

How to get the Victory - win the mind game - and know true life fulfilment

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Date: 03 November 2019

[0:00] Let's go to the Word of God to 2 Corinthians 4 and we'll just get things ready.! How to get victory.

How to get victory. How to get victory. How to get victory.

Satan's target is your mind. We talked along some themes this morning along that line. Satan's target is your mind. He's after your mind.

He plays mind games with people. And the Bible tells us that many are blinded under his mind control. We see that in 2 Corinthians 4 verse 4.

2 Corinthians 4 verse 4 it says, Of the lost in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God should shine unto them.

[1:30] Many are blinded. It's always been the devil's strategy of deception. He's the father of lies. And we know that he actually blinds the minds of those who believe not.

They don't even realise it but they're blinded in their minds. And it's like Satan offers this gift, beautifully wrapped, presented so perfectly, deceptively, this sweet wrappings of his deception, of poison really.

And that's why we must be alert to his workings. And biblical Christianity, true Bible Christians, we that are saved are constantly under his attack.

We're in his target sights. The cross hairs on us as it were, the laser pointing at us as it were. We are under his attack. And so how can we know victory in such a setting?

How can we win the battle that is certainly in hand? How can we overcome sin and be a victorious Christian? There's certainly three things we ought to be doing.

[2:36] I put to you as a man, as a woman of God. And we're going to go to 1 Timothy 6. But firstly, 2 Timothy 2. There's three things that we ought to do, three actions we ought to take, three ways to get out of trouble and into the will of God, and three strategies that can help us to be fit for the master's use.

That ought to be, I trust, our endeavour, our desire to be meat for the master to use. Ready, fit, prepared for his using.

And one thing is clear, point number one, here's the number one point that we ought to do to get victory, is we ought to flee. Flee.

And we're going to spend some time thinking about this. The Lord commands us to take evasive action, evasive action, to flee. He calls us to depart from evil.

We see that in 2 Timothy 2 from verse 19 through 26. It talks through, Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.

[3:50] And let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. Paul relates here how there's various vessels. He talks about various containers.

And that's you and me. We're containers. We are receptacles. We are vessels. We are jars of clay. Vessels of clay. And in verse 20 it goes on, But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour and some to dishonour.

Verse 21, Paul writes here to Timothy and he tells him some pointers, some essentials.

He tells him how we all can be a vessel unto honour. Or we can be a vessel unto dishonour. A dishonourable vessel. The big question is for each one here, what kind of vessel will we be?

The vessel unto honour. Or in that being our endeavour, our aspiration to be a vessel that God would honour, that we can be honouring unto our God, bring him honour with our lives, set apart, sanctified, fit for the master to use, to be in his service, his employ, to be prepared unto every good work.

[5:31] What would that be? Our aspiration, our heart's desire. If you name the name of Christ, if you reckon yourself a Christian, then depart from evil.

Flee. It says we should depart from evil. Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from evil. Flee, he says. Paul urges Timothy to flee. Flee some things.

You know, the Lord said to the Pharisees, Who's warned you to flee from the wrath to come? And that's good advice is to flee from the wrath to come. There's some things to flee from.

And then there's some things to follow. But firstly, what are we to flee? What are we to flee from? We see it reads on in 2 Timothy 2, verse 22 now. It says, flee also youthful lusts.

Something to flee. Flee also youthful lusts. But follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord with a pure heart.

[6:29] Notice here there's a call here of a purifying of these vessels to be vessels unto honour, that they be fit vessels, they are to be clean vessels. There is to be a purging, a purifying, a working of purity.

It says that they that are his will call on him out of a pure heart. Wow, how do we get that? When we know the heart is deceitful, desperately wicked, thankfully there's a great heart surgeon who performs an amazing supernatural heart replacement operation in the heart and soul of people who trust him.

God can give us a brand new heart. And it says that we can call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Likewise, Paul says to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4.12, He says something alike to that as he's still in the context talking to Timothy, just a few chapters earlier, 1 Timothy 4.12, Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Paul's telling Timothy, look, you're a young man, but let no man despise thy youth. A person's age is not necessarily a limitation.

