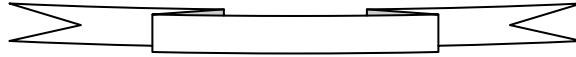


So Great Salvation Study Guide

Teaching Series Part 5 – Victory 1 and 2

By Paris Reidhead*

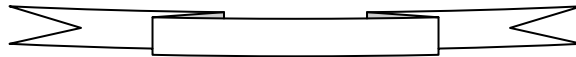
Pastor Reidhead set up this Bible Study Guide to accompany the “So Great Salvation - Study Guide I”. Below are his instructions on how to administer this study guide and questions.



Series I of “So Great Salvation” is composed of six sermons with eight correlating lessons. At the end of each chapter there are study questions. You will find the answers to these questions by carefully listening to the sermon and thoughtfully and prayerfully reading the text.

It is suggested that you first answer the questions of each chapter on a piece of notebook paper; then reread the chapter and listen again to the sermon to satisfy yourself that your answers are correct in relation to the material covered.

Then transfer your answers onto the study question sheet at the end of each chapter. Your carefully written answers will now become a valuable part of the study course of “So Great Salvation.”



VICTORY OVER TEMPTATION

“Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (I Cor. 10:6-13).

I. WHAT WE CARRIED WITH US INTO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

In Part 4 we dealt with temptation and sin, declaring on the Word of God that as long as we live we are going to be subject to temptation. Many people want God to give them an experience with Himself of such a nature that they would never be tempted again. May I assure you this, that if you ever come to the place that you are not subject to temptation, then you will be holier than our wonderful Lord, because He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.

Therefore, we have to recognize that as long as we live, we are going to be subject to temptation, and as long as we live, we are going to be capable of yielding to temptation. But that isn't the issue right now. The question is, “Is there victory over temptation, and if so, how can we have it?”

The text of this chapter is found in Hebrews 2:3, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” “Thou shalt call His name Jesus for He shall save His people from their sin” (Mat. 1:21). Not just from hell, not just from the penalty of sin, but from their sin. Therefore, we are to expect that included in the cross work of our Lord was a means by which we could escape from temptation and have victory.

Turn to I Corinthians 10:13. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted about that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Some years ago I was invited to speak at an Intervarsity Retreat in New Hampshire, involving all the universities and colleges in the Boston area. I had been speaker at the same retreat the previous year.

When I arrived at this lovely inn on Friday afternoon, a young man was in the living room of the lodge, attempting to play the piano, not too successfully. When I came in, he stopped and came over to me.

"Oh, hello, there. I came up a little early so I'd have a chance to talk to you."

"Well, here we are. What is it you'd like to say?" I put down my suitcase and sat down beside him.

"I wanted to warn you if you're going to give any of that 'Victory' stuff that you gave last year, I'd suggest that you don't do it."

"Why is that?"

"Because it doesn't work."

"I'm glad that you're here to warn me. Will you explain to me what you mean?" I had become rather interested with his honest approach.

"You remember, last year you taught us that there was victory over temptation."

"Yes, I recall that."

"I didn't want you to give us some of the same 'stuff' this year, because it doesn't work."

"Well, explain."

"There was one particular area in my life that I was having problems with, and when I listened to you, I was so excited about being able to get victory over it, and I went back to school. I was tempted, and I did just what you told us to do, and it didn't work."

"What was it that I told you to do?"

"You remember that verse in I Corinthians, chapter 10, verse 13. I memorized that while you were giving it, and then I repeated it again and again so I really knew it, and when I was tempted I quoted that verse, and quoted that verse again, but it didn't help."

"Open your Bible and let's look at the verse." And I had him read I Cor. 10:13. "What does it say?"

And he read it. "That there will be a way of escape."

"That is exactly what it says, but what's the 'way of escape'?"

"This verse."

"No. This verse is not the way of escape. This verse tells you that there IS a way of escape, but I also went ahead to explain to you what that way of escape was last year and apparently all you remembered was the verse that says there is a way of escape. Now this verse isn't going to give you victory. This verse simply tells you that there is a way to escape from temptation. You'd better listen to everything I say."

"Yes, I guess I had. Are you going to discuss this subject again this year?"

“Don’t you think I’d better?”

