

The New Life

Talks with Christians
on Practical Victory

by Captain Reginald Wallis

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PREFACE

“Thanks be unto God, who leads me on from place to place, IN THE TRAIN OF HIS TRIUMPH, to celebrate HIS victory over the enemies of Christ” (2 Cor. 2:14, *Coneybeare*).

The contents of this little book present the substance of a series of addresses which the Lord has graciously privileged me to give at various conferences and other gatherings of His people on both sides of the Atlantic. So numerous have been the requests that these simple messages might appear in printed form, that after much delay and hesitation, I now feel constrained in the Lord to respond to this desire. Multitudes of Christian men and women today are hungering for a sane, well-balanced, Biblical message of victory over sin and self. Some are seeking for it along avenues which lead to unscriptural extremes in “Holiness” teaching, resulting oftentimes in fanaticism of a distressing nature. When the Lord Jesus dealt with the sin question at Calvary, He fully met all the righteous requirements of divine justice, completely vanquished all the believer's enemies, and thereby provided for every need of saint and sinner for time and eternity—

“Great Victory over sin, and death and woe,
Which needs no second fight, and leaves no second foe.”

May the dear Lord graciously vouchsafe His unction upon these written meditations in even greater measure than He has been pleased to bless the spoken word, granting the illumination of the Holy Spirit to all honest seekers after the real and only highway to a joyous, overcoming and compelling Christian testimony.

REGINALD WALLIS

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THE NEW LIFE

CHAPTER ONE IS CONSTANT VICTORY REALLY POSSIBLE FOR EVERY BELIEVER?

The Question Stated

This is a vitally important question for you and me, my brother or sister in Christ. Should a Christian expect and experience constant triumph, every day and all day, over sin and self? Is the victorious life really practicable, or is it just an attractive subject for conference gatherings and an interesting topic for discussion? Is it merely a pet theme for extremists and fanatics, or is there actually a sane, Biblical experience of practical triumph within the reach of every believer, irrespective of temperament, circumstances, environment, or changing times and conditions? Is it some great ideal to which we must ever seek to aspire in the vague hope that, after years of experience or service, we may perhaps approximate to such a standard? Does the Word really promise a life of true spiritual achievement, conquest and supremacy to the simplest and weakest believer, or has God reserved such a priceless blessing as this for only a few of His favorites?

Many Christians are asking these questions today. Faced with the never-ending antagonism of a threefold enemy—the allurements of *the world*, the insidious outworkings of *the flesh*, and the subtle devices of *the devil*—all combining in a terrible assault against the testimony of real Life, the whole matter constitutes an acute problem as to Christian ethics and the real practicability of certain doctrines and theories.

What is the Victorious Life?

Now let us consider this question simply and honestly, with minds and hearts open to the revelation of the Spirit of God. Firstly, what *is* the victorious life? In answering this question it will be helpful to consider what it is *not*. It is not a creed, or dogma, or dictum, or merely a particular *line of Bible teaching*, or a system of rules and regulations, or a code of ethics, or even spiritual principles. The victorious Christian life is ¹A PERSON, and that Person is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. ²HE is the believer's life. Apart from Him there is no life for you and me in the spiritual realm. Real life finds its birth in the reception of Him as Savior. Entrance into the family of God must be by the ³regenerating operation of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual life is not an abstract principle, or mere objective doctrine. It is *Christ*. His advent into the heart that opens to Him is the "Alpha" of a spiritual career, for ⁴"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Allow the Holy

¹John 14:6 ²John 11:25 ³Titus 3:5 ⁴Romans 8:9

Spirit to write this upon your mind and spirit with an indelible pen. It is a simple fact which calls for a new emphasis today, because there are many who are ¹ *trying to live the Christian life before they have the Christian life to live*. Every believer, every Christian, every child of God, possesses Life because such a one has ² *received Christ*, and for no other reason. Separation from Him means ³ *spiritual death*. Real Life is more than joining a church, or passing through a religious ceremony. It is not imagination or imitation, or reformation, or confirmation, or education. It is REGENERATION, the production of ⁴ *“a new creation”* in Christ Jesus. What happens, then, when one is ⁵ *“born again?”* Nothing short of this: Christ HIMSELF ⁶ *enters to* ⁷ *dwell in the heart by faith through the Holy Spirit*. The human spirit is quickened with the very life of God. This is imperative—the first great transaction between the soul and God. Nothing less than this can lift the soul into the only realm where victory becomes a *possibility*.

Is Christ Divided?

Now consider, therefore: *How much* of Christ did you receive at your regeneration? When He says, “I will come in,” is there any statement or inference that He will only *partially* enter? Why, of course not! Such a suggestion is illogical and foolish. ⁸ *“Is Christ divided?”* What sort of a Savior entered your heart, then, when you turned the handle of faith and admitted Him? The Savior of the Bible, and no other. There is only one Lord Jesus Christ, and He says, ⁹ *“All power is given unto Me.”* Think of it. All power is vested in the Christ of God—the Christ who lives within you. ¹⁰ *“In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”* Yes, amazing as it may appear to be, this mighty triumphant Christ, the omnipotent Son of God, actually abides in the heart of the believer by the blessed Holy Spirit. Seek to lay hold of the implications of this glorious fact. Fix your gaze upon the PERSON of Christ. The victorious Christian life therefore is not a great, exalted ideal to which the believer is ever struggling to aspire. Christ Himself is your life, and since His life is a victorious life, you received all the potentialities of complete victory the very moment you received *Him*.

An Experimental Possibility

Here, therefore, we come to our first logical conclusion. Unceasing victory *is possible for every believer*, because that blessed One who Himself is unceasingly victorious, has entered the redeemed spirit, and that to stay. For this reason we find that the life of fullness in God is

¹ Romans 10:3 ² Colossians 2:6 ³ Ephesians 2:1 ⁴ 2 Corinthians 5:17

⁵ John 3:3 ⁶ Revelation 3:20 ⁷ Ephesians 3:17 ⁸ 1 Corinthians 1:13

⁹ Matthew 28:18

promised on the most simple conditions. There is nothing intricate or mystic about it. Our blessed Lord said, ¹ “*He that believeth*” (the same simple condition as for salvation), “*out of his inner man shall flow rivers of living water.*” Is that the life of victory you are seeking? That is the life promised to every believer! Repudiate any suggestion, therefore, that the victorious Christian life is an impracticable or fanciful theory. It is an experimental possibility. Indeed, it is the birthright of ² the weakest or simplest believer. This is affirmed and reaffirmed times without number in many clear pronouncements of the Word of God. Allow me to quote a few of these outstanding promises:

³ “Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for *He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.*”

⁴ “*And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them.*”

⁵ “*There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*”

⁶ “*Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all.*”

⁷ “*And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.*”

⁸ “*For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*”

⁹ “*O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*”

¹⁰ “*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*”

¹¹ “*But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

¹ John 7:38 ² Romans 10:12 ³ Exodus 15:1 ⁴ Deuteronomy 28:13

⁵ Joshua 1:5 ⁶ 1 Chronicles 29:11 ⁷ Matthew 1:21 ⁸ Romans 6:14

⁹ Romans 7:24-25 ¹⁰ Romans 8:2 ¹¹ 1 Corinthians 15:57

¹ “Now thanks be unto God, *which always causeth us to triumph in Christ*, and maketh manifest the savor of His knowledge by us in every place.”

² “For whatsoever is begotten of God *overcometh the world*, and *this is the victory* that hath overcome the world, even our faith.”

³ “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.”

⁴ “And these shall war against the Lamb, *and the Lamb shall overcome them*: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they also shall overcome that are with Him, called and chosen, and faithful.”

God's Normal

Do these scriptures suffice to establish the fact that nothing short of steady, permanent conquest in Christ is *God's normal* for every believer? The defeated Christian is a monstrosity from the divine viewpoint. He is abnormal. He is a ⁵ paralyzed member of the Body. The vanquished child of God fails to function effectively in the divine program and purpose. Backsliding and carnality are not only inexcusable, but incompatible with *normal Christian* experience. They produce a regime of contradiction. Since a living Christ dwells within there is never any reason for defeat. No enemy is too powerful for the ⁶ ALMIGHTY. ⁷ Every temptation may be resisted. Every emergency may be triumphantly anticipated. If a believer is overcome by the enemy, the simple explanation is that the Savior has been denied His rightful position of supremacy in the heart. *His* dethronement must ever lead to failure in the conflict, and an arrest of spiritual life. Since practical victory can never be divorced from His indwelling presence, therefore, it follows that the life of triumph is hopelessly impracticable ⁸ apart from HIM. Again, let me repeat---*HE IS YOUR VICTORIOUS LIFE.*

The Threefold Enemy:

(1)---*The World.* Now let us consider these great enemies which present their triple challenge and protest to the life of victory. They are threefold: ⁹ the world, ¹⁰ the flesh and ¹¹ the devil. What is “the world” in this sense? It means ¹² “this present evil world”—the great system of evil round about us. It is animated by the ¹³ “prince of this world” and characterized by a tragic decree concerning the Man of Calvary, ¹⁴ “We will not have this

¹ 2 Corinthians 2:14 ² 1 John 5:4 ³ Revelation 12:11

⁴ Revelation 17:14 (R.V.) ⁵ 1 Corinthians 12:25 ⁶ Psalm 91:1

⁷ 1 Corinthians 10:13 ⁸ John 15:5 ⁹ 1 John 2:16 ¹⁰ Romans 8:3

¹¹ 1 Peter 5:8 ¹² Galatians 1:4 ¹³ John 14:30 ¹⁴ Luke 19:14

Man to reign over us.” It is the world system of rebellion against God. Now, is it possible for the believer to live a truly separated Christian life in the midst of such antagonism? For example, is Christ’s victory such that there is a complete loss of appetite for worldly pleasures and pursuits, with all their alluring attractions and fascinating enticements today? Is it really possible for a present day Christian to rejoice with the Apostle Paul that he has been ¹ “crucified to the world” and the world unto him, even though he dwells in the midst of it? —or is it in the will of God that, having been saved from this present evil world, he should once again be captivated by its ² “beggarly elements?” The Bible answer is clear and plain. Thank God, VICTORY IS POSSIBLE, for the Lord Jesus Christ said, ³“I have overcome the world.” Because He overcame, you also may overcome, for He is yours. Mrs. Lemmel embodies the secret in her beautiful chorus—

“Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
 Look full in His wonderful face;
 And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
 In the light of His glory and grace.”

