this army we are all conquering generals. In the armies here, there are more privates than generals by far, but there are no privates in God's army. We are all KINGS and Priests. There used to be a time when there was a priest here and a priest there, but, bless your hearts, ever since Jesus went up into the Holy of Holies, and sprinkled His blood to make atonement, all the redeemed are kings and priests unto our God, and all bound toward a triumphal entrance. Today I stand my feet on the promises of God, and expect, anticipate, victory. There is no such thing as defeat to the triumphal army of our God. "I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." "They shall come from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God." The devil is a defeated devil. He is a conquered foe, and from every temptation, God will open a way of escape. Praise the Lord! If I am glad for anything it is that as a child of God He hath illuminated me for victory as He has every child of God. Study God's plan; live up to it, and shout the victory in advance. It is a bad thing to

under-rate your enemy, but it is a good thing to know who you are fighting with. The Prince of Orange went out to fight Catholic Europe -- just little Holland. The prime minister said, Your grace, as you are going to fight Europe i would like to ask you, have you made any alliances?" And the Prince replied, "Before I entered this war, I made an alliance, not with the kings of earth, but with the King of heaven and He never lost a battle."

When Judah went out to battle one day, before the battle was begun, the pious King set the Praisers in array that they might be all ready to praise God for the victory that He was going to give, and of which the king was assured. Sure, why not? Has not God said, "This is the victory even our Faith?" God picks out a man here and there to be a leader. Joshua led the hosts of Israel. One morning he got up early and walked out to see the city he was going to attack, to view the situation, look at their weakest point, and he saw a man with a drawn sword in his hand. He went to him and said, "Who art thou? Art thou for us or for our enemies?" And the man spoke and said, "Nay; but as captain of the Lord's hosts am I come." Joshua takes off his shoes, and falls down on his face before him and gets the plan of the battle according to God's order. The Lord said, "Joshua, I have given Jericho into thy hand. You are to march around the city once a day for six days, and on the seventh day march around seven times; then the priests will blow the old rams' horns, and the people will shout." (I am glad there is divine authority for shouting.) On the seventh day they followed the plan; the priests blew, the people shouted, the walls went down, and the saints of God marched in. How? By staying by God's plan.

God has nominated us for victory. The Lord said to Paul, "I will show thee the great things thou must suffer for my name's sake." You remember when Saul was outside the city of Damascus, and a light shone above the brightness of the noon-day's sun, and he cried, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Do you see that man out there, that man with the stripes on His back? Paul, that is you. Do you see that man with his feet in stocks, and his hand manacled? Paul that is you. Do you see that man in the midst of a howling mob?

That is you. Do you see that place way out there in the sea, and the ship going to pieces? Do you see that fellow standing on the deck in the midst of all this? That is you. Do you see that man with his head on the block and the axe all ready for work? That is you. Will you be true? And Paul says, "By the grace of God, I will." But Paul, there is another side to it. "When you are in prison, I will be there with you; when you are in the storm, I will be there, too, and my angels will bring you messages from me.

They may sit down on you, but I will stand by you. Paul will you be true?" "By the grace of God, I will." Beloved, God's plan for you is to lead you always in triumph, and to make manifest through you the knowledge of Christ in all places. What does He mean by this? It is just this: God is going to use you to save other folks. I went the other day to see a dying man. He had been very wicked, and did not know how to trust in Jesus. I tell you what he did turn to in his extremity.

I heard him utter the Masonic cry of distress. God have mercy on the man who has nothing, better than that when he faces the grim monster, for he surely is a lost man! I stood there at his bedside and told him what God had done for me, how God saved me, and that I knew it as well as I knew my own name, and of the joy that came as a result of believing in Jesus. God wants us to encourage other folks by telling them how we were saved by taking God's way, to tell them how we became temples of the Holy Ghost by believing in Jesus, and how he gives us victory and when they hear of real victory they want it, and are encouraged in the warfare.

God bless you, He maketh us to be a blessing to other folks. We are to be a sweet savor unto Christ whether other folks hear or not, whether they are saved or not, whether it is acceptable to them or not. It is acceptable to God, and the man who preaches it, is acceptable with Him. I used to think a sermon was not a success unless the altar was lined, but now I know it is a success whether they come or not. It is my business as a minister of the Gospel, to preach it; the results belong to God.