And he agreed. So I realized that people only listen for what they want to hear.

II. THE THREE MAJOR ENEMIES THAT CONFRONT BELIEVERS, INCLUDING MISSIONARIES AND CHRISTIAN WORKERS

In Part 4 we saw that we carried with us into the Christian life appetites, drives, urges and propensities, as well as all of the memories of how we’d gratified our appetites and drives in the past, all of those habitual and learned responses. We found out what happened when we were tempted and sinner and saw from the Word what we must do about it. Now, the question is, “Is there any way whereby we can escape from temptation and not be overtaken by our appetites and our drives?”

In the Bible we learn that there are three major enemies that we confront, that attack us. The first one is called “the flesh”. It is also called “self”; it is called “the old man” and Paul spoke of it as “I”. That is your worst enemy. The second is the world, the world system in which you live and move, that is organized by its god and puts forth every effort to make the gratifying of the appetites, against the will of God, so attractive. The third enemy is the god of this world, the ancient foe of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are talking about Satan, the devil.

We would expect if God is going to provide us victory over these enemies, it is going to be complete and all-inclusive and practical and effective.

First, we have to recognize that none of us is exempt, even missionaries.

After a long period of preparation, in 1945 my wife and I went to the Sudan in Africa as missionary linguists. I was certain that I was going to be the most effective missionary on the entire continent of Africa. As soon as my feet touched African soil I would be transformed into a great intercessor, an effective witness and a diligent student of the Word. I hadn’t done too well up to that point.

It wasn’t long before I discovered that I wasn’t nearly as spiritual as I had planned to be. In order to live with this disappointing discovery I had to prove that my missionary colleagues weren’t as spiritual as they should be.

I developed a critical mind, a censorious spirit, accompanied by a sarcastic tongue. I hurt people with my sarcasm; I cut them to ribbons. I knew that this sarcasm was a sin and I cried out to God for forgiveness. I promised Him I would never speak in this way again. He forgave me, but I did it again.

I’d received an “A” in a course on the Christian Life in Bible School, but the truth never reached my heart. I felt I was a total failure, disappointing myself, hurting my co-workers and grieving the Lord.

In due course, my wife and I came home on furlough. I determined that I would never go back to Africa, I would never go on in the ministry, unless somewhere, somehow, I could find victory over my traits, my tendencies, the habits of my mind, my disposition and attitudes.

I went to a pastor in Florida and talked to him. He recommended that I go to seminary, and so I matriculated in a seminary in the south. I paid my money, bought my books, went to my room, and sat there and looked at these books on my desk. I had read half of them and hadn’t liked what I’d read, and now I had to study them. I knew right then that my need was never going to be met by what was going to be offered at seminary. Not that there was anything bad in it, but it wasn’t the answer to my problem.

So the next day I went to the bursar’s office and I “dematriculated”. I got as much money back as I could, and since I was to be charged one month’s rent for the room, I decided to stay that month and get my money’s worth.

During that month I took spiritual inventory. I went back through the years and began to search for reality. I finally went back to the Camp Meeting where as a lad, at an altar in the straw; I had knelt and opened my heart to Jesus Christ and had been

born of God, and had had the witness of the Spirit. That was the last real thing that had ever happened to me. From that time on, it had been just words piled in on my mind, like a theological compost pit. I had assumed what my mind had perceived that my heart had received. In my spiritual inventory I discovered that the last real thing which ever happened to me was being born of God.

I then determined that as long as I lived I would make a distinction between mental perception and heart reception and experience. I'll never confuse the two. Of course, you have to know with your mind in order to have the basis of that appropriating, experiential faith.

Before returning to my family in West Palm Beach, Florida, the Mission asked me to go to Clearwater, Florida to represent our Society in a conference. I arrived late at the conference ground and got a room. After breakfast, I went to the morning service. I didn't know anybody. I sat there listening to the speaker, whom I did not know. I listened to him for awhile and soon recognized that he knew the Word. I went to the service that evening and heard him speak again, and then discovered that he not only knew the Word, but also knew the Lord.

By this time I was feeling very warm and open toward him. However, in the service the next morning I found that the speaker knew ME, and the worst of it, he was telling all those people about me, about my failures and about my problems. Finally, he posed a question.

