

## LIVING THE VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIFE

What is the victorious life? 1John 5: 1-5 tells us what it is. **Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. {5:2} By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. {5:3} For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. {5:4} For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith. {5:5} Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?**

So we start with what I like to call the core Christian belief. That belief in everyday terms is this; Jesus Christ is the only begotten son of God. He was born of a virgin. He lived a sinless life. He died on a cross at Calvary, taking on the sins of the world, to pay for our sins. That this, and this only, is sufficient to pay for our sins and satisfy God. That He rose from the dead on the third day and is sitting at the right hand of the Father in Heaven.

Finally, that He will come again.

If you believe these things you are saved and have the starting point of the victorious Christian life. If you believe anything else regarding our Saviour then you are lost and going to Hell.

To have a victorious life we must find the will of God for our lives. God reveals his will on the basis of obedience. See Romans 12:1-3-go here and mark it. **I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.**

This passage indicates three wills of God for the Christian. An acceptable will, a perfect will and a will that is good but unacceptable to God. First the perfect will. This is where the Christian has determined what God would

have him to do in life and is doing it to the best of his or her, ability. That is the perfect will of God and that will be different for every Christian. Then we have the acceptable will. This is the Christian who follows God's plan for his life some of the time and ignores it at other times. Finally we have the good but unacceptable will. This is the Christian who lives a good life but has no clue what the will of God is for his life and couldn't really care less. This person will live a good moral life and arrive in heaven one day with absolutely no rewards. This person has lived a good life but not the plan for life that God intended.

Here is another form that goes with the good "moral" guy we just mentioned, and that is the Christian who has unknowingly submitted their life to Satan. They have listened to an unclean spirit while believing it was the Holy Spirit. They live their entire lives in violation of God's word. This is the test. Does it line up exactly with God's word as given to the New Testament Christian. If what that inner voice is telling you doesn't line up with the Word then you are in trouble. The charismatic movement is full of these. They mean well but are entirely out of the will of God.

Finally there is the Christian who lives like the devil, knows he lives like the devil, and doesn't seem to care. This Christian is in danger of premature judgment in the form of chastisement from God even up to and including death. I had an acquaintance who was an ex Baptist preacher and was totally out of the will of God and living like hell. He would actually beg us not to pray for him. He did not want to be brought to God's attention, as if that was possible. Now I don't doubt this guy's salvation. He was an alcoholic and unwilling to change. He was scared to death.

I knew another Baptist preacher who went up to the DeFuniak Springs area and preached at a couple of very small churches on alternate Sundays. They had no pastors so they paid him a small amount to come and preach for them. This was his drinking and cigarette money and he saw nothing wrong with that. You can bet the farm that God's attention was on these two. I don't know where they are now but I would imagine they are both dead. Folks that kind of living is serious.

This was supposed to be about victorious living so lets get back to that. In Psalm 32:8 God said to David, **I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.**

He also said in Psalm 37:23, **The steps of a good man are ordered by the**

**LORD: and he delighteth in his way.**

Then we read in Isaiah 58:11, **And the Lord shall guide thee continually.**

So there's the key. If we submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit He promises to guide us.

These three verses should be enough to let us know that God watches us always and has a plan for every Christians life. God has a plan for each of us and the plan is different for every one. God uses your past experiences ,job history,education or lack of it, and most of all each different personality for his specific plan for your life. Now consider this. Just because you have been ignoring God's direction for years does not mean that God won't use you. I believe God changes his plan for our life as we get closer to Him. For instance,let's say you were called to be a missionary at age 16 and you ignored,or did not recognize, the call. Then at age 30 God called you to preach and again you ignored, or didn't recognize, the call. God doesn't give up on you. If at age 45 you have matured and are listening closely to the Holy Spirit. You are studying and praying ,then God will issue another call and this time you may “get it”.This time it may be for something entirely different. Where do you think all these church workers come from? You and I may get to scrub the toilets for the next ten years because we weren't paying attention.

Many,many,probably most Christians miss God's will for their lives because they do their own planning. This is a serious mistake since God is much more capable of planning our lives. Being able to see the future gives Him a big edge when it comes to planning. Instead of using that we go our own stubborn way.

God does not tempt us nor does He bring evil on us. (James 1:17 says,**Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.** But sometimes, for His specific purposes, He may allow Satan to test us. If you doubt that all you need to do is look at the book of Job. In other situations, it may be just a matter of time for the Lord to change our circumstances. But in the meantime, you can find peace and refuge in His presence. Psalms 9:9 tells us **The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.**

God promised to make a way of "escape" in the midst of distress, enabling us to "bear" certain temptations or trials. **"No temptation has overtaken you**

**except such as is common to man;**

A whole generation of Israel died outside the will of God. For them, it was 40 years of wandering around the desert when they could have been living in the Promised Land. For what it's worth their journey could have been done in about two months if they had been in God's will.