It should be remembered also that such victory is not cruel, arduous, or tyrannous. True victory is never a hardship to be endured. **The Easy Yoke** It is a life to be enjoyed and radiated. The program of the world is not refused because of a sense of bondage under a torturing yoke. Never! The blessed Lord Jesus said, ⁴ “My yoke is easy,” and so it ever proves to be. On the contrary, ⁵ “The way of transgressors is hard.” ⁶ “His commandments are not grievous.” They lead to a joyous, willing, grateful liberation into the blessed will of God. Here is ⁷ “joy unspeakable and full of glory.” It is the “expulsive power of a new affection.” Such a blessedness robs the world’s farewell of any smart. Yes, ask those who know. Their unanimous verdict will be that “His yoke is easy, and His burden is light,” and their eternal song:

“Now none but Christ can satisfy,
 None other name for me;
 There’s love, and life, and lasting joy,
 Lord Jesus, found in Thee.”

(2)—*The Flesh*. Then, secondly, there is “the flesh.” The Apostle Paul says, ⁸ “I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing.” What is “the flesh” in this sense? The next chapter will go more fully into this important question, but suffice it to say here that “the flesh” is ⁹ *fallen human nature*. It is the corrupt principle of sin, the carnal nature, which

¹ Galatians 6:14 ² Galatians 4:9 ³ John 16:33 ⁴ Matthew 11:30

⁵ Proverbs 13:15 ⁶ 1 John 5:3 ⁷ 1 Peter 1:8 ⁸ Romans 7:18 ⁹ Genesis 6:12

“the natural man” has inherited from his fallen parent. It is the Adamic nature. It is the ¹ birthplace of all those ugly sins and besetments which so easily mar the Christian’s joy and hinder his testimony. Again, can it be the will of God that, having been lifted into the realm of spiritual life and ² justified from sin before Him forever, the people of God should continue to be victims of such ugly things as:

- a) *Temper*—a failure to control the human spirit, when aroused?
- b) *Irritability*—the tendency to manifest impatience on little provocation?
- c) *Moodiness*—A capricious disposition and a yielding to temperamental weaknesses?
- d) *Jealousy*—the spirit of fear and revenge at the prospect of being displaced by a rival?
- e) *Pride*—the spirit of self-exaltation and glory?
- f) *Selfishness*—the “ME first” spirit, and the tendency to minister to self?
- g) *Unforgiveness*—the refusal to forgive?
- h) *Anxiety and fret*—the tendency to worry when difficulties and dangers threaten?
- i) *Harshness*—an ungracious and ungentle spirit?
- j) *Complaining*—a grumbling, unsatisfied spirit?
- k) *Criticism*—the inclination to backbite, gossip, and feast on the weaknesses of others, due to an uncontrolled tongue?

Need we enlarge such a repulsive catalogue? These are not regarded as gross sins, but they are, nevertheless, outworkings of the carnal nature. Is there victory over “the flesh?” Yes, thank God, this is promised unequivocally in the Word of God. As we shall see later, there is a great secret revealed to us in God’s blessed Book whereby “the flesh” may be kept inoperative through the power of the Holy Spirit, by way of the Cross.

(3)—*The Devil*. We have thought of the world, that *external* enemy, and of the flesh, that *internal* enemy; now we must think of the third great foe—the devil, that *infernal* enemy! The devil is a person, the actual ³ “prince of the power of the air.” He controls the affairs of “this evil world,” and his great objective is to thwart the divine will and program in the world, in the Church, and in the believer. To this end he seeks to usurp and dominate the property which rightly belongs to Christ by creative and redemptive claim. As a believer, you cannot evade his subtle ⁴ devices. He is your ⁵ unceasing antagonist. He must be met and overcome. Is this possible? Yes, thank God, through the Savior’s victory on the Cross this

¹ Galatians 5:19 ² Romans 5:9 ³ Ephesians 2:2 ⁴ 2 Corinthians 2:11

⁵ 1 Peter 5:8

mighty enemy has been fully and finally vanquished, and one day the whole world shall see the full consummation of this triumph. Meantime, the Evil One is busy in the world, but all his activities are within the *permissive* will of God. The child of God may have victory in Christ day by day, since the Victorious Christ is an indwelling reality. "Satan to Jesus must bow." But of this, more later.

Believest thou This?

Now, my reader, are you convinced that the Word promises full victory to every believer? Having known the healing touch of the Good Samaritan upon your sin-wounds, that blessed Benefactor will never leave you to your own resources for the remainder of the journey. Having been delivered from the horrible pit of sin, it never is God's will that you should periodically wander back into its dark domain and stodgy atmosphere. The Savior is more than a guarantor of safety from Hell and sin's penalty.

¹ He is sufficiently strong to keep you from sin's dominion day by day. Yes, complete victory is possible all the time, or there must be a defect in the atoning work of Calvary. Since it is proved by abundant Scripture evidence, as well as in the practical experience of saints of God down through the ages, it remains true to this day. Has Christ changed? Is He not yours? Then such a life is possible for you!

Standing and State

Before closing this chapter it should be emphasized that the experimental life of Victory deals exclusively with the believer's *state* day by day, as distinct from his eternal *standing* in Christ. Every true believer is ² "in Christ" forever; that is, as to his standing. To ³ "abide" in Christ day by day, however, is a practical matter which concerns his daily walk and conduct. Every believer is indwelled and ⁴ "sealed with the Holy Spirit," otherwise he is not a believer. As to his state, however, he is exhorted to ⁵ "be filled with the Spirit." Every Christian, in his spiritual standing, possesses *life*. If his *state* is to correspond with his *standing*, however, he must learn the secret of ⁶ life more abundant. Do you see the difference? Your standing in Christ is ⁷ perfect and complete forever, because the perfect One is the accepted One before God, and you are ⁸ accepted in Him. The Holy Spirit's function, however, is to make the blessings of our standing in Christ experimentally real day by day, so that others may see ⁹ Christ in us, and that we may be enabled to possess our possessions in Him. Do not allow the devil to confuse your mind over this important, yet simple,

¹ Hebrews 7:25 ² Philippians 1:1 ³ John 15:4 ⁴ Ephesians 1:13

⁵ Ephesians 5:18 ⁶ John 10:10 ⁷ Hebrews 10:14 ⁸ Ephesians 1:6

⁹ 1 Peter 2:9

distinction. Your *standing* is what you are IN CHRIST positionally; your *state* is what you are in practical daily life and conduct. Remember again that the triumphant life is just CHRIST HIMSELF. He is its ¹ "Alpha" and "Omega," the solution of every problem, the answer to every challenge; and since He dwells within you, triumphant Christian life is your spiritual birthright and glorious inheritance. Now, we must consider another important matter which logically arises at this point.

¹ Revelation 1:8

CHAPTER TWO WHO IS THE TRAITOR WITHIN?

The Two Natures

To understand God's way of victory over sin and self, it is vitally important to recognize the duality of nature in the believer. Many a young Christian has been bothered about the continued recurrence of former sinful desires. As believers they have been "born again," and are true children of God; they are as much "justified" before God as ever they will be; yet they are conscious from time to time that there is a traitor within who ever challenges the will of God in and through them. With every impulse towards holiness, and every urge of the Holy Spirit towards whole-hearted consecration, there is ever ¹ present this *other thing* which

² "wars against the soul." The fact is that every Christian possesses this duality of nature. The Scripture views him in two aspects—as a child of Adam by natural generation, and as a child of God by spiritual regeneration. Having been born ³ "of the earth, earthy," we all participate in and bear the corrupt nature of our fallen parents. When we are born again, we become ⁴ "partakers of the divine nature." The very nature of Christ Himself is imparted to us by the indwelling Holy Spirit. Since the truest saint, however, is not beyond the range of temptation, or exempt from the possibility of yielding to it, the Adam nature is obviously still there, and is neither improved nor removed by regeneration. Every believer, therefore, has *two natures* as distinct from "the natural man" who possesses only one, i.e., the nature which is ⁵ born of the flesh.

¹ Romans 7:21 ² 1 Peter 2:11 ³ 1 Corinthians 15:47 ⁴ 2 Peter 1:4

⁵ John 3:6

An Incessant Warfare

This accounts for the fact that the moment you were “born anew” an incessant warfare commenced in your heart. Paul describes this conflict as, ¹ “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh.” Each of the two natures is ever striving for the mastery. It is possible for you as a Christian to *yield* to either, and the one to whom you yield, ² his servant you are. Later we shall see God’s method of victory over this carnal enemy, but meantime let us emphasize the fact of its existence. These two natures are diametrically antagonistic. The carnal nature ³ “cannot please God.” On the other hand, the divine nature ⁴ “doth not commit sin.” With every impulse of the one, therefore, there is invariably the challenge of the other. Read through Romans 7 and see how the Apostle Paul describes his own conflict along this line. Here are the two “I’s”, the old “I” and the new “I.” ⁵ “When I would do good,” he says, “evil is present with me.” Now this evil principle of sin has a number of designations in the Scripture. In Romans 6 it is referred to as ⁶ the “old man.” Then reference is made in other portions of Scripture to the ⁷ “law of sin and death,” ⁸ “the carnal mind,” the fleshly “members,” etc. In the passage quoted already from Galatians, it is referred to as “the flesh,” and this term we shall use for the purpose of our study. Remember, therefore, that “the flesh” does not refer to this substance that goes to make up our physical bodies, but to the fallen nature which resides within the body. The term “flesh,” in this sense, is really an abbreviation of ⁹ “sin in the flesh,” as we shall see later.