"Do you know what your problem is? Your problem is that when you came to Christ you knew what you needed and wanted. You wanted pardon; you wanted forgiveness; you wanted to be born again. But you weren't the least bit interested in what God wanted."

"You came saying, 'Oh, God, forgive me, pardon me, give me eternal life; and God forgave you and pardoned you, and gave you eternal life. You went in, as it were, THROUGH the cross. The cross was behind you and the gates of heaven in front of you, and you started running, stumbling as you ran. This repetitive up and down action became wearisome. Do you know why it's been like that?"

And I almost broke the silence. "Why has it been like that?"

He said that the problem was that you had never turned around to look at the cross from the inside. If you had, you would have found that there were two people on that cross. You see. Jesus Christ was there as your representative as your substitute, dying your death, in your place. He had identified himself so completely with you in the eyes of God on the Throne, when He saw His Son on the front of the cross, dying for you, He saw YOU on the back of the cross dying with Him.

I had never seen that before.

After the service I went to my room and took a sheet of stationery and drew up a contract.

"From today on, that "I" that I know myself to be, I do count as on the back of the cross, crucified with Christ." After finished the letter to myself, I sealed it ... and still have it somewhere.

The next morning a fellow missionary from another society who I knew didn't like our mission or me, cornered me and began to tell me what was wrong with both me and the Society of which I was a part. Now remember, I am the one with the sarcastic tongue. With a few well-chosen words I would leave a wound that would never heal. This time as I stood there, I looked at this man and smiled, and said, "Brother, a miracle has just happened. Forgive me. I have to go and seek the Lord."

And I went back to my room. It was the first time in my entire Christian life that I had had victory in such a situation. I was so elated, so thrilled, so delighted, that I'd had victory for the first time over the criticism, censoriousness and sarcasm. I'd had VICTORY over it.

About a week and a half later someone came up behind me and got a hold of my little prayer rug on which I was standing, gave it a jerk, and I fell flat on my face. And that's when I realized what Paul meant when he said, "I am always being delivered unto death."

Dying with Jesus, by death reckoned mine,

Living with Jesus, a new life divine,

Looking to Jesus 'till glory doth shine,

Moment by moment, Oh Lord, thou art mine.

Moment by moment I'm kept in His love,

Moment by moment I've life from above.¹

What was the song writer telling us? When we are under temptation we go back and see ourselves crucified with Christ. You see, at Calvary you were wired for victory, like your home is wired for electricity. All you have to do is to find the switch, like switching on a light, and turn it on. The switch is this: "reckon yourself to be dead indeed unto sin" (Rom. 6:11).

Reckoning releases the flow of the resurrection life into your life to give you victory over yourself, your traits, your habits, temptations over whatever kind they may be.

The speaker in the Bible conference in Florida, years ago, was George Mundell, pastor of Maranatha Tabernacle, Upper Darby, Pennsylvania. I later shared several conferences with him. I am so grateful that I found experientially that the day Christ died for me, I died with Him.

God's method of saving us from the tyranny of our traits, our habits, our attitudes and of temptation is by our union with the Lord Jesus 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 I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Even though you understand how to have victory over "you", that is only one of the three enemies with which you have to deal. The second is the world.

In I John 2:16-17 we learn more about the world, not only that it is governed by this ancient foe, Satan, but something about the nature of it. We are told in I John 2:15-17, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

We find the first form of idolatry in the Scripture in Genesis 10:8-9, "And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord." Nimrod was actually a mighty rebel against the Lord. He led the race in an effort to set up another system of government other than God. The Tower of Babel was actually envisioned as the means whereby God could be torn out of the heavens. Some authorities say that Nimrod took one of his father's wives, Semiramis, not his mother, in an incestuous relationship, and enthroned her as the goddess in this temple which had been erected, and gave a new theology, the theology of sexual indulgence as being the means by which religious obligations could be fulfilled, as well as satisfy their fleshly appetites.

Across the centuries there has been this form of idolatry which appeals to the flesh, which gives license and indulgence to the flesh and to the sexual appetites, such as the worship of Ashtoroth and Juno. There was a second form of idolatry identified in the Scripture. One of the tragedies of Israel after they had crossed the Jordan and entered the Promised Land was that "they

¹ "Moment By Moment" By Daniel Webster Whittle and Music by May Whittle Moody, 1893.

feared the Lord but served the gods of the land” (II Kin. 17:33).