Amen? Let no man despise thy youth. Young man, young woman, God can use you just as mightily and more so essentially than an older man or woman.

[8:06] And we know that what matters is that we'd be an example of the believers and we see here 1 Timothy 4.12, in word, in conversation or conduct of life, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

We know that our world largely and sadly applauds and parades that which is defiled. We see that all the time, don't we?

We're given what is defiled and we're told that it's clean. It's evil and they're calling it good. And for us that are saved, what does the world say that Christians, when they're put on the media or talked about, it's often those that are pure and unsoiled are often mocked and ridiculed as being wowsers, old-fashioned, out of touch.

But God commends us and commands us to stand tall, to be vessels unto honour, that rather than having ungodly lusts steering us, that we'll have godly desires energising us and that they be what motivates us.

Godly desires. And as believers, we're told to steer clear of what is polluted and dishonouring of our God. Paul tells Timothy, flee.

[9:28] He says, flee youthful lusts. Where are those people who will call upon the Lord with a purity of heart, that we'll aspire to that? Where are those who will be, as Paul asked of Timothy, to be an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity?

What an amazing list of qualities to aspire to. Purity, that's a lacking quality, isn't it? Purity, where's that gone? You know, you used to think children had some purity, but you hear and read of what children are exposed to these days.

They lose their purity very young these days. God would have you to be an example, people of God, an example to the believers, that you would be a vessel unto honour, to set a godly example

as a believer in your word, in your conversation, your conduct, your charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

How do we get that purity? It's almost like purity is so uncommon these days, isn't it? Purity. We need a cleansing, we need a purging, we need a washing, a removal, a separation, to be a vessel unto honour.

Think of that. Sanctified, declared holy, fit for the Master's use. Now when you go to take a drink of something, you think, oh, that glass, that glass does look clean.

[11:01] That water does look clear. Thanks for that, whoever put that there. You know, just as well, isn't it? If I'd have looked to that and saw, oh, there's one of those mozzly wrigglers in it, or there's some, out of our tap lately we had some dirty water and Julie was, you know, it really stood out to us how the water was defiled.

But think about that. A vessel unto honour, it should be clean, shouldn't it? A vessel unto honour should be that which is clean, purged, a clean vessel for his use. Oh, and it tastes good too.

A clean vessel. And the Lord tells of a purging, of a purging. And it's interesting in John 15, there's this same reference to purging, and it's about a plant being purged.

In John 15, the Lord says, I am the vine, the true vine, you are the branches. He says, verse 2, John 15, So as with a plant, it needs purging or pruning.

And by this purging, it becomes a more fruitful plant. You know, I had this happen lately in my garden. I had this overgrown, bushy plant that was largely dead leaves and dead branches that looked like it was too far gone.

[12:31] And it needed a radical haircut, this branch, this bushy plant. And I got out of the garden shears and hacked away, and I always have to do that when Julie's not looking because she hates me cutting plants too savagely, but this plant really needed it.

And now I can see that plant, and it's blooming, it's blossoming, and there's lots of fresh green shoots. The purging worked. Now we might face those times, don't we, brother, sister?

Face times of testing, of difficulty, of loss, of hard things happening. And we can face those times where the master gardener comes, and we can feel like a plant getting pruned.

Ouch! Snip, snip, snip, chop, chop. You know, it hurts sometimes. But the master gardener is doing a work in that purging process.

When we can encounter those difficulties at times, it's easy for us to ask, why is God doing this? Why is this happening to me? The answer, that it may bring forth much more fruit.

[13:37] That he may bring forth more fruit. And Paul says, he says flee. He says flee youthful lusts. He also says 1 Corinthians 6.18, flee fornication.

1 Corinthians 6.18, flee fornication. Paul says flee, sexually or immorality. In other words, don't linger. Flee.

Now, when Lot exited from Sodom, his wife lingered. You know, the angels had to virtually drag them out, take them by the hand and get them out in time.