The “Self” Life

It has been helpfully suggested that the best way to define “the flesh,” is to cross out the “h” and spell it backwards. This makes “SELF,” and that, after all, is the very essence of the old nature. We arrive at this simple conclusion, therefore, that there are two possible centers for every Christian life, SELF or CHRIST. The ¹⁰ carnal Christian is one who, though born again, lives a *self*-controlled life, and seeks along many avenues (even in Christian work and ministry) to ¹¹ minister to self. This produces a desire for praise of self, and possibly a resentment of anything in the nature of rebuke or dispraise. This is a sad and subtle temptation, one to which any Christian may yield. We easily become ¹² “I” specialists! Christendom is infested with a dread malady called “Perpendicular-personal-pronoun-I-tis.” It is just that big “I,” the *self* life, that carnal nature, intruding into the realm of spiritual experience and service. What a blessed thing to know the way of ¹³ deliverance from SELF! Remember,

¹ Galatians 5:17 ² Romans 6:16 ³ Romans 8:8 ⁴ 1 John 3:9 ⁵ Romans 7:21

⁶ Romans 6:6 ⁷ Romans 8:2 ⁸ Romans 8:7 ⁹ Romans 8:3

¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 3:3 ¹¹ Romans 15:3 ¹² Luke 18:11-12 ¹³ Romans 7:25

therefore, that the believer possesses these two competitors for the ascendancy, and each is in deadly combat with the other.

Now it is important that we should see what the Scripture has to say about this traitor within, i.e., the flesh. Let us examine the matter simply and carefully.

(1) *It is NOT the physical body.* The Greek word for “body” (*soma*) is quite a different word from that which is used for “the flesh” (*sarx*). The body is a tangible, material substance. “The flesh” is a principle. Indeed, the body of every believer was potentially redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ in His Calvary atonement and actually belongs to God. The term,

¹ vile body,” in our English Authorized Version, is a little misleading. It should read “the body of our humiliation.” The fleshly tabernacle is not something repulsive. It is sacred. ² It is holy unto the Lord. It is the temple of the Holy Ghost. It is to be presented to God as an ³ instrument of righteousness.

⁴ Every whit should utter His glory. Why, then, is the body referred to as a “body of humiliation?” Because it is the residence of this fallen nature, and therefore is subject to disease, sickness, death and ofttime infirmities. The flesh should not be confused with the body. Remember also that the atoning work of Christ included the potential redemption of the body. It will not be ⁵ actually redeemed, however, until the coming again of the Lord Jesus in the air for His Church. Then this earthly tabernacle with all its limitations and weaknesses will give place to a glorified body ⁶ like unto HIS. In the meantime, the believer is responsible to nurture and ⁷ care for the body, thus keeping it as fit as possible for an earthly instrument of service and a vehicle of divine life. To sin against the body either by neglect or through fleshly indulgences, is a sin ⁸ against the Lord. Your body belongs to Him; you are only its tenant. It must be presented “a living sacrifice” to God. To pander to it or use it as an instrument for the mere satisfaction of “the flesh,” or the ⁹ exhibition of camouflage beauty, is grieving to the Holy Spirit of God. ¹⁰ Real beauty in the sight of God is not the product of cosmetics but the outshining of the indwelling Christ. A Quaker lady was once asked the secret of her beautiful complexion. She said, “I use truth for my lips; for my voice, prayer; for my eyes, pity; for my hands, charity; for my figure, uprightness; and for my heart, LOVE.” These heavenly cosmetics are worthy of trial, and are supplied free to every applicant at the Throne of Grace.

(2) *“The Flesh” is Fallen Human Nature.* All that a person is by nature is included in God's designation “the flesh.” Human nature has become

¹ Philippians 3:21 ² Romans 12:1 ³ Romans 6:13 ⁴ Psalm 29:9

⁵ Romans 8:23 ⁶ Philippians 3:21 ⁷ 1 Timothy 4:8 ⁸ 1 Corinthians 3:17

⁹ Galatians 6:12 ¹⁰ Psalm 90:17

¹ “flesh” in the sight of God because of the fall. Man in his failure and corruption before God is “flesh.” A minister in Scotland was out visiting one day when he called at a house where a “new arrival” had recently blessed the home. The proud mother, carrying the infant in her arms, said to the visitor, “Who do you think he is like, Doctor?” His reply was, “Very like Adam, Ma’am.” That was probably a little disappointment to the mother, but it was sound theology! Yes, all that we are by virtue of our natural generation is “flesh”—but of this more in a later paragraph.

(3) *It therefore includes and is responsible for “Indwelling Sin.”* There are some who make a distinction between “the flesh” and “indwelling sin.” This invariably leads to confusion and error. The Apostle Paul gives a very ugly and repulsive catalogue of sins in Galatians 5:19, to which even a Christian may yield if he fails to live under the domination of his new nature. Where do these ugly things come from? The Apostle is careful to tell us that they are “the works of the flesh.” Who could doubt, therefore, that the flesh embraces “indwelling sin?” Paul again refers, in another connection, to ² “sin in the flesh.” Everything that displeases God finds its birth in “the flesh.” The fact is, all human nature is fallen nature. Some may argue that the scriptures quoted have sole reference to “the natural man.” This is not so, however, for similar warnings concerning the sins of ³ the flesh are included in the Epistles to the Church, and in close proximity to the highest doctrines of spiritual experience. Truly, the believer must ever walk close to the Lord, and appropriate the divine means of victory if he is to know deliverance from the subtle maneuverings of this traitor within. When the Apostle says, ⁴ “It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me,” he is not speaking of human nature as distinct from indwelling sin. Such an interpretation would contradict the doctrine he emphasizes in many other references. He is speaking of ⁵ “the new man” in Christ, as distinct from “the old man,” consistently with the rest of the chapter. The new man in Christ has no will to violate God’s purpose. It is “sin that dwelleth” in him.

(4) *“The Flesh” cannot be eradicated or annihilated.* This is very important, and this paragraph should be read in conjunction with the special chapter later devoted to the consideration, “Is it sinless perfection?” Little more need be said on this point here. In Romans 7 Paul expressly declares, “I am carnal.” As you know, there are three classes of men spoken of in the Epistles:

- a) The ⁶ “Natural man,” the unregenerate child of Adam.
- b) The ⁷ “Carnal” man, the “born again” believer living under the domination of “the flesh.”
- c) The ⁸ “Spiritual” man, the believer who is “filled with the Spirit.”

¹ Genesis 6:3 ² Romans 8:3 ³ Ephesians 5:18 ⁴ Romans 7:17

⁵ Ephesians 4:24 ⁶ 1 Corinthians 2:14 ⁷ Romans 7:14 ⁸ 1 Corinthians 2:15

Of whom is the Apostle speaking in Romans 7? Of himself as “carnal.” Therefore, he recognizes the presence of “the flesh” within. In fact, he actually speaks of himself as in captivity to the fleshly nature. When he “would do good, evil is present.” With every desire of holiness he is conscious of *another law* operating in his members. What is this law but the flesh principle within? He further says, “Let not sin therefore *reign* in your mortal bodies.” This clearly infers that sin is *present*, but it must not be allowed to prevail. It cannot, therefore, be eradicated. I once met a dear

**Rendered
Inoperative**

Christian who appeared to advocate the annihilation theory in his ministry. I asked him why he emphasized eradication. His reply was that he did not teach eradication, but used an even stronger word, the word which God used. “Oh,” I said, “what is that?” He said “destroyed,” and then quoted Romans 6:6. “Well,” I responded, “tell me, is *the devil* destroyed in -----?” mentioning the name of his home town. He admitted that this was far from being true. I then pointed out that Hebrews 2:14 clearly pronounces that the devil is “destroyed,” the same word as is used in Romans 6:6. It is obvious, therefore, that the force of the word is not annihilated or abolished, but rather, “rendered inoperative,” or “put out of action,” or “made of none effect.” This is a very different significance. The devil is very busy today. This is ¹ his age, and a worse climax will even yet be reached as the ² age draws on to its midnight. Yet ³ *the devil is a defeated foe*. He was vanquished through the death of the Lord Jesus, and the believer may know constant victory over him *through the* ⁴ *greater power of the indwelling Christ*. I trust this distinction is clear. The ⁵ “Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil.” This He actually accomplished nearly two millennia ago, though the full consummation of His work is not yet apparent. That is yet to be. In the same way “the flesh” is not destroyed in the sense of obliteration, but, thank God, it has been ⁶ “crucified” and may be mortified, as we shall see in a later chapter. another important fact to recognize is that:

(5) “*The Flesh*” includes not only gross sin but all human, natural goodness. This is vitally important, but often an unrecognized truth. If the flesh includes all that a person is naturally, it obviously embraces the good and attractive side of human nature. Yes, “the flesh” has a good side. The natural man may, and often does, ⁷ possess very delightful qualities. He may be kind, amiable, generous, gracious, artistic, religious, well-inclined, accomplished—and possess many other admirable virtues from a human standpoint. It must be remembered, however, that ⁸ *human goodness is never spiritual*. “There is none that doeth good; no, not one.” The flesh does not contain, and cannot produce, anything spiritual. ⁹ “I know that

¹ Luke 22:53 ² Romans 13:12 ³ Colossians 2:15 ⁴ 1 John 4:4 ⁵ 1 John 3:8

⁶ Galatians 5:24 ⁷ Matthew 19:16-22 ⁸ Romans 3:12 ⁹ Romans 7:18

in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.”¹ “They that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Our blessed Lord also said,² “The flesh profiteth nothing.” The two vital words which God writes over the flesh are “CANNOT” and “NOTHING.” It is utterly futile, therefore, to try and improve or patch up the flesh. God can never accept it. It is utterly beyond any hope of recovery. God has³ *condemned* it, root, branch and fruit. There is ever a subtle danger of Christians investing in shares and interests in “The Old Adam Improvement Society.” It is an utterly bankrupt concern, however. The Holy Spirit describes it in commercial phraseology. It is “no good,” and “profiteth nothing.” It pays no spiritual dividends. God can never recognize “flesh,” however humanly attractive it may be. The fact that it includes human goodness is clearly stressed in the Apostle Paul’s own testimony—⁴ “For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he may trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the Church; touching the righteousness which is of the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.” Yes, the Apostle was a good, honest, sincere religionist before his conversion. Which of us could submit such a claim as,⁵ “I have lived *in all good conscience* before God until this day?” Here was a good, religious, moral enthusiast on the road to Hell. He was not an adulterer, or a thief, or a murderer. His morality and his religion were scrupulous. Yet *it all belonged to “the flesh.”* So also with⁶ Nicodemus. Here was a conscientious devotee of the law; he was a “master in Israel.” All his good qualities, however, could never be recognized by God because they belonged to “the natural man.” He must receive a new life. We can now understand why even good people need to be “born again.” God places a vital line of demarcation between “flesh” and “Spirit.” The one is death and the other is life. “The flesh” contains no spiritual life. The natural man is “dead in trespasses and in sins.” He needs to be spiritually quickened. Our blessed Lord emphasized a logical principle when He stated,⁷ “That which is born of the flesh *is flesh.*” Of course it is. It can never become anything else. It may go to Church and be religious, but that is “religious” flesh. It may be accomplished, but it is *only “accomplished” flesh.* You may try to educate a baby pig, but it remains a pig, and all your attempts to improve the manners or appearance of the little creature do not⁸ change its nature. At the first opportunity it will reveal this fact by scampering off again to the dirty pig-sty. The human can never *develop* into the spiritual. All that man is by nature, therefore, is “flesh”—good and

¹ Romans 8:8 ² John 6:63 ³ Romans 8:3 ⁴ Philippians 3:3-7 ⁵ Acts 23:1

⁶ John ch. 3 ⁷ John 3:6 ⁸ Jeremiah 13:23

bad. He may possess wonderful talents by the endowment of natural inheritance, or by human genius, but even these are unacceptable to God until they are lifted into the realm of the Spirit and become animated by divine life. The flesh ever serves ¹“the law of sin.” From the divine standpoint it can never make any contribution to the heavenly program.