The Children of Israel are in the land. They have displaced the former inhabitants and have taken over their farms and fields, but the people were not destroyed the way God had commanded, and some of them are still lingering around. Imagine an Israelite family who has occupied a farm who isn't too successful. They weren't particularly skilled as farmers; they'd had no experience either in Egypt or in the forty years wandering in the wilderness.

The former owner comes along and says, “I see you aren't running this farm as well as I did when I had it.”

The Israelite farmer replies, “Well, I don't know. I'm doing the best I know how.”

“Well, you'd do better if you'd let me make a few suggestions. You see that pile of stones over there in the fence corner?”

“Yes, I've often wondered about that. They are stained. What are those stones?”

“That's the altar to Baal.”

“What's Baal?”

“Baal is the owner of this place; that's the evil spirit that controls this farm, and you can't have a crop here unless you get his cooperation. And the way you get his cooperation is to offer a blood sacrifice to Baal. Then you'll get a good crop.”

Obviously that God-fearing Israelite isn't going to do that. He wouldn't think of it. He tells his wife about the conversation that night, and she says, “You know, if we had a good crop I could get some of those things I need for the children and we haven't had the money to buy them. I think we might give this a little thought; let's not dismiss the idea too quickly.”

And so it just “happens” that a poor little lamb jumps up on the pile of rocks, and falls onto a knife. It was all accidental. So the farmer just leaves the carcass, and lets the blood run, adding further stain to the altar. And sure enough, he gets a good crop. And so the word spreads.

So here you have a people whom God has delivered, but they have compromised here a little and there a little. The result was that they brought judgment on themselves because they feared the Lord and served the gods of the land.

Now, that's the world, the lust of the eye, the things to be seen and acquired. It corresponds to the worship of Baal.

Subsequently, a third type of idolatry crept into Israel and angered God. It was called the worship of Moloch, which means “king”. Moloch was in the form of a statue, quite large, possibly more than 20 ft. in height, carved out of solid rock. Tunnels had been drilled up from the base of the rock allowing for the flow of air. Bellows were attached on the back. This massive figure sat with his arms extended out over his thighs and his hands clasped, thus forming a kind of a fire basin in his lap, which was filled with charcoal. When the charcoal was lighted, the priest would get behind the huge figure and work the bellows until there was a red bed of coals in the lap of Moloch. The person who wanted to make an offering to Moloch stood on the ground in front of this colossal figure with the glowing fire in his lap.

Moloch demanded a living sacrifice. A man and his wife would come with their new-born infant and stand in front of this figure. The father would take the child, endeavor to establish a trajectory, and would then throw the little one up into the air, with the intent of landing it right in that bed of coals to be consumed. You say that's horrible. And it is. Why would they make such a sacrifice?

The worship of Moloch was associated with position, with power, with influence over people, or if you please, the pride of life. We agree that the sacrifice to Moloch was horrible. It is also horrible that parents in our day are sacrificing their children to their ambitions. We have a great deal of the worship of Moloch today.

Now that's all there is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, the worship of Ashtoroth, the worship of Baal and the worship of Moloch.

III. GOD'S WAY OF ESCAPE: OUR IDENTIFICATION WITH CHRIST: OUR UNION WITH CHRIST

You and I once walked "according to the course of this world, according to the prince and the power of the air, that spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our manner of life in times past, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others, but God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)" and has provided us victory, so that now we have been washed in the blood of His dear Son, we have been born into His family, we can go back into that world where once we were slaves, and we can be there safely and free (Eph. 2:2-5).

Why? How could God work so marvelously that He could trust us, who once walked according to the course of this world, to go back into that world without fear that we would be forced back into slavery? It is marvelous to realize that when God purposed our salvation, He included everything that was necessary for us to be everything that He wanted us to be, and He called it "So Great Salvation". Everything the Father purposed the Son provided. It has been made available. Everything that the Son provided God the Holy Spirit is here NOW to make real and effective and operative in our lives. If God knew that we needed it and Christ provided it, and the Holy Spirit wants to make it operative in us, how are we going to escape the consequences of doing nothing about it? "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation" (Heb. 2:3).

