

# Perils of the Victorious Life

by George Verwer

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*George Verwer discusses the dangers and pitfalls associated with living a victorious Christian life, emphasizing the need for humility and awareness of spiritual perils.*

**Duration:** 27:22

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 10:5

**Topics:** "Victorious Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the potential dangers and pitfalls that young people may face in their spiritual journey. He emphasizes the importance of being realistic and looking at historical examples of youth movements and missionary movements that have ended up on a negative path. The speaker urges young people to take time to reflect, study the word of God, and get involved in their local church. He also highlights the story of God's people in the wilderness, who started off with great victory but eventually faced challenges and fell into disobedience. The speaker warns that many religious zealots who lack proper understanding and preparation may end up knocked out or on a tangent.

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## Transcript

1st Corinthians chapter 10. 1st Corinthians chapter 10. I want to speak to you tonight on the subject of the perils, the perils of the victorious life, the dangers, the pitfalls of the victorious or the abundant life.

I'll never forget reading a little pamphlet by a great man of God named Trumbull on the subject of the perils of the victorious life. And I tell you, when I finished reading that pamphlet, I never thought the same again. I never thought the same again.

In Luke 14 we're told to count the cost. We're told how foolish it is to go forth to war or to build a building without first sitting down and counting the cost. And I believe these days of conference are days of counting the cost.

They're days of seeing what we're going into, of seeing what's involved, and then by faith saying, I believe, as we talked about the other night. And I believe we need to count the cost. Let us read this passage of Scripture.

For over brethren I would not, that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud and all passed through the sea. And were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all

eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink. And did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.

But with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them, as it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. That's twenty-three thousand fell in one day. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of servants.

Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for in samples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed, lest he fall.

There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say. This is a shocking passage of scripture. Really, you wonder how it got in the Bible.

The story of twenty-three thousand people who fell in immorality in one day. Twenty-three thousand fornicators. World's most realistic, straightforward, on top of the table book.

What we've got in front of us. And it's amazing. And this is the story of God's people, who according to verse four, had all drank of that rock.

They had all experienced something of God. They all knew God. And they were pressing on through the wilderness.

And they, well, we all remember when they arrived at the other side of the Red Sea. The songs they sang, the praises they sang. And of course, they were a victorious, a victorious multitude.

Such tremendous, tremendous victory. And then we read about what happened. I'm scared for some of you.

Maybe that's the wrong choice of a word. But I know the destiny of many religious zealots. Many of us have come into this work because we have a zeal for the Lord.

Or at least, we have a zeal. And the destiny of most people who have, or who at some time in their younger years, have this kind of zeal. And get involved in the kind of work that we are getting involved in.

And the destiny is not a pretty one. The majority of us in this room, especially those of you who are young. The majority of us will end up on a tangent.

Will end up at a dead end street. A cul-de-sac, I think they say in France. And I begin to think of it.

And it makes me just say, Lord, Lord, what can I do? You say, well, why do you say that? What a thing to say. What are you, Operation Discouragement? Operation Kick Me Down? No, Operation Realism. Look at history.

Look at other youth movements. Look at other missionary movements. We want to be realistic, don't we? And the reason that many of us will end up knocked out.

The reason many of us will end up on a tangent. Will end up on the shelf. Corinthians 9 is because we didn't realize in advance the perils of this kind of life.

The perils of the victorious life. The perils of giving all to Jesus Christ and coming into that deep war with him. Because, and it's hard to explain this, but it's true.

When a man becomes an intense and a committed man for Christ. It's in a sense like stretching the bowstring. And the more you stretch the bowstring, the greater the impact when it snaps.

And this has been proven again and again. Men who were intense with God, who preached, who won souls, who had zeal, who walked in victory. Down through history, if you read history carefully, have become powerful instruments in the hands of saints.

I don't think there's a need tonight to mention a lot of names. But it's true. And those of you who are older, you know how true it is.

Young person, it might be better for you to go home at the end of this conference. And think about it a little more. That's right.

Might be better for you to go home and get in your local church. And get affiliated in contact with some believers. And think about it some more.

And study the word some more. Listen to the tapes again. Then take a premature step into spiritual combat.

A premature step into this kind of life. Because there are many perils. There are many perils.

And oh my, when I meet people. Like one girl. That's right, she went to India.

She was intense. She was in love with the Lord. She was committed.

No doubt there were areas of weakness. I won't have to tell you anymore. It's not necessary.

Needless to say. Though serving Christ in India. Though being used to win souls.

Though all the rest. Is just far, far, far from the Lord. And when I see or think over it.

I tremble. I realize this is a battle casualty. It might have never happened.

If she hadn't gone. Young person, don't go into OM for a year. Without counting the cost.

Satan is not some kind of jovial fellow. Who is throwing stones in the brook. He knows where his enemies are.

He knows that when a man comes into victory. When a man forsakes all and follows Christ. That he is a potential.

Everything he doesn't want. I like the little booklet, Demons Nightmare. And you just see when this fellow starts to win souls for Christ.