The Believer’s “Flesh”

That

Now it is also important to remember, particularly in relation to the life of victory, that “the flesh” in the believer is *exactly the same* as in the unbeliever.

That accounts for the sad fact that if a believer loses touch with the Lord, he may backslide into ² sins which would hardly be named among decent living men of high moral standards. As we have seen already, the difference between the saved and the unsaved man is that the former has a new nature—a divine nature. Notice also that:

(6) *“The Flesh” possesses a will of its own.* John 1:13 speaks of “the will of the flesh,” i.e., the natural or fleshly will. The spiritual man says, ³ “Not my will, but Thine, be done.” He is not governed by his personal likes or dislikes. The yielding to the will of the flesh necessarily involves an arrest of spiritual life. A Christian may yield to the impulses of a fleshly will, producing carnal decisions and natural ⁴ judgments, even in relation to spiritual problems. This must result in confusion and consequent ⁵ grieving of the Holy Spirit. The Lord is never glorified through a decision of the flesh, even though it comes within the circle of orthodox service. The flesh possesses a zeal of its own, but such zeal is not ⁶ “according to knowledge.” Beware of responding to any call or deciding upon any course of action at the impulse of the natural will. Pray before you act and be sure you hear ⁷“What the Spirit saith.” The new man in Christ hears a voice behind him saying, ⁸ “This is the way, walk ye in it.” What havoc and desolation have been wrought in many an assembly because of an important judgment arrived at in the flesh! Further, how often a fleshly judgment has manifested itself in the imputation of a wrong motive and a harsh, unkind conclusion concerning another Christian. “The flesh” is responsible for all unjust criticism. It has a language all its own. The fleshly tongue is ⁹ set on fire of hell. There is a spiritual and constructive criticism which redounds to the Lord’s glory. Let us see to it that before we speak critically of another we ask the Lord to put the caustic of the Cross upon our fleshly lips, and first question ourselves along this line: “Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary?” Notice lastly:

(7) ¹⁰*“The Flesh” has its lusts.* Turn up the scriptures in these references and see what God has to say about this matter. The “lusts of the flesh” can only be conquered by a ¹¹ “walk in the Spirit,” and a definite refusal

¹ Romans 7:25 ² Romans 6:21 ³ Luke 22:42 ⁴ John 8:15 ⁵ Ephesians 4:30

⁶ Romans 10:2 ⁷ Revelation 2:7 ⁸ Isaiah 30:21 ⁹ James 3:6 ¹⁰ Romans 13:14; Galatians 5:24; 1 Peter 2:11; 2 Peter 2:18 ¹¹ Galatians 5:16

to make any *provision* for their fulfillment. A boy was told by his mother that he was not to bathe in certain water, and if ever he was tempted to do so he was to refuse the suggestion of the Evil One. One day he disobeyed, and when asked why he had done so, he said that the devil tempted him and he could not resist. His mother saw that he had returned with his bathing suit, however, and at once asked the boy why he had taken his togs with him. Said the boy, "I took them *in case I might be tempted.*" Moral: "Make no provision for the lusts of the flesh."

So much then for "the flesh." What a repulsive thing it is in the sight of God! What should be the Christian's attitude toward this evil factory of sin and unrighteousness? We should ¹ "hate" it. We shall see how it can be overcome. The victorious life is *not trying to conquer SINS*, as some seem to believe. What a hopeless and disappointing task that is! Real victory finds deliverance from the power of indwelling Sin

A Christian often used to pray at his prayer meeting—"Lord, take away the *cobwebs* of sin from my life." The poor man was evidently fighting his sins one by one, and seemed to be enveloped in carnal cobwebs! Another saint was present, however, who knew more about the divine way of victory, and he got to his feet and prayed, "Lord, kill THE SPIDER!"

Now in the next chapter we shall see the divine method of dealing with "the flesh," this internal traitor!

¹ Jude 23

CHAPTER THREE WHAT IS THE DEEPER MEANING OF THE CROSS?

Identification with Christ

Do you realize, my brother or sister, that there is a deeper meaning of the Cross, constituting a much neglected and vitally important aspect of the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary? While the substitutionary work of the Savior is the only ground of a sinner's justification, it is important to realize that the Atonement embraces something more even than that. The Savior's redemptive work also includes the glorious fact of "Identification." This we must consider under the careful illumination and guidance of the Holy Spirit in order to apprehend the divine way of victory. If there is one subject more than another which arouses the antipathy of the Evil One, and about which he uses every endeavor to keep God's people in darkness, it is this second and deeper aspect of the Atonement. Let us pray as we consider it.

We have seen that "the flesh" dwells within these bodies of humiliation, and will so remain until the earthly course is completed. In Old Testament

typology, ¹ Amalek represents the flesh. You will remember that war is declared upon him ² "from generation to generation" until *finally* his remembrance is ³ "put out" forever. This cannot be until we have glorified bodies, liberated from the very *presence* of sin. In the meantime, how can this "old man," this corrupt nature, be dealt with? That is the problem to which many an earnest Christian is seeking a genuine solution. Is it God's decree that this evil root of sin should continually bring forth its poisonous fruit, leaving the Christian to pluck off the berries one by one as they appear? Must the spider be allowed to envelop the life with its wretched cobwebs? Has the believer no alternative but a recurring experience of sinning and repenting? Yes, thank God, there is a more excellent way. Here is good news. Follow this carefully. In the glorious purpose of redemption the flesh *has already been dealt with fully and finally at the Cross of Calvary*. In the expiatory sacrifice of Christ, not only were your sins righteously atoned for, but SIN (in its entirety) was ⁴ "PUT AWAY." Calvary penetrates to the very heart of the question, and in the death of the Lord Jesus, *God saw the end of the old Adam life, the corrupt fallen human nature, and wound it up forever as an utterly bankrupt concern*. In other words, every believer was represented and incorporated into the death of the Lord Jesus. ⁵ "He died unto sin once," and therefore every believer, in the purpose of God, *died with Him*. The Cross marks the death-knell and the complete termination of the "flesh" in the sight of God. I want to quote you a few references in this important matter:

⁶ "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized unto Jesus Christ were baptized unto His

death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: 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. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.”

⁷ “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”

⁸ “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead.”

¹ Exodus 17:8 ² Exodus 17:16 ³ Exodus 17:14 ⁴ Hebrews 9:26
⁵ Romans 6:10 ⁶ Romans 6:1-8 ⁷ Romans 8:3 ⁸ 2 Corinthians 5:14

¹ “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death.”

² For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

What has God done, therefore, with the flesh? He does not *forgive* it or *condone* it. God forgives ³ *the sinner* but He *condemns* sin. Do you see, therefore, that in the Savior’s representative capacity, God saw the death of every believer, as far as the flesh-life is concerned, at the Cross? “If One died for all, then *all have died*.”

“All Have Died”

He dealt with the whole sin question as your *Representative* and mine. A representative is one who acts *on behalf* of another. An ambassador’s actions and words are those of the country he represents. The Lord Jesus “died unto sin” as your Representative. So far as your self-life is concerned, therefore, your existence came to an end nearly two thousand years ago in the divine purpose. It may be you do not understand that. Never mind, believe it! God says so. “*Our old man has been crucified with Him.*”

I have read a story which may make this clear to you. During the American Civil War, when men were drawn by lot to join the Army, a man named Wyatt was called up to fight for the South. He was the breadwinner for his family and they were entirely dependent upon him. Realizing this hardship, another young man named Pratt volunteered to go instead. He was accepted and drafted to the Front *bearing the name and number of Wyatt*. Eventually Pratt was killed in action, and having died as the substitute and in the name of the other man, the full name of Wyatt was recorded as killed in action. At a later date Wyatt was again called up for service, but at the Recruiting Office he calmly stated that *he had already been killed in action*. The entry was searched for and discovered, and Wyatt, although alive and well, was *dead in the eyes of the authorities* because he was identified with his substitute. Does that help you to understand it?

You *died* with Him. You were *buried* with Him. You were “*planted together*” in the likeness of His death. You were “*crucified*” with Him . All this is an accomplished fact in the heavenly purpose, apart altogether from the believer’s apprehension of it. The way by which it is made real in experience is another matter which we will deal with in the next chapter. Meantime, lay hold of the fact that God has conclusively dealt with the flesh nearly two millennia ago in the death of His Son. Having seen this, another blessed fact is also revealed, that every *believer has also been identified with Him in His resurrection and His ascension*. Read the

¹ Philippians 3:10 ² Colossians 3:3 ³ Matthew 6:14-15

following passages:

¹ “Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life, For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.”

² “Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him.”

³ 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 hath made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

Dead, Buried, Raised and Ascended with Him

Now let us examine the mighty sweep of this tremendous truth. Every believer without exception, every member of the Body of Christ, every justified sinner is seen by God as ⁴ one with Christ in His death, burial, resurrection and ascension. We thus conclude that three mighty transactions were effected at Calvary.