How did God design that we were going to have victory over the world? We found out that we have victory over ourselves by our union with Christ in His death. We are crucified with Him. "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" (Rom. 6:6). So it is as we see ourselves on the cross, crucified with Christ, that we have victory in the moment of temptation.

Did Christ stay on the cross? No, He was taken down from the cross and was laid in a tomb. How many people were on the cross? The proper answer would be, "Christ and me"; there were two of us on the cross. He was dying there for me, and I was dying there with Him. That's historical. The day Christ died, you died. You don't have to think dead, and play dead and try to be dead. This is history; when He died for me, I died with Him.

Now, how many people were in the tomb? Two. Who were they? Christ and me. We were buried together with Him. If we understand that we were buried with Him, it immunizes us to the attraction and the appeal of the world.

God's way of dealing with us and the world is that we are to abide in Christ, buried with Him. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me" (Joh. 15:4). Now if that's the case, there is a gulf fixed between us and the world we are in. We can dwell in it and not be susceptible to it.

So we must understand, then, that God has a method, but it's a method which demands man's obedience. He said, "Abide in Me" and that means live, reside, make your home. Abide in me, crucified with me to have victory over yourself, but abide in me, buried with me, to have victory over the world. If once you see this and understand it, and once this becomes part of the affirmation in your daily prayer, "Father, for this day I see myself by faith in union with Christ on the cross, crucified with Him and buried with Him," then you can walk back into this world, governed by your ancient foe, and not succumb to its enticements.

We have dealt with two of the enemies, the flesh and the world. But we still have a third one to be concerned about, the devil. How are we going to overcome this ancient foe?

Turn to Revelation 12:11, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

When the Lord Jesus went to the cross He became vulnerable. He reached out to you; He identified Himself with you in such a way that the Father had to see Him as you, and pour the wrath that He had against you upon His Son, to vindicate His law, His holiness, His righteousness and His justice. By the same token, because He had identified with you and me, the enemy now

sees his opportunity. Our Lord is now caught in the cross-fire between two worlds. On the cross the Father brought to Him the cup of His wrath against sin, and our Lord Jesus drank it to its last bitter drop.

But also, because He was there as you and me, and was so identified thus by God, we find in the Psalms that all of hell gathered around the cross, and those three hours of darkness, I believe, are described in the Psalms when we are told that His heart was melted like wax, He was wounded, He was bruised. He didn't even resemble a man.

Why? Every arrow in the quiver of hell was loosed at the Son of God. Everything that could be done by the god of this world against the God of heaven and earth was completed. Finally, the Lord Jesus said, "It is finished", and He died. He was taken from the cross, and He was buried, and the third day, that God life that could not die returned again, and when He came forth from the grave, He led captivity captive. We follow in the train of His triumph.

And what is our testimony, that we were the ones for whom the Lord Jesus died; we once were the slaves of hell, we once were locked into the control of the god of this world; we once had chosen Satan to govern us, but we renounced him and we repudiated him. We have committed all we are and have to Jesus Christ, who died for us. Christ conquered that ancient foe, and so we overcome him "by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony" (Rev.12:11). You need to understand that's part of "So Great Salvation".

But that's not all.

Turn now to Ephesians 1:20-23. Here we're going to find that the Spirit of God has something very important to say to us. Paul, writing to this church at Ephesus tells them that he is praying for them, "that the eyes of your understanding may be opened, that you may know ... the greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

So what is he saying? In the King James Bible, the second chapter, the first two words are "and you". I want you to put a little circle around "and you" and want you to run a line up to verse 20, and I want you to run that line over so that the verse reads like this: "That you might know the exceeding greatness of His power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him (and you) from the dead and set Him (and you) at His own right hand in the heavnlies, far above all principality, and power, and might."

I used to wonder why the King James Version translators began the second chapter with "and you", because "and" is a conjunction and the purpose of a conjunction is to join, and I could not see by looking at it where anything was joined. However, I found out that if you put "and you" up in verse 20 you get the meaning of it ..."which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him and you from the dead."

You're going to look at me and say, "Aren't you tampering with the Scripture to shift words around like that, and get them all mixed up and put arrows here and there?"