But Lot's wife lingered. Don't be like Lot's wife. Flee. Don't look back. Flee. Run for your life. Don't hang around immorality.

When immorality threatens, don't get comfortable there. Don't get at ease there. Run for your life. I could picture it as if you had to flee away from some ferocious man-eating beast.

[14:39] Now, I remember as a young child that we were out as a family in a lion park. It was a wildlife safari park. And there was animals on the loose, these wild animals.

And we were in this little minivan, this little minibuss van. And we had the windows open, just peering out, looking and enjoying the view. I think I was probably not even 10.

But, oh no, she might have been 15. But whatever the case, I was still quite a young person. And suddenly, out of the blue, we heard this, there was something chasing us.

And I looked out the window, and there was this camel frothing at the mouth. It was like foaming at the mouth. And it was making all these big noises. And it was lunging towards the open window in this minivan that we were driving and trying to poke his head into the window.

And my dad had to step on the gas and flee. Now, that's a picture of flee. That's how it should be like, isn't it? When we talk about fleeing. And I can also imagine another one that comes to mind, talking about, to try to picture this truth of fleeing, is how it's been like for me lately when I run away from a bee.

[15:52] You know? I thought, even I just get the sound of a blue bottle or something. Oh, no. It wasn't a bee. But no, when the bee comes near, you hear that buzzing.

And you hear the high-pitched buzz as it's getting close to you. And you think, how close is that to my skin? And I know it's time to run when I hear the sound of a bee. I don't just stand there. I run. I flee. And I read that a bee can fly as fast as 28 kilometers an hour. So I run as fast as I can and hope that it's a slow bee.

You know? We've got to flee sometimes, don't we? I'm just trying to put it in a picture form. And it's a bit of a light-hearted thing. But the reality is we should flee from some things. We should run away from those things that are going to hurt us.

When faced with youthful lusts, flee. Sinful lusts, flee. Rather, have godly desires. Exchange it for that. And when faced with that, when faced with fornication, flee.

[16:54] Put your shoes on, your running shoes on. Run the race with patience. Run away from the wrong. And run towards the right. He also says in 1 Corinthians 10, 14, Paul says, flee from idolatry.

Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. 1 Corinthians 10, 14. Our world is given over to idols. Now, we don't have so much temples with statues and incense burning on every corner as in some countries.

But Australia is just as idolatrous as any other nation. And it's been said that anything you're more devoted to than God has the potential to be an idol.

Wow, what could that be? Answer that for yourself. What is it that you're more devoted to than God? That could be a potential idol in your life.

And so we have to see them for what they are. False gods. False gods. We don't worship at their altar. We refuse to worship there. We refuse that. We flee from that. We flee from idolatry.

[18:02] We recognize false gods. And we don't entertain the idea of joining in with the idol worshipers. Paul also tells Timothy, he talks about how to be a man of God.

And we'll spend a little bit more time on this text here. 1 Timothy 6. If you'd like to turn there. 1 Timothy 6 from verse 10. 1 Timothy 6 verse 10.

It starts from, For the love of money is the root of all evil, which some have been coveted after, have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

They've coveted after, they've erred from the faith, they've pierced themselves through with many sorrows. The love of money is the root of all evil. But thou, O man of God, flee these things.

Here he says that same word again. And follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Lay hold on eternal life, whereunto they are also called, and has professed a good profession before many witnesses.

[19:15] How to get victory. Paul says flee. He gives this another negative item to get away from. To run away from like you'd run away from a bee, from a ferocious animal.

Flee from the love of money. And here in the middle of verse 11, Paul says a further thing to do to get victory. He says follow. Notice this one, follow.

The second thing I put to you as a way to get victory is to follow. He says follow, pursue, chase after this. What is it? Righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Careful what you follow. Amen. Careful what you follow. Now some people say I follow this team, I follow that. I follow this star or this hero, this movie or this whatever.

They follow things. We can follow things. Some things we can follow that are harmless. I remember an old childhood saying. I don't know if anyone had this saying.