Three Calvary Facts

- (1) The believer's sins were righteously forgiven.
- (2) The flesh, that internal traitor, was condemned and put away.
- (3) The birth of a “new creation” took place. A New Man in contrast to “the old man” came into being, and every believer forms an integral part of that new creation, “joined to the Lord one Spirit.” To what intent? That he should no longer live unto himself (i.e., *to the flesh*) but henceforth ⁵ “unto Him which died for them and rose again.” All this is a blessed accomplishment in the divine purpose, to find practical outworking in experience day by day. Look again at Romans 6. In verse 4 the objective is “newness of life.” That means that the believer should possess a new mind, a new heart, new desires, new ambitions, new pursuits, new joys, a new peace, a new power, a new victory—in fact, ⁶ “all things are become new.” ⁷ “The flesh” ceases its dominion. The believer is no longer ⁸ debtor to the flesh, i.e., no longer under any obligation to serve sin, any more than the children of Israel were under further obligation to Pharaoh as they marched out of his dominion in that victorious passage through the Red Sea.

¹ Romans 6:4-5 ² Romans 6:8-9 ³ Ephesians 2:4-7 ⁴ 1 Corinthians 6:17

⁵ 2 Corinthians 5:15 ⁶ 2 Corinthians 5:17 ⁷ Colossians 3:9 ⁸ Romans 8:12

Do you now appreciate, my reader, that the Cross means something more than the Lord Jesus dying for our sins? Take that second look at the Cross and ask God to reveal its meaning to your heart: ¹ “*I have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*”

² “*Ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*” Believest thou this?

The Fact and the Experience of it

The next question that arises quite logically and normally in the mind is that experience often proves that the flesh in the believer’s life is NOT eradicated. It is often very much alive and manifests itself in distressing ways which mar his testimony, disturb his joy, and canker his usefulness. How can this apparent contradiction be reconciled? The Word of God clearly declares that “the old man” is crucified, whereas experience proves beyond doubt that the flesh often asserts itself like a “Jack-in-the-box” at the least provocation, and at the most unexpected moments! Now we need to recognize the distinction between what happened *once and for all* in ³ the eternal purpose at the Cross, and that which is made experimentally true in *experience* day by day. Obviously there may be a vital difference. While it stands eternally true that a full and complete salvation was wrought out to its finality at the Cross its blessings do not become practically real in *experience until they are appropriated*. How may this be done? The answer is simple. ⁴ BY FAITH. Think of your conversion for a moment. Was it not true and an accomplished fact, long before it became experimental to you, that Jesus died for you? Why, certainly; before your conversion it was *just as true* as after your conversion. What made the difference, then? *You believed it* and accepted Him into your heart, did you not? How did you receive Him?

⁵ By faith. So that faith made God’s eternal fact of experimental value to you. Do you see that? Let us pursue this important enquiry in the next chapter.

¹ Galatians 2:20 ² Colossians 3:3 ³ Ephesians 3:11 ⁴ Hebrews 11:1 ⁵ Ephesians 2:8

CHAPTER FOUR HOW DOES CALVARY BECOME REAL IN THE BELIEVER'S DAILY LIFE?

The Art of Reckoning

Here we come to the blessed theme of the triumphant "reckoning" of faith. Turn to Romans 6 again. What do we find the Apostle exhorting in verse 11? His logic is perfect. Having emphasized the believer's death with Christ, he now says, "Likewise reckon ye also *yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.*" Reckon on what? Reckon on God's fact that "the old man has been crucified" with Christ, and that you have been raised again with Him into "newness of life." The *fact*, of course, is eternal. Even my ¹ unbelief does not alter the truth of God, though it will rob me of the blessing of it. What does it mean to "reckon?" Surely it is simply *counting on a fact*. I am told that a pool of ice is strong enough to bear me. Immediately I *stand upon* the ice, however, and commit myself to it, I *reckon on the fact* and actually *prove it true*. A sum of money is credited to my account in the Bank. Even though it is mine, it may long remain unenjoyed and unappropriated. Immediately I draw my check, however, and present it at the Bank for payment, I reckon on the fact that the money belongs to me and actually possess my possessions.

"Victory...Even Our Faith."

Now this is tremendously important. The Christian life, from its Alpha to its Omega, is essentially a life of *faith*. ² This is the victory...even our *faith*." What does real faith accomplish? It ³ turns God's promises into facts of experience. No potential blessing in Christ becomes real to me *until it is*

appropriated, and that by the victorious art of “reckoning.” A condemned prisoner may be offered a signed pardon, but it is only a scrap of paper until it is appropriated. It is his *potentially* immediately it is signed, but it is not his *experimentally* until he claims it and acts upon it. Now how does this work out in the Christian's experience? Very simply and very blessedly. God says in effect, “My child, as you reckoned on the substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus Christ for your salvation, now go a step further and reckon on His representative work for your victory day by day.” You believe that the Lord Jesus died for you because God said so. Now take the next step. Accept by faith the further fact that *you died with Him, i.e.*, that your “old man was crucified with Him.” Believe also that you rose with Him into newness of life, and henceforth “*reckon yourself to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God.*” Do you see that, my fellow believer? If so, you will appreciate at once that ⁴ victory does not come by struggling or agonizing, but by ⁵ *reckoning*.

“Come down from the Cross”

Let me suggest a further practical consideration along this line. What will happen if you *reckon yourself dead to sin*? Imagine the devil approaching you, as he doubtless often does, with ⁶ temptation to sin. What part of you can respond to him? Obviously not the new man, for ⁷ “that which is born of God doth not commit sin.” Any response, therefore, will come from “the flesh.” Exactly. The devil's objective is to get

¹ Romans 3:3 ² 1 John 5:4 ³ Hebrews 6:12 ⁴ 1 Corinthians 15:57

⁵ 2 Corinthians 4:10 ⁶ James 1:13 ⁷ 1 John 3:9

the flesh into activity, for the flesh is the devil's battleground. Yes, the Savior's temptation is that of everyone who is joined to Him: ¹ "Come down from the Cross." Thank God, He won the victory in that supreme hour and became ² "obedient unto death." You and I also may share His triumph by reckoning on the fact that we are identified with Him. Suppose, then, that in this moment of temptation you assume a simple attitude of faith and *reckon yourself to be dead to sin*; what is the result? We read, ³ "He that hath died is *freed from sin*." Testify to the evil one that you are dead: "No, these hands cannot commit sin because they have been crucified with Christ." Tell me, what can the devil do with dead hands? Do you see? ⁴ "This is the victory...*even our faith*." Wherever or whatever the temptation may be, therefore, there is ⁵ "a way of escape."

Dying—Not Doing

A dead man cannot respond to sinful inducements, however alluring. Imagine a man, addicted to alcohol, drinking himself to death. There is his lifeless corpse! Now you may surround his body with all the strong drink you can discover. What is the effect? NIL! For what reason? Drink has exercised its full dominion over him. He is now dead, and there is no further response. Apply the illustration. Death exercised its full dominion over the Lord Jesus as He was ⁶ "made sin" for you and me. You and I have been incorporated into His death. Therefore, argues the Apostle, ⁷ "Sin shall not have dominion over you." Is not that the victory you have been seeking? We can only conquer sin and self by *dying* to them.

I have heard of two society girls who were gloriously converted to God. A few days after they were saved, an invitation came from some of their former friends to attend the theater. They had no further desire for the things of the world, however, and their reply was both courteous and interesting. It was to this effect: "Thank you for your kind invitation to go to the theater; we cannot attend, however, as we *are dead*! We died with Christ a week ago." That is it!

Now it is clear that victory comes through the reckoning of faith and not through struggling and striving. "But," it may be asked, "are we not exhorted to ⁸ 'fight the good fight?' " Yes, that is so; but you must please finish the text, "Fight the good fight OF FAITH," and faith never struggles for victory. Faith *stands IN* victory, and combats the forces of darkness *from a victory position*.

Standing in Victory

Yes, the Christian does not fight for victory but stands IN a victory

¹ Matthew 27:40 ² Philippians 2:8 ³ Romans 6:7 ⁴ 1 John 5:4 ⁵ 1 Corinthians 10:13

⁶ 2 Corinthians 5:21 ⁷ Romans 6:14 ⁸ 1 Timothy 6:12

already won. But are not Christians exhorted to ¹ “resist the devil?” Certainly; but here again please remember the other word, ² “Whom resist, steadfast *in the faith*.” You see it is faith holding a position, and not *struggling* for a position. What a blessed secret is here revealed! Reckon! Reckon! Reckon! Rest on God's FACT.

I heard of a Christian who asked another to pray for him, particularly that he “might be *nothing*.” “There is no need to pray for that, brother,” answered the other, “you ARE nothing; *accept it by faith*.”

Apply this death-principle to all fleshly manifestations. Are you tempted to jealousy? Then reckon yourself to be dead. Can a dead man be jealous? Are you subject to the tyranny of a hasty tongue? Does the unkind word slip out? Reckon yourself to be “crucified with Christ.” Can a crucified man say unkind things? Are you sensitive to the opinions, the criticism or the eulogies of others? Reckon yourself dead. Can a dead man be offended? Go to a cemetery, find the grave of a man you knew, make a trumpet with both your hands and shout over that grave all the praise or blame, eulogy or hatred, of which you are capable, and you only waste your time! He is dead, and quite impervious to other people's opinions. Simple enough, yes, but that is the way of victory. God's way is simple.

Dead Men Cannot Sin

³ “Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as My messenger that I send? Who is blind as he that is at peace with Me, and blind as the Lord's servant? Thou seest many things, but thou observest not; his ears are open, but he heareth not.” The servant of God may see, and yet be blind; he may hear, and yet be deaf. He may have lips, and yet be silent. He may be dead, and yet live.

“I am not now what once I was,
Nor am I what I ought to be,
But what I am, I am by grace,
And when I see Him face to face,
I shall be like Him perfectly.

I once was dead, yet thought I lived,
And now I live, yet dead I am—
I live in Him with whom I died,
I to the world am crucified,
My life, my song, is Calvary's Lamb.

A Christian man recently wrote, concerning his relation to a certain

¹ James 4:7 ² 1 Peter 5:9 ³ Isaiah 42:19-20

important work in connection with which one of his suggestions had not been acted upon, "I just want to keep a humble out-of-sight place in my relation to that work, and be everything else. I am nothing, anyway, and I don't want anyone ever to succeed in making me think that I am anything; for if they do, from that time on I'll be nothing in the worst sort of sense. So just feel free to write me anything that is on your heart, critical or otherwise, and ask God to give me grace to take it in the way that a WISE DEAD man ought to take it. I am His bonds slave." Yes, we can be dead and we can be wise at the same time. Indeed, until we have accepted our own death through crucifixion with Christ, we can never let the wisdom of God have free course in our life.