All the demons start to throw everything they had. And they're calling all the plays. Making every attempt to stop this soul winning.

And when you determine in your heart. You're going to win men to Christ. You're going to turn your back on the world.

You're going to give your life to prayer. And to snatching men from the jaws of hell. Satan draws up a master plan to ruin your life.

And drive you into the ground. If you don't believe that. Then you must read a different Bible than I read.

Satan seeketh whom he may devour. Speaking of the wicked, wicked woman in the book of Proverbs. It says, and she seeketh and hunted for the precious life.

That's right. And I know young men that never had a temptation. In the area of morals to any degree.

Until they got active in the work of God. Until they got out in front line combat. And then again, and again, and again.

The devil brought situations. The perils of the victorious life. Better to go home.

Better to wait a year. Better to say, not me Lord, I'm not ready. I admit I can't count the cost.

I admit it, I admit it. I'll go home. Than to go into battle.

Than to forsake all. And to commit your life. Even for a year.

In this kind of. You will without a doubt. If you become desperate and concerned.

About the messages we are giving. You without a doubt will become a primary target of the evil one. Every one of our leaders could come up here and give testimonies.

To subtle stinging darts. That were thrown at them. The perils of the victorious life.

Of course that's why it's so important. To make sure you have the victory. Let me list a few of the perils that have come to my mind.

That I believe can especially hit us in OM. The peril of pride. Pride.

The Bible says that pride cometh before the victory. That's Satan's version. Pride cometh before a fall.

Ooh, I tell you. Pride. Intellectual pride.

Any of it? Here tonight? Bible knowledge pride. Ooh. Very subtle.

Preachers pride. Church planters pride. All kinds of spiritual pride can come in.

When we get into the Bible, we see some victories. We see some men won. We see a church planted.

And all we become puffed up. Pride cometh before a fall. It's deadly.

It's one of the perils of the victorious life. It's one of the perils that comes to us in OM. As we commit ourselves to the task.

As we say, Lord, anywhere, at any time, at any cost. The peril of pride. Subtle.

Terrible. Hideous pride that has ruined many a man of God. Many a man of God.

I want to tell you I've seen how pride has come in. To even men who are used mightily of God. Mightily.

In ministry. In edification. In soul winning.

And yet a subtle form of pride clings and creeps into the heart. And the man does not sin. The man does not sin.

I've seen it again and again all over the world. Spiritual pride. One of the perils of the victorious life.

One of the perils of the man who's living in the heavenlies. That's right. One of the perils of the man who knows the inner fellowship with the Lamb, with the Lord.

Spiritual pride. Beware the leaders. Those of you who have been to the field.

Those of you who have been used. Those of you who have led men to Christ. Those of you who have tasted of spiritual things.

As these people there in the wilderness. Beware of spiritual pride. Beware of any form of pride.

Remember what Amy Carmichael said? If I want any other place on all the earth other than the dust at the foot of the cross, I know nothing of Calvary love. Is that the place that you want tonight? No pride there. No pride there.

Another peril that comes. The peril of a critical spirit. Here we sit.

Day in and day out. And we're getting so much truth. We're hearing so many messages.

Do you realize what a privilege and yet what a responsibility it is to go through a conference like this? With men like Mr. Wurmbrandt coming into our midst. And with others. And giving ourselves to the word.

And to prayer. And to seeing things and hearing things that many people never have the opportunity to see and hear. By the very fact they don't have the time.

They have to work. People can't spend all day in the Bible conferences. That's why I get so thrilled when some of you visitors come night after night.

I realize you're working a lot harder than we are. And oh my, how we can get truth. And instead of having that truth for our own edification and to build up our own spiritual life, we use it to build up a false standard and then we criticize everyone else who's not up on that standard.

It's a terrific peril of this kind of life. And you go back to your church. And right away you want to take all that you learn and you want to cram it down your pastor's throat.

Becoming almost unconscious of the fact that the man who's been living 30 years for Jesus Christ, studying the Bible for 30 years, might have something to teach you. I mean, it's possible, you know. It's possible.

But this critical spirit, this attitude of know-it-all, this attitude of, well, my, I've got a chunk of truth that very few have today. And out we go with our chunks of truth. And most people get indigestion when we try to feed it.

A critical spirit. Are there any of us here that have this critical spirit? You know, any idiot can criticize. Any idiot.

I had a terrible critical spirit. When I went to Bible college, everything I saw I criticized. I could have written Encyclopedia Criticata on that place.

Everything seemed to be going wrong. Everybody was unspiritual. Nobody was winning souls.

Nobody was in honor to pray through the night. Long lists of things I had. The Pharisee list.

I had it on my wall. It's a deadly thing. And it's a peril in O.M. It's a peril in any spiritual movement.

It's a peril in any church that's alive. We have a live church. Look at the dead church down the street.

Oh, my. If they'd only get on the ball. If they'd only see the vision.

If they'd only understand the truth. Maybe it's our lines. Maybe it's our pride.

Maybe it's our critical spirit. Maybe it's our censoriousness that's keeping them from knowing the truth. Beware.