[20:19] It was a child growing up, but maybe it's a Manchester kind of saying. But it says, did you hear what thought did? Anyone heard this one?

You hear what thought did? Yeah. He thought he followed a muck cart and thought it was a wedding. You know, you had that sense. He thought it was something that it was absolutely not. And we can follow things that we think are right or we think are true, we think are going to be helpful, but we don't always realise where it's going, what it is.

And it matters what we follow, who we follow, we become like them. Because when we follow someone, something, it's going somewhere. What is it that it's leading us to?

What are we aiming for? What is it we're running after? We've got to get what we follow right. Do we run towards things that, as we'd run after something, we'd really want to have?

You know, another example of late, I was in a large building and there was a bird inside the building and it got caught inside the building and it was trapped inside the building.

[21:24] And I had to run hard after it to try to capture it, to throw something over it, to capture it, to take it and release it outside the building. I had to pursue it. And this is the same sense here of things we ought to pursue as Christians.

To get victory, there's some things we should pursue. This is the sense of this word follow. It's an active pursuit. Do we intentionally want these things? What does he say? Righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Do we put these godly aspirations, desires as things that we would seek after, we would chase after, that we'd want to have in front of mind in our hearts and lives?

Do we run after these things? I was thinking likewise, I know you might be able to relate to this at times I've had to catch public transport. And I know sometimes you know the bus is coming at a certain time and you leave it to the last minute and you're running along, breaking a sweat.

I'm sure there's some bus drivers who can relate to this. And you know, you've got to run and run like mad to get there at the appointed time because you don't want to miss that bus. You pursue it. And hopefully you make it in time.

[22:37] That's the sense of it here. These are things we should follow after, we should pursue. Righteousness, Godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. They're qualities to nurture, to foster, to aspire to, to cultivate.

They're like to the fruit of the spirit really, aren't they? It's God's spirit making that happen. These qualities that he puts in our lives. Think again.

Righteousness, Godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Are these qualities in our life? Are they the standards of our work? Are they the motto, our life motto, our code of conduct?

Are these the qualities we want to be known for? When we're in the box, in the ground, when there's a tombstone, an epitaph, is there some legacy that you'll be known for these qualities? That you'll have followed these things?

Righteousness, Godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. That you'll be known for that. That's a hallmark of who you are. Notice these things, they're vertical as well as horizontal, aren't they?

[23:40] How we treat people. Righteousness, Godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. They're vertical and they're horizontal. How we deal with man as well as God. And Paul says, follow these things.

And thirdly, just the third point here really is a fight. In this passage really of Paul writing to Timothy in 1 Timothy 6, he says, fight.

We have a faith worth fighting for. We have a faith worth contending for. Our Lord calls us to war. And it seems like for many they've lost the fighting spirit.

They've capitulated. They've quit fighting and they get occupied with some other interest. It's almost like they're fraternising with the enemy. We're called to fight. We're called to a contending earnestly. Now the word calls us to be knit together in love. Knit together in love. But some saints are just caught up in the knit picking. We're not about knit picking. We're meant to be knit together in love.

[24:41] We're meant to be a fighting force unified. An armed force working together under his command. Reporting to the commander in chief of our soul, the Lord Jesus Christ, to be a fighting force armed for conflict, ready for battle, ready for the combat.

And we ought to be a battle ready people. So how so? How can we be such? It calls for a taking up of arms. A putting on of the whole armour of God. A mobilisation of the army of God.

And we're called to warfare. We're called to a fight. Sometimes we can whimper out when we're faced with a conflict situation.

There's a struggle here on our hands. And we have a fight on our hands. And meantime the enemy's propaganda machine is pumping messages, anti-God messages and confusing signals all the time towards us.

You know in times of warfare the fake news of the enemy would report things that skew the news and the information such that it looks like you're losing.

[25:47] And the enemy we're fighting is the master of camouflage. He has been since the Garden of Eden. And what are we to do? There can be no middle ground. We can't just settle and take it easy.

We can't just kick back and take the easy chair, the comfortable Christianity or the do nothing attitude. We're called to a fight. He says fight. And we're called to a separation.