¹ "But Alive unto God"

Then remember the other side and reckon also on the fact that you have been "raised together with Christ." "I have been crucified with Christ, *nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*" Do you see that? Your whole being has come under a new control. "*This business is under new management.*" While it is true, therefore, that we are to be dead to sin, we are not to be corpses. VICTORY IS LIFE. Having been identified with Him in His risen life, these same members, this identical body, this very mind and intellect, these same faculties—reckoned dead to sin—are now to be *alive unto God*. Your whole being is to come under the domination of the new nature which is energized by the Christ-life. When the devil knocks at the door with his seductive suggestions, he is told to go his way, for the old and loyal friend who used to welcome him has now ceased to exist. Such an attitude alone can overcome his subtle devices. Yes, Calvary is Victory. Then there comes another appeal! Here

Calvary is Victory

is a request, or urge, from the Holy Spirit to some service for the kingdom of God. What is your response now? "Yes, Lord, here am I; here are my hands, my feet, my mind, my time, my money; they are all thine, Lord, and I am ready for Thy commands; take me, use me, fill me and keep me ever responsive to Thy will. I am not my own, I am bought with a price." You see it is simply saying "no" to the devil, and "yes" to the Lord, *i.e.*, dead unto sin but alive unto God. Victory is yours, therefore, by Calvary becoming experimentally real in your life day by day. Nearly two thousand years ago the devil was overthrown; the world was overcome, and the flesh crucified, at Calvary. There ² "the Seed of the woman" bruised the serpent's head; there the evil one was ignominiously defeated on his own battle-ground. Calvary, blest Calvary! Only as Calvary is worked out in the believer day by day, by a consent to the ³ "sentence of death" upon "the old man," and a recognition of the claims of Him with whom we have risen into newness of life, can we discover victory in practical experience.

¹ Romans 6:11 ² Genesis 3:15 ³ 2 Corinthians 1:9

Now two further points concerning the reckoning of faith need to be emphasized here:

It is Not a “Once for All” Reckoning

Reckoning ourselves as dead indeed unto sin is not a *final crisis*, but a *continuous process*. It is not a second blessing, nor is it a millionth blessing, for that matter. It represents blessings innumerable every day. The Christian life is essentially a “moment-by-moment” life. It is a continuous dying, and a continuous living. Of course, there may come a particular crisis in experience where the Spirit of God brings the soul face to face with a definite issue as to a *willingness* for the Cross, and full surrender of the whole life to God. Yes, the first revelation of the secret of victory also may constitute a real crisis in the life of the believer, but *that crisis or experience can never, in itself, avail for the future*. There is a subtle danger in relying upon some isolated experience of “sanctification,” so-called. The victorious Christian life is a Person, not an experience. Following the crisis, whatever phase or landmark in the life that may represent, there must be the *daily reckoning*, the moment-by-moment abiding, and the

Moment-by-Moment unceasing control of the Holy Spirit. ¹ “*Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.*”
 Whatever may have been your experience of holiness, and the measure of spiritual attainments in the past, you can *never get beyond the need for* ² *abiding in Christ and the continuous reckoning* of faith. Fail to reckon, and “the flesh” is at once resurrected! In other words, to forfeit the faith position is to ³ offer capital to the enemy and a battle-ground upon which he may pursue his challenge. Unfortified flesh is the devil’s hunting ground. The Christian life, therefore, is one continuous impartation of life from above, by the indwelling Holy Spirit, made possible by the continuous dethronement of

Jesus Only the self-life. Beware of depending upon externalities for the subsistence of your Christian life. God has graciously given to His people means of grace which indispensably contribute to the outworking of His purpose, but these agencies must never be depended upon *in themselves*, or allowed to be substitutes for a moment-by-moment intercourse with the Lord Jesus. ⁴ HE is your life, not *things*! Some of God’s dear people are “Conference Christians,” for example. They almost live on Conferences; they seem to attend every meeting with scrupulous regularity, and by the end of a particular series of meetings, with its fresh impetus, they are “charged up” like an electric battery, and go their way again in the wistful hope that they will hold out until the advent of the next Conference! Beloved, that is not God’s way. Thank God for Conferences, with their spiritual ministry and delightful Christian fellowship. They are undoubtedly divine appointments and

¹ 2 Corinthians 4:10 ² 1 John 2:28 ³ Ephesians 4:27 ⁴ Colossians 3:4

means of grace and strengthening to the Church. Never allow them, however, to become the basis of your spiritual experience. Nothing can substitute a constant, personal, moment-by-moment communion with the Most High. Indeed, one of the real tests of the victorious life is an ability to go on with the Lord in constant, joyous victory, even though there may be an unavoidable severance from Conference ministry and the fellowship of other believers. The Word of God declares that ¹two may put ten thousand to flight. The two are the believer and his Lord!

Now the other thing that needs to be said in connection with “Reckoning” is that

It is Not a Mere Mental Effort

It is a mental reckoning, of course, but not solely a process of the mind. Some young Christians have been bothered because they have *tried hard to reckon themselves dead to sin*, but somehow it did not work. Why is this? The main reason is that God always links “reckoning” with “surrender.” ² In Romans 6 these injunctions are also associated. To attempt to reckon yourself dead to sin without yielding your will to the Holy Spirit will inevitably lead to failure and discouragement. A mental reckoning, in itself, can never experimentally crucify the flesh. *The flesh can only be reckoned dead by the power of the new life.* ³ Such power is imparted by the Holy Spirit when the whole being—spirit, soul and body—is surrendered to Him. If your will is unyielded all your reckoning will be futile. ⁴ Your will must be handed over to the Lord and be energized by divine power. Only as you are occupied with Christ in the power of an ungrieved Spirit, can you successfully “reckon” on death to sin. *The flesh cannot crucify the flesh.* The indwelling Spirit alone can impart the power to mortify the flesh. The blessed function of the Holy Spirit is to make the LIFE of the Lord Jesus real in the believer day by day. That is a liberating life. The gateway into resurrection life is by way of death, and the way to die is to yield to the new life. The two are inseparable. Pardon a personal allusion just here. For years I was a cigarette smoker, though a Christian. One day the Lord spoke clearly to me in conviction about this habit. I wanted to be free, but I knew very well that so long as my will was unyielded, and the “*want to*” was there, all my reckoning would end in failure! The supreme need was to “LET GO,” and *yield my members to the Lord* for His supreme control. By His grace I consented so to do, and at once there was a blessed accession of divine life, a loss of appetite for the weed, and praise His Name, since then I have possessed the *spiritual ability* to reckon that *dead men do not smoke!* This side of reckoning is vastly important. Only as you *yield*, can you *reckon*. “*Ye through the SPIRIT do mortify...*”

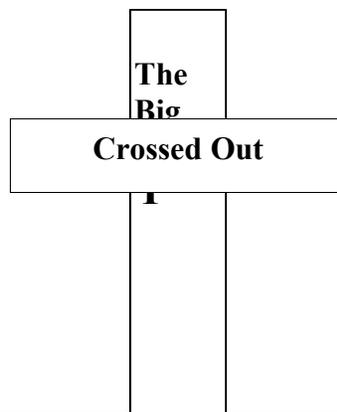
¹ Deuteronomy 32:30 ² Romans 6:11, 13 ³ Romans 8:13 ⁴ John 5:30

“But if it Die—“

Now it is manifest that the Holy Spirit will bring the believer face to face with a definite issue along this line. Am I prepared to say “Amen” to a real outworking of the Cross? It is not sufficient to bow our assent to this truth as a matter of objective doctrine. Indeed, it is sadly possible to have a very *high doctrine* and a very *low practice*. The real issue is this: Am I willing to die? This is an experimental death, a *real death*.¹ “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and *die*, it abideth alone, BUT IF IT DIE it bringeth forth much fruit.” Of course this has primary reference to the Lord Jesus, but it is essentially the way of blessing for all His followers. I was impressed some time ago by the words which precede the divine description of those seven downward steps of the Lord Jesus from the Glory to the Cross in Philippians 2. You will recollect that the climax is His “obedience unto death, even the death of the Cross.” Notice the preceding sentence,² “Let *this mind be IN YOU*, which was also in Christ Jesus.” Yes, have I³ the

The Cross a a Symbol of Death

mind of Christ to this same end? Am I willing, for example, that my⁴ reputation should go to Calvary? Am I willing to *humble myself* and become⁵ “obedient unto death?” Nothing short of this is involved in the Lord’s appeal. Until the cross means this to you and me, it means little.⁶ “If any man will follow Me, let him deny himself and take up HIS CROSS and follow Me.” What is the cross, after all? It is not a fetish, or an object to be admired, or a charm to be hung around the neck. No, indeed! There is only *one cross*, and that is *the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ*, with which every believer has been identified. The cross is essentially a symbol of *death*. It is *something to die on*. To take up my cross is to consent to a sentence of death upon myself. Self denial is not forfeiting a few luxuries during a certain period, and then returning to their indulgence again with a sigh of relief when the Lenten era has expired! No, “self-denial” is not a forfeiting of *things*, but the abandonment, the dethronement, the abnegation and crucifixion of SELF. The cross is the big “I” crossed out!



¹ John 12:24 ² Philippians 2:5 ³ 1 Corinthians 2:16 ⁴ Philippians 2:7

⁵ Philippians 2:8 ⁶ Matthew 16:24

As Dr. E. J. Pace suggests in one of his cartoons, "Christian" means "CHRIST" and the "I-A-N" stands for ⁴ "I AM NOTHING." Here we come to the *crux* of the whole matter concerning personal victory and an effective, holy, happy Christian testimony. There can be no Crown without the Cross. There can be no life without death. There can be no "Canaan" without "Jordan."

The Eternal Fact

Let us not think of the Cross as an isolated event in the history of the universe. It is a great *eternal fact* in the purpose of God. It was no afterthought, or merely an unhappy termination to a wonderful life. It is not a postscript in God's letter to man. Away back in the past eternity there was ² "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Look in to the future eternity and see the redeemed multitudes surrounding the throne of God and of the ³ "Lamb as it had been (freshly) slain." Calvary lies between the two eternities, and during this interim the purpose of the Holy Spirit is to work out the meaning of the Cross in the Church and in the individual believer, thus enabling the Body to function effectively in the life of the risen Head. ⁴ No flesh can intrude into this sphere. It must die.