I might be intimidated by such an accusation, but I want you to go to verse 4, Chapter 2 of Ephesians. You see, the way we read it is this: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;"

That is what Paul is telling you, that there were two people on the cross, Christ and you, that He might provide you victory over temptation; and there were two people in the tomb, Christ and you, that you might have victory over the world; and that there are two people who were quickened and raised and seated in the heavnlies, that you might have victory over principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this age.

IV. GOD'S PLAN FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE FOR HIM

What is the purpose? He wanted to deliver you from the power of the enemy, so He led captivity captive, and He is now at the right hand of the Father with all power in heaven and earth in His hand. He wants His victory enforced in the world. The very people, who had sold themselves under Satan, are the ones who have been redeemed from the power of Satan, and now are the people who are entrusted with the responsibility of enforcing the victory of Christ over Satan. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me ... to proclaim liberty to the captives" (Isa. 61:1). How is He going to do that? There is only one way and that is to lead captivity captive, and return and take authority.

Now who is going to enforce it for Him? Obviously, He could have used angels. There are enough of them, but they have other responsibilities. So God in His wisdom and love has turned the enforcement of His victory over to those who once were the slaves of Satan, over to us.

The Lord Jesus said in John 15:4 that we should abide in Him, crucified with Him to have victory over ourselves, buried with Him to have victory over the world, and quickened and raised and seated with Him to have victory over principalities and powers. In Ephesians 1:3, we read, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:" That's where the spiritual blessings are, and that is where we are to abide, that's our natural habitat in Christ ... seated in the heavenlies. This is God's way of delivering the captives. He has put YOU in charge, He has entrusted you, with enforcing His victory.

How does it work? There have been many times that I have been witnessing to someone and they have replied: "Well, I hear what you are saying, and I guess I could spell all the words you are using, but they don't make sense to me. I don't comprehend anything that you are saying. They are just words. I don't really see it."

When I first heard that I used to think that these people were stubborn and unattentive. Then I realized that they were telling me the truth. The Scriptures say that our Gospel is hid to them that are lost, "that the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (II Cor. 4:4).

In my heart I prayed, "Father this man is telling the truth. He can't see; he doesn't understand. The god of this world has blinded his mind. But just now, on the authority that is ours in the body of Christ to enforce the victory of the Lord Jesus, I take authority over the enemy and ask you to see to it that the hood of death is lifted, and this mind is opened to perceive the truth and understand it. I do this in Jesus Name."

You notice that I didn't address the enemy. I address the Father. I am claiming the victory of Christ for the release of this person's mind from this binding effort of a defeated foe, so that he can understand the gospel. Now that doesn't mean that I have control over the person to submit to Christ. God didn't take such control and He won't give it to us; but at least, they can hear the gospel.

I have had that same person say, "I don't know what's happened. But everything seems to clear now. Yes, I understand what you are talking about ..."

In just a few moments, God has answered prayer. Why? Because He has turned over to His body the responsibility to enforce His victory.

"How are you going to escape if you neglect so great salvation?" It is so important for us to understand what He has provided for us, to appropriate it and to experience it and to use it wisely and carefully. Christ has told us to abide in Him, crucified with Him, to have victory over yourself, buried with Him, to have victory over the world, and quickened, raised and seated with Him in the heavenlies so that you can have victory over principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this age.

VICTORY OVER TEMPTATION

1. What verse of Scripture declares that there is a way of escape from temptation?
 - a) Reference:

 - b) Quote:
2. How long will we be tempted?
3. What is the first of the three major enemies we face as believers?
4. What is the distinction between truth mentally perceived and inwardly experienced?
5. What is God's provision to save us from ourselves?
6. How does I John 2:15-17 describe the world?
7. What are the three forms of idolatry and how do they relate to the world?

8. How could God trust us to go back into the world to witness for Him and to serve Him?

9. Describe our union with Christ from Ephesians 2:4.

10. What was God's purpose as set forth in Ephesians 1 and 2?

11. How does our victory over the defected foe manifest itself in our witnessing? See II Cor. 4:4.

12. How can we escape if we neglect So Great Salvation?

* Reference such as: Original Message Delivered at Bethany Fellowship, Minneapolis, MN on Friday, June 12, 1987 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

©PRBTMI 1987