It's stark. It's severe. It's decisive. Some will not understand us when we make a stand. Some will say you're being too strict. You're being too judgmental. You're being too drastic here.

You know we can just all get together and be just link arms and sing kumbaya. But there can be no mixture with that. We can't join party to that.

We must make a definite break. And we see that for example 2 Corinthians 6 people would know verse 14. Be not ye unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

[26:45] For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? What communion hath light with darkness? What concord hath Christ with Belial? The devil. What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

You know a believer and an unbeliever it's chalk and cheese. They're polar opposites. There can be no middle ground here. No pussyfooting around. Verse 16. 2 Corinthians 6.

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God. As God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them and I will be their God and they shall be my people.

Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you and I will be a father unto you. And you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Now there's a cutting off here. There's a separation. It's black and white. It's the enemy's forces and there's God's army, as it were, to use a militaristic kind of language here.

[27:46] And really that is the reality for us. This is not just language. This is the reality. And so there's got to be a cutting off, a separation, a purging, a cleansing, a cleaning.

There's got to be a fleeing from evil. There's got to be a following and there's got to be a fight. And we can know the living God and know, as we know him, we cannot accommodate evil.

Doubtful actions are sinful. If it's doubtful, don't. If in doubt, don't. It's a good motto, isn't it?

We have a fight on our hands. And Paul says in part, in Philippians 1.17, I'm set for the defence of the gospel. This word, we ought to defend the truth.

We ought to stand fast for it. Hold it forth. Hold it fast. And hold it to communicate. To impart it. Who is on the Lord's side?

[28:47] We must follow the divine marching orders. There's that sense where the standing orders are here. To use military language, these are the directions from HQ.

And we ought to take it as read. That God's word be our standard, our code of conduct. And that the truth, as we see it, many are drifting away from the truth.

We ought to determine to be vessels of honour. Will we be such? Vessels of honour. Determined to honour the Lord. Friends, just to recap where we've travelled here and ideally sharpen it down to what the message is here tonight.

We are under attack. War has been declared. We are in a battle. And we will be in that battle till our last breath. We are under attack.

And what are we to do? The Lord calls us to depart from evil. To flee. That we be aspiring to be a vessel unto honour. Fit for the Master to use. Sanctified. A vessel unto honour.

[29:59] Set apart for him. Prepared for his use. Prepared for every good work. We're living in days of defilement. And God's looking for a people.

He calls out for his name. A people made pure. And that's not to say we can claim any credit for that. It's only by his grace he cleanses our hearts and makes us right with him. That we ought to be such a people. That we'll be such a people that we'll call out unto our Lord out of a pure heart. That God can purify our hearts by faith. And when the Master Gardener comes and he cuts and he prunes.

It's part of that purging. It's a cleansing. And for our good that we may bring forth much fruit. So don't shy away from his hand. When we have those times of the snip snip.

The cutting of the shears of the Master Gardener. That we should take it from his hand. That he's purging us. He's cleansing us. He's making us to be a more fruitful Christian. Paul says some things very clearly.

[31:00] Here in these verses we've read. He says flee youthful lust. Those desires that are ungodly. Flee fornication. Don't take the pathway of immorality. Put your running shoes on.

Flee from the idols of this world. The false gods that are all around us. Flee from the love of money. Don't fall into that trap. Flee as you would try and outrun a bee.

Run for your life. And we can aspire to be a godly example. A vessel unto honour. Such that we'll follow some things. That we'll aspire to have an example. We'll set an example for others.

In word. In conversation. In charity. In spirit. In faith. In purity. And what's more we'll follow. We'll follow after some things. We'll follow after righteousness.

Godliness. Faith. Love. Patience. Meekness. We'll chase after this. As we chase after that bus. We'll chase after these things. We'll follow after these things.

[31:58] We'll make these things our aspiration. That will make them our life ambition. To be more like our master. And he's called us to a fight. To fight the good fight of the faith. He says fight the good fight of the faith.