The Real Issue

My brother, my sister, before we pass on to a more definite consideration of the risen life of the Lord Jesus in the believer, shall we, you and I together, face this question? Am I, are you, willing to die? Are we prepared for the Holy Spirit to plant the cross upon our flesh-life? Shall we say "yes" to the nails of the Cross going through those ugly things which have marred our testimony and over which we have never gained victory? Shall we tell the Lord that we are willing for Jordan as the only way into the promised land of Canaan? This means the ⁵ burial in the waters of death of the stones of the self-life. Twelve other stones were taken from the bed of the river and ⁶ placed on Canaan's soil; a beautiful picture of resurrection life out of the waters of death. The word comes in freshness to writer and reader alike today, ⁷ "GO OVER THIS JORDAN."

The power of God makes this possible as we go through with Him. There is no other way. Nature itself illustrates this abiding principle in all the works of God. All life is born out of death. The autumn leaves fall to their death,

Red and Gold by the power of, and in order to make way for the advent of, new life, and notice how God paints them with special tints—red and gold, the red to remind us of the Cross, while the gold speaks of the Glory. How often the ⁸ sufferings of Christ are linked with His glory! His way is your way, dear Christian. Watch

¹ John 3:30 ² Revelation 13:8 ³ Revelation 5:6 ⁴ 1 Corinthians 1:29 ⁵ Joshua 4:9
⁶ Joshua 4:8 ⁷ Joshua 1:2 ⁸ 1 Peter 1:11

that magnificent sunset at the close of a calm summer day. See that exquisite glory which illuminates the heavens. That “greater light” gives forth its most exquisite radiance *after it has sunk* below the horizon. Yes, there is a ¹ glory in the Cross and, further, there is no *real glory* apart from the Cross. Does that sound like a paradox? The Cross is a paradox, unexplainable by the natural mind. The Cross is God's masterpiece.

Seek the power of the Holy Spirit that it may become real to you every day and every moment of the day. Listen again to the Apostle Paul, ² “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, *being made conformable unto His death.*”

“THE CROSS IS GOD’S MASTERPIECE”

CHAPTER FIVE

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF “CHRIST LIVETH IN ME?”**“Christ in You, the Hope of Glory”**

Here is a wonderful revelation which was locked up in the heart of God for centuries and hidden from the heart of God for centuries and hidden from the hearts of Old Testament worthies. This is ¹ “the mystery that hath been hidden from all ages and generations, but now hath it been revealed to His saints”—to you, my brother or sister—“which is CHRIST IN YOU, the hope of Glory.” What a stupendous thought, transcending our finite comprehension! The Christ of God, in whom ² “dwellleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,” condescends to live within the redeemed spirit of a man. We can conceive of Him as God incarnate, born in the manger, and living as a Man amongst men; we can think of Him filling the whole universe with His majesty and glory; we can conceive of Him occupying the heavens with all the celestial creation in

unquestioning subjection to Him, but to think that He actually
“I in You” condescends to come down and dwell within ME, a worm of the dust, is truly beyond human understanding! In fact it can only be appreciated and realized to any degree by ³ divine revelation. The Holy Spirit causes the indwelling Savior to become a blessed, living reality. ⁴ “At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, AND I IN YOU.” The Lord Jesus also pronounces that the Holy Spirit ⁵ “abideth with you, and shall be IN you.”

This wonderful mystery introduces us to the fact that the Lord Jesus *still lives in this world*. Although He now resides in a different body from that local, physical tabernacle in which He moved in the days of His flesh, He continues His incarnation. Do you remember how HE looked forward, on one occasion, to the time when this great purpose should become an accomplished fact? ⁶ “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened (i.e., pent up, or held in) until this be accomplished.” Although such a mighty and gracious purpose would necessarily involve the sufferings of Golgotha and the death of the cross, the Lord Jesus anticipated ⁷ “the joy set before Him” when, through that mighty atonement, a glorious release of divine life would become possible. Since the descent of the Holy Ghost at ⁸ Pentecost, and down through this age of grace, the primary purpose of God centers around *the formation of this new* ⁹ *Body, which is the Church*, a ¹⁰ spiritual house composed of living stones, i.e., all true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Wherever a soul has

¹ Colossians 1:26-27 ² Colossians 2:9 ³ Galatians 1:16 ⁴ John 14:20

⁵ John 14:17 ⁶ Luke 12:50 ⁷ Hebrews 12:2 ⁸ Acts 2. ⁹ Colossians 1:24

¹⁰ 1 Peter 2:5

come to the “fount open ¹ for sin and uncleanness,” finding peace of heart and life eternal, there is an earthly manifestation of the very life of Jesus. To every heart open to Him the Lord Jesus says, ² “I will come in.”

³ This heavenly treasure becomes resident in earthly vessels. The body of every believer becomes a temple of the Holy Ghost and a vehicle of divine life. ⁴ “Jesus Christ is IN you except ye be reprobates.” Now let us simply consider two great implications of this wonderful truth. If Christ dwells within you then:

(1) **You become His.** The usurper’s authority has been annulled. The Lord Jesus, who claims you by right of creation and of redemption, has been given possession. A boy made a boat one day from a rough piece of wood with his penknife. Having made it, he lost it. Some time afterwards, to his surprise, he saw this very boat in a shop window. He asked for it, but the shopkeeper claimed it as his own property and said that it could not be surrendered without payment. Putting down the necessary price the boy walked out with his precious boat once again in his possession, and looking down upon it he said, “I *made* you, I *lost* you, I *found* you, I *bought* you; you are mine.” So the Lord Jesus ⁵ redeems His property from the Adversary, and of every sinner saved by grace He says, “I *created* you, I *lost* you through sin, I *found* you in your need, I *bought* you by blood; YOU ARE MINE.” Yes, His residence implies the right of possession. ⁶ You are not your own. All that you have and are belong to Him. Your body with all its members, your faculties, your talents, your time, your money, your possessions, your heart. His to show forth His beauty and glory. Do you remember how the face of ⁷ Moses shone with the glow of heaven after he had ascended into the mount with God? This should ever be one of the manifestations of the glorified life. A long-faced Christian is a slander on the joy of the lord. ⁸ Victory and joy always go together.

Your Eyes become His to exhibit His sympathy and tenderness. He wants to look on the world’s need ⁹ through your eyes. A Christian should realize this and never lend his eyes to the devil. They belong to the Lord. What a difference it makes when you see things from His point of view!

“Heaven above is softer blue,
 Earth around is sweeter green,
 Something lives in every hue
 Christless eyes have never seen;
 Birds with gladder songs o’erflow,
 Flowers with deeper beauty shine,
 Since I know—as now I know—
 I AM HIS AND HE IS MINE.”

¹ Zechariah 13:1 ² Revelation 3:20 ³ 2 Corinthians 4:7 ⁴ 2 Corinthians 13:5

⁵ 1 Peter 1:18 ⁶ 1 Corinthians 6:20 ⁷ Exodus 34:29 ⁸ Isaiah 12. ⁹ John 4:35

Let us yield our eyes to Him. In the vilest sinner we shall see a potential saint. You will not see ¹ the mote in your brother's eye without discovering that it is the reflection of the beam in your own. Be careful how you use your eyes. They are His; let Him control your vision.

² *Your Lips* become His to speak His messages. This means that the harsh, unkind word remains unspoken. Others will marvel at the ³ "gracious words which come forth" out of your mouth—even under provocation. ⁴ "Never man spake like this Man" was the testimony of His enemies, and *this is the Man* who lives within you. In that ministry to which the Lord has called you remember that you are only the instrument for the expression of *His* message. It is not what you say for Him that counts, but what ⁵ *He* says *through* you. That makes a difference. His words are ⁶ spirit and life. The word going forth out of His mouth cannot return unto Him void. Remember, your lips are His. Never lend them to the devil. What havoc has been wrought in many a Church and many a life by the cruel ⁷ gossip-monger and the tattling busybody!

Your Ears become His ears. They will be sensitive to every cry of spiritual need. The Savior heard ⁸ the cry of Bartimeus above the din of the crowd, and in selfless compassion He "stood still," even though the burden of the cross was heavy upon Him. This same Savior lives in you and wants to ⁹ hear the plaintive cry of the world's need through your ears. Tune in to the bleating of the lost sheep whom the Lord would rescue through you. Never lend your ears to the devil. ¹⁰ "Take heed what ye hear." Refuse to hear the voice of the tempter or give your sanction to the spread of false reports and idle rumor concerning others. Your ears are His. As the Lord Jesus ever communed with the Father, so there may be in your life that intimate fellowship with God which enables you to catch His communications day by day.

"No tender voice like Thine
Can peace afford."

Your Mind becomes His, to think His thoughts. It becomes the very "mind of Christ," because He thinks through you. ¹¹ "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Cultivate spiritual thinking. This is the secret of true spiritual discernment, and never was there a day when the Church was in greater need of Holy Ghost discretion. Your intellect becomes His that He may plan through you, in order that you might be an instrument for the realization of His purpose. Yield your mind to Him that you may know ¹² His secrets and be kept in the current of His will. Never lend your mind to the devil. The mind is his favorite avenue of attack. If the garrison of the mind is captured the whole citadel falls. A realization of the indwelling Christ

¹ Matthew 7:3 ² Colossians 4:6 ³ Luke 4:22 ⁴ John 7:46 ⁵ Isaiah 55:11

⁶ John 6:63 ⁷ Proverbs 18:8 ⁸ Mark 10:46 ⁹ Psalm 102:20 ¹⁰ Mark 4:24

¹¹ Philippians 2:5 ¹² Psalm 25:14

and a surrender of your mind and thoughts to Him, is the only remedy for unwholesome thinking and carnal judgments. ¹ “Gird up the loins of your mind.”

Your Hands become His to act on His impulse. He will work through you. Again, it is not what you do for Him that counts, but what ² He does through you. Only that activity which is directly in the line of His divine purpose is effective for the kingdom of God. All action is not unction. All plant is not power. All endowment is not enduement. Your hands are His. Give them up. Allow His full use of them, and He will perform His works through your instrumentality. Never lend your hands to the devil. Even Christian hands may commit sin if they slip out of the control of the indwelling Christ.