After I preach, when I go to bed, I say, "Lord I did my best." Whether they come or not, the responsibility is with them. They are free moral agents; they accept or they can reject. I sometimes think that God is going to reward us for the people who ought to come as well as for those who do come. Our labor is owned of God if our eye is single to His glory. If you want to please people, you can do it. There was a time when I stood before an audience on the lecture platform and people laughed one minute and cried the next and the reporter would tell in the papers how they were affected by the lecture: they laughed and cried.

There was no God in it. I had to quit the lecture platform, or be damned. I was an intense prohibitionist and one night, a Sunday night too, I preached a sermon on Prohibition. When I went home God asked me, "If there had been a sinner there who wanted to be saved was there anything said tonight that would help him?" I quit preaching sermons of that kind, and preached to win folks for God.

I was preaching at a church for three weeks one time, and I was most beautifully entertained in the home of a rich farmer. A number of people were saved in that meeting, but this man though under deep conviction went through that meeting without being saved. It was the last Sunday night, and the last meeting was over. My host took the lamp, (there were no electric lights in that country) and he said, "Mr. Kulp I will show you to your room." I said, "No Sir; please put that light down; I have something I want to ask you. A number of people have been saved in this meeting. You have been there every night, and tonight you are still unsaved. I must ask you a question. Is there any thing I could have done that would have won you for God that I have left undone?" He stood there dumbfounded, like a guilty sinner, and at last he said, "Say Elder, if I am lost, it is not your fault. You have done all you could do." I said, "Good night. I am going to bed." And he showed me to my room. Brother, it is worth more than any thing else to be assured of faithfulness to souls, just to know that God is pleased with you. The Psalmist was conscious of his integrity before God. We as ministers of the Gospel are not seeking the plaudits of worms of the dust.

The victory is eternal and continuous. It will not always be battles, bye and bye it will be peace, eternal peace. By and by there will be rest. I can imagine those soldiers of Rome coming back and waiting outside of the City for that triumphal entrance. Tomorrow they are going to the Capitol Hill and get their crowns. Say, beloved, God bless you! The time is coming when the last enemy will have been overcome, the last battle will have been fought, the last grave will have been dug, and when the saints of God of all ages shall march in through the gates of the Celestial City, and Jesus Christ the Captain of our salvation, will stand by the great white throne of the Eternal God, while God Himself will arise to give us welcome, and all the angel choirs of heaven will sing our welcome home. Home at last! Thank God, there is a triumphal entrance for the saints! No matter what may be the difficulties in the way, God will take you through. Go if you go barefooted, and lions be on both sides of the way, go if you have to go between flashing swords. No weapon formed against you shall prosper. Go on, and one day you shall see the King in His beauty, and when I get there if He will only let me kiss His feet, I shall be satisfied through all eternity.

Christ makes us always to triumph -- to triumph over circumstances, over darkness, over enemies, over every thing that can rear its head against us, -- maketh us always to triumph. Beloved, are you farther

along this year than you were last? I am not asking you if you are shouting happy. I am simply asking you, are you in the procession? I know some folks who never shout. I have in my church a little woman in whom I have as much confidence as I have in M. G. Standley, and she never shouts. But I know when she is getting blessed. Her face will get red and her eyes will fill with tears, but I never heard her say "Hallelujah" in all my life, and I was her pastor fifteen years and more. Shouting is good, but oh, there is something way beyond it. Are you in the procession? How many have victory, not twenty years ago, nor twelve, nor five, but NOW? "Brother Kulp, you do not know anything about my trials." Jesus does. Jesus knows all about my trials, Hallelujah! Sister Cowman tells me that over in Japan they have no word for, Glory to GOD, so they say Hallelujah! What word have you got? A brother tells me that he has quiet hallelujahs down in his soul. Have you? Are you conscious of the presence of God with you and in you? I am not talking about when you joined the church, nor when you were baptized, nor when you were blessed last. I am talking about Bible salvation, triumphing in Christ. It is Christ in you the hope of glory. It is just as much your privilege and mine to triumph as it was Paul's. When I was preaching down in Kentucky, an old colored woman would get blessed and shout, and when I was coming away that dear old Auntie came to me and said, "Say, you are my preacher." And I was too. If I can please God and please His people I am glad of it.

One time the Governor of a province in China was taking the Emperor out to see his soldiers. The Governor 'was drawing money from the Emperor for ten thousand soldiers, when he had only five thousand, so he took brooms and dressed them up in soldier clothes. The Emperor reviewed them from a distance. There were only five thousand real soldiers, the rest were broomsticks. Beloved, are you broomsticks or soldiers? Are you real or just professional, just a member of the church? O beloved, it will pay you to get in the procession. His triumph will be your triumph, and the victory will be an eternal victory for you.

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