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Lesson 9



KNOWING THE WAY OF VICTORY

The Lord wants us to know the victory that can be ours daily. He has already made that victory possible for each saved person. It should be our daily experience to walk in victory. By victory we mean that we live with a testimony of God's grace in spite of temptation, a rejoicing in trials, and a deliverance from sins and habits that hinder us. There are three basic things we must do so that we may walk in that victory.

THREE "R's" TO REMEMBER

Rejoice in the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 5:16 — *"Rejoice evermore."*

Philippians 4:4 — *"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice."*

Joy is a certain sign of victory and strength in our Christian lives. It should be the norm in every Christian life.

Nehemiah 8:10 — *"The joy of the Lord is your strength."*

You may not always have this joy. All of us experience "down" times when discouragement and doubt may move in. These times do not rob you of your salvation, for salvation was settled for

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eternity when you accepted Christ. God never gave us salvation to take it away from us every time we do something wrong. Our salvation is never in question or doubt with God when we have one of these "down" times.

When the joy of the Lord is not present as it should be, there is always a reason. It could be due to a physical condition. When the body or mind or both become weary or are under great pressure, we will probably lose our joy. Or it may be that sin is present in our lives. This is most often the reason that we have lost our joy. Joy is produced in the Christian's life by the indwelling Holy Spirit. When we sin or quench or retard His ministry through us, joy cannot be produced. We must confess that sin to have the joy restored by the Lord Himself (1 John 1:9; Psalm 51:2, 3, 8 — 10).

To keep the joy and strength of your salvation:

1. Keep a close fellowship and relationship with God (1 John 1:7 –9).

2. Confess sin as soon as it is realized in your heart (Psalm 32:1 — 5).

3. Never look at your immediate situation from the human standpoint, but keep your eyes upon Christ, who gives the ability to conquer situations of life, keeping in mind Philippians 4:13. If we have our eyes upon situations and circumstances of life, we will have our joy replaced by fear, worry and distrust (Philippians 4:4, 6 — 8; Psalms 5:11; 63:7).

Recognize the old nature.

Before you were saved, you had nothing but the old sinful nature (Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 3:8, 9; Galatians 5:16, 17). As soon as you accepted Christ as your Saviour, you received a new nature. This new nature is literally Christ in you, the implanting of the divine nature, which is the presence of the Holy Spirit, and the indwelling of the Trinity (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10; 1 John 3:9, 10).

Therefore, to understand yourself properly, you need to realize that as a Christian you now have two natures. You have the nature of sin which you received at the time of your birth, and you have the nature of Christ which became yours at the time of your salvation. In a sense, you have become a dual personality with two natures. You have the nature of Christ which became yours at the time of your salvation. In a sense, you have become a dual personality with two natures present in you, and this affects your thinking and actions.

Your experience will be that the old nature with which you were born tries to get you away from God and Christian activities. It tries to get you to continue in the old life and the sin of the past. It tries to make you self-centered and to squelch all spiritual activities such as praying, reading your Bible, testifying to others, and going to church. This sinful nature cannot please God (Romans 8:7, 8).

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At the same time, the new nature is tugging at your thoughts and urging you to let your life and activities be Christ-centered. It invites you to fill your life with Christ, to live a yielded, joyful life of obedience.

In the midst of this, a tremendous battle is taking place. In Romans 7 Paul speaks much about this experience. Then the conflict of the Christians is spoken of in Galatians 5:17. It is well for you to realize that these two natures will always be present in your life. It is for you to determine which nature will have the control over you. It is really up to you. (Note Romans 8:5 –13.) God has given us the answer very clearly in Galatians 5:16. We must walk in the Spirit, which means to walk yielded to the Holy Spirit, to mind the things of the Spirit. It is like feeding two pairs of horses on opposite ends of a wagon. The wagon represents our lives; the horses represent the flesh and the spirit natures. We cannot feed both natures and expect to have victory. We must starve the old nature and feed the new nature. Thus our yieldedness to the Holy Spirit is very important.

The activities of the old nature are mentioned in Galatians 5:19 –21; the character of the new nature is mentioned in Galatians 5:22, 23. As a new Christian, you must let the new nature of Christ take over the controls of your life right now and walk daily in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Respond to God's victory for you.

How good to be on the winning side! As soon as we accept Christ, we are on the winning side. Christian friend, you are right now on that winning side. In the greatest contest ever fought, we, as Christians, were represented by Christ. There on the cross, Christ came out victorious for us. There on the cross, the forces of sin, death, Hell and the grave were defeated. There the archenemy of our souls, Satan was defeated. Yet to look at some Christians, you would think that they were on the losing side. They have no victory in their lives; They lack any enthusiasm for the Lord. God's people should be an overcoming, victorious people. Paul spoke often of that victory which is to be ours NOW. It is wise for us to note Romans 8:37; 2 Corinthians 2:14; I Corinthians 15:57; and 1 John 5:4.

How do we get that life of victory in Christ? It is already ours in position in Him. He is our Victory (Ephesians 6:10). It is not a matter of working toward a victory, but walking in a victory already secured by the power of the Lord. In Him, we have already won the battle. No matter how dark your circumstances or environment may be, you can rejoice for you already belong to the Winner's side. The previously mentioned verses make this very plain. It is our portion to rejoice in His victory (Philippians 4:4).

What will be the results of a victorious Christian life? One will be personal contentment. You will have a joy and stability which will even affect your daily life and personality. Then you will be a source of challenge and blessing to others. A victorious Christian is always a blessing to others. Your life can be contagious to others. Lastly, you will be a better witness for Christ if you are a victorious Christian who walks in His power. The success of the early churches was primarily due to the fact that the individuals who composed them had a quality of victory and power in the Lord that attracted others. This we can have today (2 Peter 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:7; Ephesians 6:10 — 18).

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Lesson 9

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Memorize 1 Corinthians 10:13. We suggest that you also memorize 1 John 1:9.

2. Read John 15 — 21. Now read John 8:14. Please note the references where Jesus Christ is presented as the Son of God Please record your findings under "NOTES" on a separate page.

3. Answer the following questions in your own words:

    1. What is God's will for us? (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

    _____

    _____

    2. Outline or list the things necessary for joy in the Christian life according to Philippians 4:6 — 8.

    a. _____

    b. _____

    c. _____

    d. _____

3. What is it that usually destroys our rejoicing in the Lord, His Word, and salvation? (Isaiah 59:1, 2; Psalm 51:3).

_____

4. What were you born with? (Romans 5:19a; 7:17 — 23)

_____

5. What happened in your life when you were saved? What did you receive? (2 Corinthians 5:17; 2 Peter 1:4)

_____

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6. To whom do I need to yield in order to have victory over the old nature? (Romans 6:13)

_____

_____

7. What was Paul's testimony? (Philippians 4:13)

_____

_____

_____

8. How can we have the victory that is needed in our daily lives? (1 John 5:4)

_____

_____

9. Where is the place of victory? (1 Corinthians 15:57)

_____

10. Is there something that I can do to have that victory? (Psalm 37:4, 5)

_____

_____

_____

NOTES

1. A blessing I received each day as I read John 15 — 21:

Day 1 — John 15 _____

Day 2 — John 16 _____

Day 3 — John 17 _____

Day 4 — John 18 _____

Day 5 — John 19 _____

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Day 6 — John 20 _____

Day 7 — John 21 _____

2. Promises in God's Word concerning joy in my life:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. Below I note all of the references I found in John 15 –21

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