Don't fraternise with the enemy. There's got to be a separation. Now of course we want to reach out to people. But there's a sense where we are to fight the good fight of the faith. Lay hold on eternal life.

Whereunto thou art also called. And hast professed a good profession. Before many witnesses.

One day it will be the final roll call. As it were. Or maybe the first roll call.

When we're in heaven together. And we'll be standing as it were. As an army of God. Amongst the hosts of heaven. And the Lord of hosts. The Lord of armies. Will be asking us to report.

For our accountability. For our service on earth. As it were. And we'll just cast our crowns at his feet. And we'll thank him for just the privilege of having had a life to live.

[33:01] And some service to render. That will have been prepared. For every good work. That will be fit. For the master's use.

That will be a vessel unto honour. That will aspire to be such a people. That will step over the line. When the fight is on. We'll be known to be those who are going to fight. On.

That will take. Our place. Our station. We'll fight. We'll take. The front line. And we won't hold back. We won't linger in the trenches. But we'll want to head into the battle zone. Out of the comfort zone. We would be such a people.

That we can know victory. You know. Sometimes we think of victory. Well. After the fight. There's the victory. But there's other things too. There's some things to flee from. Recognise the enemy's work. And we can flee from that. There's some things to follow.

[33:59] That we can aspire to. Be like our saviour. Our master. And then. He'll help us to fight. When the battle is on. He will be the one who fights for us.

Because the battle is the Lord's. And he is the one who will fight for us. And he is the one who will empower us. For the fight ahead. So be encouraged brothers and sisters. You can know victory. In your life today.

You can be a victorious Christian. The Bible tells you that you can. Have that. It can be a reality. That you can be a vessel unto honour. It's not just something theoretical.

As if only a select few would achieve it. Or realise that. That we. Each one of us can be such a vessel. Each one of us in our place of serving.

And our calling. We can be a vessel for God. For God's honour. Unto his praise. Let us pray. Dear Lord. We thank you that. Your word.

[34:56] Just give us these. Instructions. For life. We know we face a battle. And. A committed enemy.

Lord. We pray for every Christian here. We pray Lord. Especially for those that may. Yet be. Yet not be Christians. Lord. That they might know that. They can.

Trust. In your salvation. That you are. A mighty saviour. And you can save the most unclean. The most unworthy. You can.

As you did with Paul. Take the. Those who would. Call themselves. The chief of sinners. And make them. A glorious. Saint. Lord.

We pray. That each one here. Might know the wonderful truth. That soul saving. Life transforming. Reality. That. You came. And died on the cross.

[35:51] For man's sin. You took our place. And paid the full penalty. Of our sin there. That we can receive your. Awesome. Awesome.

Unspeakable gift. We cannot. Find words to. Describe. What you have given to us. Of to. To be a saved people. And Lord.

Help us as saved people. To also be victorious people. That we will know what it is. To have. A daily victory. In our lives.

Help us to see. The devil's works. To have our eyes open. Not as blinded minds. Of those that are lost. But as. Wakeful. Watchful Christians. That we can be alert.

To the enemy's deceptions. And his strategies. Lord. That we can flee from his works. Lord. Help us. Rather to follow. After that which is righteous. And good. To follow in your footsteps.

[36:47] Lord. To aspire to be like you. To follow after that. Which will bless. And uplift. To follow that. Which would make us. More fitting vessels. For you to.

For you to use. Lord. Lord. And thank you for the privilege we have. To be a vessel unto honour. And Lord. Help us. As we do wage war. To see. The battle zone.

To realise. The battle is yours. And you are. Our victor. Lord. You are the one. Who we follow. In your triumph. And know your victory.

By the power of your Holy Spirit. We can know. Daily victory. Lord. We pray for those that are battling. With temptation. With situations that. Are dragging them backwards.

Or into the world. That will recognise these things. And realise your victory. Each one. As we commit to be. A vessel. A container of you Lord.

[37:41] That you fill us. With yourself. That you make us more fitting. That we can be such a people. That you would fill us. That you would use us. That you would lead us.

We praise you Lord. In Jesus name. Amen.