Critical spirit. Tell you, God has broken me. Broke me back then.

Again and again and again. On this point. And I thank Him.

And I praise Him that we can be delivered from all critical spirit. And that's why, praise God, all over the world we've been able to fellowship with other believers and work under them. Do you think that we can't work with people unless they agree with all the little O.M. superstructure, all the little O.M. periphery? It's ridiculous.

Because we must go out to unite with those who believe the basic truths and together with them accomplish the job for God. And as you go back to your church, if you have a critical attitude, if you have a negative attitude, and negative thinking is one of the greatest soul-killing practices, you can engage it. If you are a negative thinker, if you are pessimistic, you see everything from the black side.

Though the light shines in your eye, you only see the dark. Even if you have to close your eyes to do it. If you're this type, you're in for probably a good dose of mental trouble sooner or later.

Oh, that we might have a positive attitude, a joyful attitude. Might we not go into a church and see all that isn't happening? Might we look for something that is happening and believe me, God is working, even in a

place where you think everything is so-called dead, according to your definitions. Just because the pastor doesn't shout, just because the organ doesn't jump off the floor, and they don't divide up in twos for prayer, doesn't mean the place is dead.

But we get our little preconceived ideas, we get our little biases, and we build the little O.M. image, and if you don't come up to the O.M. image, well, well, you know, we don't have to say it, we can speak with our looks, we can speak with our attitudes, we can speak by our silence, we can speak by our non-commitment. There's many ways to speak without opening your mouth, many ways. Oh, may God deliver us from any form of critical spirit.

And may we just refuse, absolutely refuse to criticize any other born-again Christian group. May we just run from it, may we flee from it, may we just stay a mile away. We can speak in authority as God gives grace, and empower against wrong practices, yes, against materialism, against all these things we're talking about.

But we do not have the right to go and to name a specific group, if they are born-again believers and brothers and sisters in Christ, and criticize. If we have some criticism, go to them according to Matthew 18 and tell them, direct. Let us be, you know, and completely delivered from bombarding other Christian groups, and from tearing, comparing.

You know, like the tobacco men. I used to see the ads on television when I was back in the States before I knew the Lord. They'd always take a little cigarette.

Tear and compare, tear and compare. Funny-looking man on the screen, and he'd tear the cigarette down. Oh, look at this.

Tear the other cigarette down. This brand is the best brand. Smoke this brand.

Smoke this brand. And that's just the way some of us are in OM. Any Christian group, oh, another Christian group, I must make sure it's not more alive than OM, because then maybe I'll have to join.

Tear and compare. Oh, my brand is better. Smoke OM.

Oh, how God must just look down on us. And he must be shouting, don't you realize they're my children? They're my sons and daughters also. They're born again.

They're washed in the same blood. Jesus died for them as well as you. How can we allow these divisions to come among true believers? I'm not talking about modernists, Christ deniers, men who don't preach the blood.

I'm talking about people who have basically the same doctrines and the same truths. May God deliver us from tearing and comparing. I don't believe it's a valid thing to join a movement because you think it's the best movement.

If you're in OM because you think OM is the best movement, you are absolutely on the wrong track. And you'll probably help the devil to make us the worst movement. You must come into OM because God has given you a heart linking.

Because God has led you here. Oh, my heart was so warmed by one dear Indian brother, and I tell you some of these Indians, they make us look like we're walking backwards. And we had a big question

session and all the questions were being answered.

You know how we are in the West, we like to answer all the questions. And I talked to this Indian brother who was just new in the world. A wonderful young man.

His wife has sold some of her jewelry to pay his way down to the conference. Dedicated fellow. And I said, Well, how do you feel, brother? Do you feel many of your questions are being answered and you're really feeling, you know, getting into this thing? He just sort of stared at me.

He said, That question is not necessary. He said, He said, Brother George, God called me into this work. Made sense, didn't it? God had called him into the fellowship.

It didn't matter if all of his questions were answered. It didn't matter if he fully understood anything. It didn't matter if we were the best or not the best or anything like that.

God had called him there. He knew he was in God's place. And maybe God will take you out of O.N. and put you into another movement.

Then maybe that movement won't have as much life. Maybe it won't have some of the things you think are so important. But if God puts you there, that's enough.

That's enough. Oh, may God deliver us from the critical spirit, from the judging spirit, from the tearing, comparing spirit. And cause us to follow him in humility, in positive thinking, in praise, in looking at that which is good according to what it says in Philippians chapter 4. Another peril.

The peril of becoming accustomed to spiritual truth. Now I would say this is the greatest danger of any people who go to this assembly. I would say this was your greatest danger.

My, my, the truth that has come across this pulpit. I mean, and the books that have flowed out of here, the printing press has been underneath the place. And what has happened here down through the years, I would say that this was without any doubt a terrific danger.

You've heard so many spiritual messages, so many Christ-exalting messages, so many challenges. You've heard so many missionaries. It must be a terrific battle.

And oh, how we need to just come to the Lord again and again.

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