

Triumphant in Christ

RADIO MESSAGE BY DWIGHT PORTER, D.D

"Now thanks be unto God, which ALWAYS CAUSES US TO TRIUMPH IN CHRIST, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place"

II Corinthians 2:14

STOP to think with me! Suppose a man came from a far country, found a New Testament and studied it on a desert island for five years. He arrives in America and begins his search for a local church that matched the ones revealed in the Book of Acts, demonstrating the teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostolic authority of the epistles. I wonder! - how long would it take to find such a church filled with people who live in the thrill of sins forgiven, with complete victory over Satan, sin, flesh, and the world about them?

Why so many Christians living far short of the divine standard? They are not sinners, but are dominated by the worldly system that surrounds them, living on the basis of their emotions, walking by sight, waiting for victory sometime down the road of life. Why do we know so many defeated Christians instead of the vibrant, living, rejoicing, and obedient saints?

Why so few claiming the absolute victories stated in the following scriptures? "Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37). "For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Romans 6:14). "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (II Corinthians 12:9). Note in our above text, "ALWAYS CAUSETH US TO TRIUMPH IN CHRIST."

There is provision for every Christian to live in complete victory over all elements of the flesh and sin day by day. Interested in God's declaration for this to be a reality in your life? There are many religious leaders who tolerate sin within the lives of Christians. *After all, we sin by word, thought and deed everyday.* Since when? *We have the old nature and must be tolerant of it.* How dare we arrive at that conclusion when God states in Romans 6:6: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." "What shall we say then? Shall we CONTINUE IN SIN, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6: 1, 2)

Complete Victory

"But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:57). Here is victory already established. It does not depend upon time or space or when or what or where. Our victory has already been purchased and provided for us, let come what may! Note the terms of our possession. This victory is based upon its being a gift of God's grace through His Son. We do not arrive at this position with clenched fists, using self-discipline to obey. It is victory assured, complete and final. Let's believe God's infallible Word concerning it.

Let's appropriate that which Christ provided for us at Calvary. Remember, in Romans 6:2 we are taught that being dead to sin, we no longer live under its influence or power. The reason we Christians no longer serve sin is that our old man is crucified with Christ. Crucifixion means death. "For he that is dead is freed from sin" (Romans 6:7).

Christ died for and unto our sins. With Him at Calvary, we also died to sin. "For in that he died, he died UNTO sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise RECKON also yourselves to be dead indeed UNTO sin, but alive UNTO God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness UNTO sin, but, yield yourselves UNTO God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Romans 6:10,11,13). When God refers to our members, He means the literal members of our body. It is our body where the Holy Spirit dwells and empowers us to obey His commands. Here is one of them, for example: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye PRESENT YOUR BODIES (members) a living sacrifice (death), holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1). Have you done this? Had a funeral of reckoning? Are you so identified with Christ's death that you are dead to sin and this world? Hear Paul's personal testimony about this matter: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified (dead) unto me, and I unto the world" (Galatians 6:14). (This was my father's life verse.) The secret of being dead to sin is reckoning on it (Romans 6:11). Do it as often as you must! The more you practice this identification with Christ at the cross. The less sin will trouble you.

"We are now alive, and what a glorious way to live. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism UNTO death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE" (Romans 6:4). We will! "Therefore if any man be IN Christ, he is anew creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5: 17). No such change within your life? Then you are yet in your sins, lost and under the damnation of God, in rebellion against Him, despite His provision of grace in and through His Son FOR YOU. When are you going to be honest about your personal sin and repent before God?

Many Christians tolerate sin between regeneration and sanctification. Others grant the same privilege by classifying themselves as carnal Christians, which is an unscriptural term. Others condone sin until filled with the Spirit. Listen to the voice of the crowd that says you can meet Jesus Christ as Savior and later on, sinning in the meantime, accept Him as Lord? The repentant Philippian jailer was told to believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST. (You ought to read my free printed message, "JUST BELIEVE IN JESUS.") God's Word tolerates NO sin for the Christian. Of course we can sin, but we will not *continue* in it (I John 1:8, 9; 3:9, 10).

