

Rev. 3:21. the Victory and the Crown

by Horatius Bonar

The Christian's life is a warfare, but with Christ as our Captain and strength, we can overcome and share in His glory, honor, dominion, and power.

Scripture: John 16:33, Romans 7:15-25, Romans 8:37, Ephesians 6:10-18, Philippians 3:14, 1 Timothy 6:12, 2 Timothy 4:7-8, Hebrews 10:32-34, 1 Peter 5:8-9, Revelation 3:21

Topics: "Perseverance in Faith", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

Horatius Bonar emphasizes the Christian life as a continuous battle, highlighting the inner and outer warfare believers face daily against sin, the world, and Satan. He reassures that through Christ, who has already secured victory, believers can overcome their struggles and achieve numerous victories in their lives. The sermon culminates in the promise of a glorious reward for those who persevere, specifically a seat on Christ's throne, symbolizing shared glory and honor with Him. Bonar encourages the faithful to remain steadfast amidst challenges, looking forward to the ultimate triumph and the return of Christ. The message serves as a reminder of the hope and strength found in Christ as believers engage in their spiritual battles.

Transcript

"To him who overcomes will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne."--Revelation 3:21.

Three persons are set before us here--the warrior, the conqueror, the king. Or, putting the figure in another way, we have--1. The battle; 2. The victory; 3. The reward.

I. The BATTLE. Common life in this world is a warfare; and hence even worldly men speak and write of 'the battle of life!' Much more is the Christian's life a warfare. It is an out and out warfare--for all here is hostile. It is called the good fight, the fight of faith, the good warfare.

(1.) It is INNER warfare. The 7th of the Romans is the description of this--the battle between faith and unbelief, between the spirit and the flesh. This war is private, solitary--with no eye upon the warrior; fought in the closet, on the knees, with the Bible as his weapon; not uncertainly, nor as one that beats the air.

(2.) It is OUTER warfare. The enemies are legion; the world, with all its enmities, snares, pomps, pleasures; Satan, with his principalities and powers--both of these in combination hating, persecuting,

attacking. This is 'the great fight of afflictions' (Hebrews 10:32). Thus it is so far public--before men; 'we are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men.'

(3.) It is DAILY warfare. It is not one great battle, but a multitude of battles--constant warring--there is no intermission and no discharge in this war. The enemy wearies not, ceases not--nor must we. We wake to warfare each morning, and go out to warfare each day. Everywhere we find the enemy posted, sometimes openly, sometimes in ambush. The conflict is life-long, and it is daily.

(4.) It is warfare not fought with human weapons. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal. We do not war after the flesh. It is in divine strength; with the sword of the Spirit; clothed in the whole armor of God. It begins when we begin when we believe. Faith, instead of being the end, is the beginning of conflict; ours is 'the good (or 'glorious') fight of faith.'

(5.) It is warfare in which we are sharers with Christ. He first fought the good fight, as the Captain of our salvation--the Lord strong and mighty--the Lord mighty in battle. The inner warfare indeed was not His, but all the rest was. He fought, when here, the same battles as we; and it is into His warfare that we are called to enter. His battle on earth was ours; and our battle now on earth is His. Let us fight it with this remembrance and encouragement. We fight along with Paul, but we also fight along with Christ.

II. The VICTORY. Here it is spoken of as one great final victory, but in reality it is a multitude. As are the battles, so are the victories. There may be occasional defeats--wounds--losing ground; but the tide of victory rolls steadily onward. Inner and outer warfare ends in victory--we are made more than conquerors through Him who loved us. He fought and overcame, and He leads us on to victory--'Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.' The brunt of the battle fell on Him--He routed the army, and it is with a 'conquered foe' that we have to do. Sin, hell, death, the world, the devil, He has vanquished, and He is now leading us on to the same victory.

Seven times in these chapters do we hear the glorious words, 'To him who overcomes.' Each Church had its battle and its victory--even Laodicea--so has each individual. No one can fight another's battle--or win another's victory. Each fights and wins for himself. Fight then, and win; overcome daily; nor faint until the long series of victories is summed up in the one great final triumph--the triumph of each saint, and of the whole Church of God.

III. The REWARD. In these epistles seven rewards are promised--a peculiar reward to each. To Ephesus, the tree of life; to Smyrna, deliverance from the second death; to Pergamos, the hidden manna and the white stone; to Thyatira, dominion and the morning-star; to Sardis, the white clothing; to Philadelphia, to be a pillar and to receive the new name; to Laodicea, a seat on Christ's throne--each according to his peculiar battle and victory. In Laodicea there are warriors and conquerors--few, perhaps, but still some whose faith remained steadfast, raising them out of lukewarmness and worldliness. To these there is a brilliant hope presented--a seat upon Christ's throne. In Laodicean times, and a Laodicean Church, be faithful and true!

(1.) A throne. Not salvation merely, or life, but higher than these--glory, honor, dominion and power. From being the lowest here, they are made the highest hereafter. Even out of Laodicea there come God's kings and priests--heirs of the throne!

(2.) Christ's throne. He has a seat on the Father's throne as the reward of His victory; we have a seat on His as the reward of our overcoming. He shares with us His crown and throne. We are made 'joint-heirs'

with Him. He is on the Father's throne just now; He will shortly be upon His own. To a seat with Him we look forward; and, cheered by this hope, we fight the good fight of faith. We are sharers or 'partakers with Christ' in all things. We share His battles, His victories, His rewards--His cross, and His crown.

Let us look forward then, as well as backward. All the promises to these Churches bid us look forward. Amid toil, conflict, weariness, sorrow, backsliding, we have a hope! Let us hold it fast; let us use it constantly. In the midst of Laodicean lukewarmness here is something to stimulate and rouse! When our hands hang down, let us think upon the throne--the throne and Him who gives it--the throne and Him who sits on it, and shares it with us. It will be glorious enough to compensate for hardship and conflict now! It may soon be here--we know not how soon. Events are rushing on--Antichrist is waxing strong; Israel is preparing to return; wars are rising; departures from the faith are multiplying; the gospel is going forth as a witness. The King is on His way. Behold, the Bridegroom comes! Let us watch and be ready.

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