

# How you can have Victory

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[0:00] Romans 8 from verse 35 it says, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

! Shall tribulation, shall distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?! As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. There's a lot of definite statements there, isn't there? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? All of these things. Tribulation, distress, persecution, peril, sword. I am persuaded,

Paul says I'm persuaded, I'm convinced of this, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature. Nothing. Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. There's a promise there, isn't there? There's a victory there for you. There's a promise for you. In God's work, nothing can take you away from Him, from His love. How can we know this victory that is being talked about? How can we know this wonderful promise, this wonderful assurance of victory? How can I win in life? How can you win in this, at times this battle that we know life can be? And whilst there may be failure on the way, yet we know we can win.

Think of even secular stories of people who've battled against the odds and had overwhelming obstacles in their lives, yet they still come through, they still found victory. They still battled through and got through on the other side. People like, for example, Abraham Lincoln. He entered one wall as a captain and he came out as a private. And yet he went on, as we know, to become a president. Walt Disney went broke several times. He had a nervous breakdown before he became successful. Albert Einstein failed his courses in maths. He was four years old before he could even speak and seven before he could read. Albert Einstein. Henry Ford. He was broke when he was 40.

[3:09] Yet we know he invented the Ford cars. Thomas Edison's school teacher called him a dunce. He said he was a hopeless case. He failed over 6,000 times before he perfected the first light bulb.

Failure after failure. 6,000 of them. John Wesley had a failure of a marriage. He rose above his circumstances to do a tremendous work for the Lord. Sir Isaac Newton, a great scientist and astronomer, mathematician, he was considered a poor student. Beethoven was considered by his music teacher as a hopeless composer. Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of Great Britain in World War II, one of the greatest statesmen of world history. He failed and had to repeat, grade 6. These men, these people all had failures before they got through on the other side. Leonardo da Vinci, a famous artist and scientist, suffered from dyslexia and attention deficit disorder, apparently.

So there's all these examples in the secular sense of people who had a tough time, times of failure and disappointment and yet wonderfully successful on the other side of it. In the Word of God you've got examples like the Apostle Paul. Paul was another person with determination. He got through the troubles and trials of his life. His story is amazing. This one who came to proclaim God's truth and message of hope and love for people. He was thrown into jail several times. He faced death again and again. Five times he was whipped by the Jews. Three times he was beaten with rods. Once he was stoned.

Three times shipwrecked. He faced grave dangers from robbers and mobs. He lived with weariness, with pain, sleepless nights, often hungry and cold, criticized for his less than perfect looks and his speech. But did Paul ever feel that he was a failure or that God had forsaken him? No. He said nothing, nothing, not one thing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. Who shall separate us? No one can take us away from him. We're on that road to victory now. Yet we know there's battles on that road to victory.

[5:54] victory. That's how the victory comes through the battle. As we know as a Christian it can be a constant warfare as was talked about in the youth group lately. How we need the armor of God to put on.

And so we're going to look at this fight that Christians face and what it means for us. How we can get through to that victory side. And firstly we must enter the battle zone. You've got to get in the battle to get the victory. You've got to get in the battlefield, the arena, the sphere of combat and struggle. We need to enter that place. Life itself it can be a contest like a boxing match, a wrestling, a running, an event of stamina and endurance and perseverance. And this fighting that you fight as Ephesians 6 tells you it's against not flesh and blood. It's against these spiritual forces, against these spiritual powers, against wickedness, spiritual wickedness in high places. That's the battle that you face. Believe us tonight as God's people, young and old, if you're a Christian here today, you're in the battle zone.

You may not realize it. Life is a battle, a place of conflict and it's waged on a number of fronts. There's a number of places that you're fighting. Places in that battle zone. The battle zone has a number of fronts. And firstly the fight is going on in your body. In your body which will live. The old, carnal, fleshly, person or the spiritual one. Romans 8.13, For if you live after the flesh, you shall die. But if you through the spirit do mortify, put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live. There's a sense where our body has to be held captive to his leading, to his way.