We Are Overcomers!

Many have the attitude that we must fight to overcome.

They talk about the crises of the deeper life. Why such crises? Christians do not struggle toward a hard, well-fought victory. The Christian stands in a victory already consummated. Christ speaks in John 16:33: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD." John says the same of us in I John 2: 14: "... because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and WE HAVE OVERCOME THE WICKED ONE."

The child of God does not practice sin and is not dictated to by the devil. "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not (continuous action); but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not" (I John 5: 18). (You should write for my free booklet, "GIVE NO PLACE TO THE DEVIL. ") If we overcome the world, then it holds no attraction with all its solicitation to influence us. The moment we believe Christ to be who He claims to be, and do what He promised, we are overcomers. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (I John 5:4, 5) In our identification with Christ, this matter of victory is a present reality. We bask in the glow of being an overcomer, no longer victimized by the devil, who is already a defeated foe, a matter which was eternally settled at Calvary and by the way of a tomb left empty. Our victory is not the consequence of clenched fists and a set jaw. "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37).

A New Relationship

No longer are we important! Already we learned that our old man was crucified with Christ "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet NOT I, BUT CHRIST liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh Hove by the faith of the Son of God (His faithfulness), who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). We are now dead to sin. When we reckon on this fact, our death is in the aorist tense (Greek). It is a finished Transaction, once and for all. On the cross, the Son of God stated a completed Transaction when He declared, "It is finished!"

We have experience a funeral with the flesh at Calvary. "And they that are Christ's have crucified (put to death) the flesh" (Galatians 5:24). Our present position as children of God is, if dead to sin, how can we live in it any longer? (Romans 6:2) "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but UNTO him which died for them. and rose again" (II Corinthians 5:15).

The Walk of Victory

Allow me to give you a few patterns of activity:

1. Daily we walk in the Spirit as we feast upon God's Word. Read and dwell upon His greatness and willingness to empower us to be a shining light in a dark world. Give priority to this admonition by establishing a time for this meditation every day.

2. Let us keep our knees bent in daily prayer, when we

talk everything over with the Lord. Make it an opportunity to thank Him for daily provision and leadership. This personal intimacy is the most important relationship of our life. His Spirit is with us always, so we depend upon Him for understanding of His Word and for the wisdom to effectually live for His glory.

3. He has given us a job to do. We are to witness to a world that desperately needs His forgiveness. Let us live the gospel as well as proclaim it to others. We are to be demonstrators. We are "His workmanship" according to Ephesians 2. Many will first come in contact with the demonstration of God's power within human beings. May we be a genuine testimony of His greatness.

4. A holy God cannot bless an individual under a foreign control. Not willing to force His intentions, we must joyfully obey all His directions. What a privilege to please the One Who died for us. (All of His directions are in the Bible.) May God help us to be doers as well as hearers of His Word (James 1:22).

At the close of this message, again I remind you that the Christian does not struggle toward a possible victory. NO! NEVER! He proceeds from a victory over self and sin already achieved. We always are triumphant on the basis of the victory already consummated in Christ. You do not struggle to obtain a place you almost never quite reach in spite of your prayers, tears, effort, consecration, or whatever you do. You turn to Calvary where you died in Christ and arose with Him in radiant power and glory, evidenced within your daily life. "For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3).

Do not spend your time *trying* to die to sin. Your power is in the living Christ. Declare complete victory over sin on the basis of Christ's accomplishments in your behalf. The world is in deep need of rubbing shoulders with Christians who are radiant, rejoicing and triumphant. That word "ALWAYS" includes every day during the rest of your life.

Be sure to remember that OUR TRIUMPH is because of our position IN CHRIST. The faith demanded is supplied for us by God through His Word. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10: 17).



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