There were two with that nation who were in God's will for their lives and they went into the Promised Land. That was Joshua and Caleb. Every other member of that generation who left Egypt died in the wilderness. Those were the people who did not believe God.

Get a vision, or plan, of what you should do for God, then work to bring it about. Do this through prayer and study of God's word. God's presence is not greater with some people than with others. We all have equal amounts but we have to learn to tap into that presence of the Holy Spirit. God said to Joshua, **"I will never leave you nor forsake you"** (Josh. 1:5). He repeated the same promise 1,300 years later in the book of Hebrews. Heb. 13:5. God is with us not because we are good or because we have great faith; He is with us because He has committed Himself to us. Get rid of feelings of inferiority. Moses succeeded, Joshua succeeded, David succeeded, and Paul succeeded. The same God who was with them is with you and I. God has promised to guide you according to his word. He has not promised to do it the same day you ask for it.

Going back to Romans 12:2 which says; **And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**

For a victorious Christian life you must take a clear cut stand against the world. There are thousands upon thousands of Christians in America today that you can not tell apart from the world. They live in the world and love it. You and I are supposed to be separated from the things of the world.

Separation from the world and separation from known sin is a must if you would have a victorious life. Get in the Book and stay there and the Book will separate you from the world. You can not be in tune with God and be close to the world. Watch for the world creeping in so slowly that you do not notice. For instance you can be watching a TV program like one of the old ,clean, westerns and the next thing that comes up may be something as demonic as that new show "How to Get Away with Murder. Ann and I saw part the first episode of that piece of porn. We won't be watching any more

episodes. My point is; watch what you watch. Prime time TV now can be just as bad as anything you might find in an x rated movie.

Alright. The Holy Spirit always goes by God's word. That never varies. One well known con man from Oklahoma who is famous for saying God would kill him if he didn't raise 11 million dollars by such and such a date also said that that the Holy Spirit does not always lead according to scriptural principles. That is a devils lie as God's word says in Isa.8:20 **To the law and to the testimony:if they speak not according to this word, [it is] because [there is] no light in them.**

Now that's pretty plain. If someone is telling you that his message is from God, and it doesn't line up with this Book, then that person is lost. That is what "no light in them" means. The Holy Spirit was given to guide us and he guides through God's word. If you think you have guidance from a spirit and it doesn't line up with the Word then you have direction by an unclean spirit. It's a sad fact that most churches in America today, including many in our own denomination, are filled with people in this condition. They are in this condition because they are led by people who have left God's word and caused their people to leave God's word. It's easy for people without the correct Word of God to be led by unclean spirits. Anything goes. When I was saved I had a Revised Standard Version and was told that it was just the KJV with up dated English. That is a particularly vicious devil's lie as it leads people astray from the start. Fortunately for me we moved to a church that taught from, and used the KJV, exclusively I soon learned the difference.

A victorious Christian life does not mean that you have all your prayers answered immediately or even answered at all. Those of us who have been saved for a while well know that all of our prayers do not get answered. Prayers have conditions. It also doesn't mean that we have all the gifts, like healing, the apostles had. Those were for signs to the Jews and they ceased when the apostles ceased. Some of you may remember some years ago that there was a so called revival going on over in Brownsville. That bunch claimed to have all the apostolic gifts so some poor soul whose daughter had died loaded her up and brought her to Brownsville so this bunch of "apostles" could raise her from the dead. Guess what? She is still dead. I have great sympathy for that father but the rest of those devils should be glad I'm not in charge of their future.

OK, we need to start summing this up. Let's start with some of the things we

should get out of our lives. These things are negatives.

Pray and wait patiently for the Lord. Stop trying to make things happen. Let God do it.

Focus on Jesus and stop focusing on yourself and the things you need. God will take care of it.

Stop worrying. Worry from a Christian is an affront to God. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you

Stop chasing money and look after the things of God. God will provide the money if you are doing your part.

Don't get too concerned about things going on in the world. You can't do anything about them anyway.

Stop criticizing others. You can't change them and you have plenty in your own life to clean up.

Quit fantasizing about things you don't have. Paul said "be content with what you have.

The last but most important of the negatives; get known sin out of your life.

Ask God's help with that. Known sin implies that there is unknown sin in our lives as well.

So, summing up the positive. Remember that passage from John that we started with; **For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.**

Again, it is study God's Word. That is a King James Bible. Study isn't just reading through the Bible. If you have one of those bibles that have references next to the verse use them. You would be surprised how these sometimes open up your understanding of a passage..

Spend time in prayer. The Old Testament saints prayed three times a day.

Paul tells us to pray without ceasing. That's not impossible. What that means is staying in a prayerful attitude or keeping an open line to God throughout the day. Realize that not all prayers are answered the way we would like.

Prayers must be according to God's will.

Spend time in praise and thanksgiving. Praising God for what he has done for you and for what he will do in the future. We don't do enough of that.

Make an honest effort to stay in touch with the Holy Spirit. Talk to Him. One of His jobs is to guide you.