Your flesh needs to be nailed. Nailed and killed, crucified. As Paul talked of to kill the desires of the flesh. He can help you to kick that bad habit. You can be victorious in your body. Paul talks about how he keeps his body under subjection. 1 Corinthians 9.27, it's like an athlete, like a champion. A winning athlete. He's got to punish and pummel and discipline that body to make it lean and mean and able to match the contest that faces it. Are you feeding the appetites of your body?

Or are we feeding the spirit? The spirit of God. We need to feed our spirit. That's why we fellowship. That's why we study God's word. We take it in. We want to feed that spirit. Will we seek to bring that body into subjection? Those desires, those natural desires that we want to restrain and make our body a vessel, and instrument of righteousness that is used for his purposes. As it says in Romans 13.14, don't make provision, don't give way to the flesh, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

[9:21] The fight is going on in your body. The fight is going on in your mind. In your mind. Romans 12.2, be not conformed to this world, but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Let your mind be submitted to the will of God. Allow God to mold your thinking, your decision making after his will. So let your mind dwell on those things that would be pleasing to him. Is God first? Do we seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, or does it come maybe a close second? The Lord Jesus says, seek it first.

Number one, make it your priority. Philippians 4, we're told about the peace of God. Paul says, let the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. He says, finally my brethren, he says, grab this. Brothers in Christ, he says, finally, think on these things.

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever is of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things. There's a deliberate intention there, a command there for us to think on these things. Those wholesome things, those godly things. As Paul says in Christ 3.2, he says, set your affection, make it your conscious choice to set your affection, your love on those things that are above, not on those things that are on the earth. And so many Christians yet, these days, they're dwelling on the things of the earth.

They're overcome, they're defeated, walking around with their head hung low, with kicking the stones down the path, feeling like everything's on top of them, because they're thinking on the things that are on the earth.

They're not thinking, they're not setting their affection on things above them. We wonder why are we defeated? Why are we dominated? Why are we beaten? Overwhelmed? Overcome?

Overpowered? Because we've given ground to Satan in our mind. We've let our thoughts dwell on those things, the vanities of earthly living, without thinking to put the kingdom of God and his righteousness first. Christians defeated, defeated by temptation, by the world, by the flesh. The fight is going on for your mind. Let that mind be renewed, transformed, thinking on those things that are wholesome, setting your affection on things above.

[12:16] And the fight is going on also in your spirit. 1 Corinthians 6.20, it says, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. That's 1 Corinthians 6.20, for you are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Your body and your spirit belong to God. He has the ownership of us. He's rightfully purchased us with his blood, his own payment, his own ransom, price. And as a Christian, your spirit rightfully belongs to God. Think of your spirit. Do you protect your spirit? Do you give your spirit your emotion, your your loves, your affections? Do you have that which counts God as the first priority, as your first affection? As a Christian, do you allow your spirit to be broken? It talks about a broken spirit.

In Proverbs 15.13, it talks about the spirit is broken. By sorrow of heart, the spirit is broken. We can all experience sorrow. It's a natural affection. But some people are dwelling in that brokenness of spirit. And they're not realizing that the one who can heal the brokenhearted is the one who wants to reach out and heal us. We can be angry in our spirit. Proverbs 16.32, it talks about, He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty. He that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh the sitting. Rule your spirit. Don't let your spirit be angry. You know, some people, they walk around full of hatred and resentment and bitterness, eating themselves up from the inside out. There's an angriness of spirit. God doesn't want us to have that. He wants our spirit to be at peace with God and with men. We can have a proud spirit. Proverbs 16.18, pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall. We can have a proud spirit. We can get puffed up and have a vain view of ourselves, an inflated idea of ourselves, and we can have a proud spirit. Or is our spirit right with God? As the psalmist, he says, create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Psalm 51.10.

So think about that. The fight is going on. It's going on in your body. It's going on in your mind. It's going on in your spirit, on these battlefronts, that battle zone. And in this battle zone that is you, there's a battle raging. And victory means a fight. It takes resolve. It takes perseverance and struggle.

We think of the warriors of our nation in other countries at this time. It's a real battle. It's no make-believe. It's no fiction. It's no Hollywood action movie. They face death. They face reality and hardships.

[15:25] And what do they do before they go? Intensive training, severe training, endurance training, hardships and fatigue. That's why the sergeant barks the orders at the recruits.

