

# (Secrets of Victory) 9. God Controls Our Circumstances

by Zac Poonen

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*Our victory is entirely dependent on God's grace, which can be ours in every situation if we humble ourselves.*

**Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 5:18

**Topics:** "Sovereignty Of God", "Spiritual Dignity"

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## Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of giving thanks in all circumstances, as it is God's will for us in Christ Jesus, urging believers to offer thanksgivings for all people. By recognizing the absolute sovereignty of God, we can find meaning in our thanksgiving. Despite facing betrayal, denial, and unjust treatment, Jesus exemplified spiritual dignity and love, attributing all authority to God. Just as Jesus walked with spiritual dignity, believers are called to testify a good confession before the world, keeping God's commandments without reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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## Transcript

God, even the Father" (Ephesians 5:20). In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). First of all then I urge that thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men" (1 Timothy 2:1).

We can do this meaningfully, only when we have seen the absolute sovereignty of God.

God cares for us as He cared for Jesus. The same grace that helped Jesus, the same power of the Holy Spirit that enabled Him to overcome, is now available to us.

Judas betrayed Jesus, Peter denied Him, His disciples forsook Him, the multitude turned against Him, He was unjustly tried, falsely accused and led out to be crucified. And yet on the way to Calvary, He could turn to the multitude and say, "Stop weeping for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children" (Luke 23:28).

There was not a trace of self-pity in Him.

He knew that the cup that He was drinking had been sent by His Father. Judas Iscariot was only the messenger who had brought the cup. And so He could look at Judas with love and call him "Friend." You won't be able to do that, unless you have faith in the total sovereignty of God.

Jesus told Pilate,

You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above (John 19:11).

It was this assurance that enabled Jesus to walk through this world as a king, with dignity. He lived with that spiritual dignity and died with that same spiritual dignity.

Now we are called to "walk as Jesus walked." As He "testified a good confession" before Pilate, we too are to make our confession before an unbelieving generation.

Paul tells Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:13, 14

I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As we have already seen, the ultimate good that God is working towards is to make us partakers of His nature, of His holiness. In His marvellous sovereignty, He makes use of everyone who crosses our path, to fulfil His purpose. That's why we can give thanks for ALL men.

Why does God allow that troublesome neighbour, that nagging relative and that tyrannical boss to keep harassing you? He can easily remove them elsewhere or even take away their lives, and thus make life more comfortable for you. But He doesn't do any such thing. Why? Because He wants to use them to sanctify you. He may even want to save them - through you.

Praise God that our victory is never dependent on the type of people we are surrounded by - whether in our home or office or anywhere else. Our victory is entirely dependent on God's grace. And that grace can be ours in every situation, if we humble ourselves.

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