But they need to jump when they're told to do something. When the order comes, they obey. And people tonight, younger people, older people, when God says something, obey it. It's not something we can question or choose what we hear and don't obey. We need to obey the word of God, put it into our lives and put it into our hearts. And think of Christ. He's done all the hard yards for us. He says the battle is the Lord's, it says in various scriptures. The battle is not yours. It's the Lord's. And he's really fought the battle. He's the one who's gone down there and taken the weight of our sin.

He's the one who's taken the brunt of Satan's condemnation of even the Father's wrath against our sin. He's had it vented against him in full. The fury of God, that is due to us. Christ has battled the enemy. And as we know, it says that he is triumphant. He's glorious. He's leading a triumphant procession of victory for us. And we're part of that victorious marching army in the ultimate end. It's great to know that I've heard a preacher say, if you read the end of the book, you see who wins. You know, it's like when you get a book to read and it's a heavy book, you want to just know how does the story end. And you go to Revelation and you see what it says there. In that prophecy of time to come, it tells you what's going to happen. And you know, you're on the winning side. If Christ is with you, who can be against you? If God is for you, who can be against you? And we know in the back of the book, it says that Christ will come victorious, triumphant as the all-conquering king, as the rightful owner of planet earth and retake it and regain his rightful possession, planet earth as the

king of kings and the lord of lords. And Satan will be vanquished completely and utterly. He's just still whimpering and hurting from the cross. And Christ will come and utterly vanquish him at that final moment as he comes victoriously. Meantime, there's a battle on. It's still raging. It's for us. And you, as soldiers of the

[17:58] Lord, are you a soldier? Are you a Christian here tonight? If you're a Christian, you're in the soldier, you're a soldier in the army of the Lord. And we should hear that wake-up call, that bugle call. You know, as you can hear the trumpet blasters, whether it's getting out of bed, whatever the different sounds that they make, and then there's that certain trumpet call for it's time to get out and advance on the battlefield.

And it's time for us to hear that battle cry, that bugle call, that wake-up call. It says there in 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 6 that it's a time for soberness. This is the time that the church should rise up.

This is the time that we should stand up and be counted. It says, 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 6, Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober.

It's a time for soberness. It's a time for wakefulness. It's a time for action. A time to be alert and watchful because, as 1 Peter 5 tells us from verse 8, Be sober, be vigilant. In other words, wake up and keep temperate, keep sober. Don't lose control of your faculties.

Be sober and be vigilant. In other words, be alert, be on the lookout, be watchful, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour, whom resists steadfast in the faith.

[19:31] You know, what a blessing to know that we've got that wonderful promise from God's word that he will help us to resist the devil. That was spoken of this morning.

How as we submit to God, we resist the devil and he will flee from us. There's a wonderful promise of scripture there in James 2. And your enemy, the devil, he roars, he's prowling around, he's making a lot of noise and making a lot of commotion, but really it's been said, some have said that really it's a toothless tiger, that he's looking for someone to devour, but Christ has already given him the death blow.

He's just really just having a last fling, a last effort to give us a bit of a scare. But yet we should still be on the alert. We should still be self-controlled, stand firm in the faith, be steadfast and resist the devil.

And think about how we can fight the good fight of the faith. Some ways we can fight the good fight. We fight the good fight on the home front. In Romans 12, 21, it says, Overcome evil with good. Now for some of you here today, you might live and work with people who don't know the saviour. That's commonplace. Maybe your parents, your brothers, your sisters, maybe your wife might not be a Christian here today, yet you can overcome evil with good.

[20:57] You can be that one who can be a testimony for Christ in your home and your family. The devil wants to tear up families and cause strife and despair. But the fight is fought on the home front.

Take it to the home front. Stand up for Jesus in your home. The fight is fought in our talking. In Ephesians 4, 29, it says, Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but may that which is good for the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

So our speech will show where we're coming from. It was said of Peter as he warmed himself at the fire, they could tell where he was from. They could tell his accent was Galilean.

And they recognised him. And people will recognise you by your speech. Now, sometimes I hear young people who come to this church swearing, and I wonder, well, they recognise where they're coming from, what country they belong to.

They're not part of the heavenly country yet. They're not part of the heavenly city yet. I trust that they will become. Let's go.