Your Feet become His to walk in His way. The Christian's walk is the very walk of Christ. ³ “Walk in love”... “Walk circumspectly.” ⁴ “Walk not as other Gentiles walk.” The feet of the Christian must tread the narrow path the Savior trod, and keep in ⁵ step with Him throughout the earthly pilgrimage.

Do you see the simple implications of this? In a sentence, YOU ARE HIS. Allow Him to take full possession. Yield your members to His control. Invite Him to allocate your ⁶ time as His own. Allow Him to control your ⁷ money as His own. Let Him sanction your expenditure and look after your income. He can be trusted. Allow Him to energize your talents, your zeal and your ability with His own resurrection life. You are His by purchase at infinite cost. Allow Him complete right-of-way through the whole territory of your being—without reserve, without regret, and without retreat. He does not want *apartments* in your house. He claims the whole building, from the attic at the top to the cellar at the bottom. That is the life of victory. Have you invited Him into every room? What about that sitting room? Does He control that? Is He consulted as to the periods of rest and leisure? What of the reception room, and the realm of your ⁸ friendships? Are your friends His friends? What about the work room and the realm of your service? Does He control your activities and general program? What about the study? Is your ⁹ reading governed by His tastes? What about the recreation room? Is your recreation consecrated unto the Lord, and are your earthly pleasures sanctified by His sweet presence? Oh, let us surrender the whole house to Him. Is He not worthy of it? Why should we deprive Him of His due?

A reserved compartment in your heart, however small, provides capital for the enemy to work spiritual havoc and rob the believer of victory. Before we pass on to the next phase of this chapter, will you not get to your knees and say again from your heart, “Lord, I surrender all, I give you *the last key?*”

¹ 1 Peter 1:13 ² John 5:36 ³ Ephesians 5:2, 15 ⁴ Ephesians 4:17 ⁵ Genesis 5:24

⁶ Ephesians 5:16 ⁷ Matthew 25:18 ⁸ Psalm 119:63 ⁹ 1 Timothy 4:13

“Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.”

The next simple blessed fact is that:

(2) **He becomes Yours.** If the fact that you become His implies His possession, then the truth that He becomes yours implies your possession. Have you ever quietly thought this out? Christ is yours!

“Jesus is mine; yes, He is mine—
Through sunshine and gladness,
Through sorrow and sadness;
Jesus is mine; yes, He is mine—
Forever and ever, my Savior divine.”

This means:

a) *His Life becomes Your Life.* ¹ “Christ liveth in me.” ² “To me to live is Christ.” ³ “Because I live, ye shall live also.” As we have seen, this touches the very vitals of victorious Christian living. The Lord Jesus is not your Helper only. He is your very life. The victorious Christian life is just ⁴ the life of the victorious Christ. There is only one Person in the wide universe who can live such a life, and that is *Christ Himself*. It is His life. Since Christ lives in you, however, such a life becomes possible through a human personality. Have you this conception of the Christian life? You cannot get victory by trying to live for Jesus. That is the popular way; but very disappointing in its results. It is Jesus LIVING HIS LIFE IN YOU, and that is a very different proposition. The victorious life is His business, not yours. The crucifixion of the flesh gives Him right-of-way to make your heart His palace and His royal throne. In yourself you cannot live such a life any more than I can live the life of the Prince of Wales. I have not been born into the Royal Family. If it were possible, however, for the Prince of Wales to clothe himself with my body and live his life in me, then I could live his life. Do you see that? Christ IN you makes victory possible. ⁵ “*Without Me* ye can do nothing.” Therefore, what is the use of trying? No amount of effort can accomplish it. A little girl was stirring her tea furiously and exclaiming, “It’s no use, mother, it won’t come sweet.” And then her mother realized that she had forgotten to put the sugar in! No amount of stirring could make such tea sweet! Yes, His life is your life.

b) *His Power Becomes Your Power.* This is the power you need. He says, ⁶ “All power is given unto Me...Go ye, therefore.” Why? Because He lives in you and places His power at your disposal. You are His instrument, and

¹ Galatians 2:20 ² Philippians 1:21 ³ John 14:19 ⁴ Romans 5:10 ⁵ John 15:5

⁶ Matthew 28:18-19

Utterly powerless and impotent apart from Him. He is the great
¹ Overcomer. At Calvary He demonstrated His mighty ascendancy and supremacy over death and hell, and now He lives in you. His power alone can see you through. Invite Him to ride in triumph through your little city. Face the foe in your own puny strength and you will surely be overcome. I heard of a speaker who made this point clear to his boy-listeners by inviting them all to try and make a pencil stand on its point. Their effort, of course, was unsuccessful, and then he said, "Watch me, and I will show you how to do it." Putting the pencil point downwards on a book, and keeping his finger on the top, he said, "There you are; it is standing on its point." "Oh, but you are holding it," they said. "Yes," he replied, "and that is *how the Christian stands*; he is held and kept by the power of God." That is a simple illustration, but vital in its application. He is able to ² keep you from falling, and only as you *abide in Him* are you safe. Lose contact with Him and you fail. This brings us to the next great fact that:

c) His Victory Becomes Your Victory. Remember, therefore, the triumphant Christian does not fight *for* victory, but *celebrates a victory* already won. This is an important distinction. Have you read 2 Corinthians 2:14 as Conybeare translates it?—"Thanks be unto God who leads me on from place to place IN THE TRAIN OF HIS TRIUMPH TO CELEBRATE HIS VICTORY over the enemies of Jesus Christ." What a magnificent conception of life!—to "celebrate HIS victory!" Because He has conquered, you may be ³ "more than conqueror." The victory is already won; rejoice in that! All your enemies have been

Celebrate overcome, and the risen, triumphant Lord demonstrates
His Victory His triumph through those who are joined to Him. With Christ God has given you ⁴ "all things." Imagine a boy returning home after watching his school play football. He shouts to his father, "We won today!" His father turns to him in surprise and says, "'We,' you say, and what did YOU do towards it?" The boy replies that he did nothing but look on. Yes, and yet he was right! "WE won." Somebody else fought the fight. The representative team took the field and won the day, and since this boy belonged to the school he *shared in the victory*. No wonder Sambo replied as he did when after his conversion he was asked whether he had the *mastery* over the devil. "No," said he, "but I have the Master of the devil living in my heart." That is magnificent theology! Yes, He becomes yours. ⁵ All that He possesses is at your disposal. His victory is your victory. You have probably heard about the little girl who had a very bad temper. After her conversion she never again yielded to her temper, and one day she was asked the reason. Her reply was simple and to this effect: "Before the Lord Jesus came into my heart the devil would knock at the door, and when I went to the door he would push his way in; but

¹ John 16:33 ² Jude 24. ³ Romans 8:37 ⁴ Romans 8:32

⁵ 1 Corinthians 3:21

now the Lord Jesus has come in, and whenever the devil knocks I say to Him, 'Lord, you go and open the door,' and when the devil sees the Lord Jesus at the door *he sees somebody who is more than a match for him*, and passes on saying, 'Excuse me, I must have come to the wrong house.'" Yes, that is it—Christ IN you. You are His, and He is yours, and all

**Not I,
but Christ**

He asks is for your honest cooperation day by day and moment by moment in His will and purpose for your life.

¹ You must decrease, *He* must increase. The last gasp of the self-life will be the first breath of the new. Little wonder is it that the Apostle finds his vocabulary limited to describe such an amazing truth, and speaks of ² "the RICHES OF THE GLORY of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is CHRIST IN YOU, the hope of glory."

I remember hearing of a violinist who came upon the stage one day and gave a wonderful performance. In the midst of the thunderous applause which followed, he did a most extraordinary thing. Lifting his violin high above his head he brought it down with a crash upon a chair and broke it in pieces. The audience listened spellbound for an explanation. "Yesterday," said he, "I gave six shillings and sixpence for that instrument." Then he disappeared for a few moments and came back with his own violin, an instrument of priceless worth for which he would have exchanged nothing in the world. Again he commenced to play, the same beautiful music, the same exquisite harmony, and only the most highly skilled ear could detect the difference.

The Master Hand

You see it was not the instrument that mattered, but the *master hand* that held it. Remember, you are Christ's and He is yours. Allow His unfettered control of the instrument, and even though you may be conscious of many human limitations He will bring forth music out of your life. As He places His pierced hands across those human chords, there will emanate a harmony that will cheer His own heart and bring blessing to the multitudes.

In Romania there is a certain valley where they grow nothing but roses for the Vienna market, and the perfume of that valley in the time of the rose crop is such that if you go into it for a few minutes, wherever you go for the rest of the day people know that you have been there. So may others take knowledge of us as we emanate the fragrance of the indwelling Christ.

¹ John 3:30 ² Colossians 1:27

CHAPTER SIX

IS IT "SINLESS PERFECTION?"

This chapter forms a sort of parenthesis, though its content needs to be carefully considered in connection with the Life of Victory.

Bible teachers who emphasize the need for personal victory in the heart and life of the believer, and who therefore teach the way of practical holiness, are often accused of being "sinless-perfectionists." In fact, it is difficult to avoid this suspicion wherever such a ministry is given. There are always some who assume that the extremes of religious fanaticism are thereby countenanced. Fortunately, a faithful minister of the Word need not be concerned about the opinions or criticisms of others. Indeed, he must always expect some measure of misrepresentation. It is feared, however, that such criticism often arises from prejudice against any stress whatever on practical sanctification in the Christian's walk day by day—and that for reasons of which the critics themselves are most cognizant.

Bible Holiness

It should hardly be necessary to state that the doctrine of the Word of God on practical victory is both sane and spiritual. None of us need be afraid of being sinlessly perfect this side of the pearly gates! There is only one sense in which the believer is absolutely ¹ perfect at the present time, and that is in his perfect standing before God in Christ Jesus. He is *positionally* perfect, but, as we have seen, he is temporarily residing in a body of humiliation, i.e., a human body beset with limitations and infirmities because of indwelling sin and a corrupt human nature. It is obvious, therefore, that so long as he resides in such a body he cannot reach a state of sinless perfection. There may even be outworkings of that carnal nature which, although unconscious to the believer himself, constitute defilement in the sight of God. Thank God, the precious blood,

**The Blood and
The Cross**

in its eternal efficacy, ² maintains the believer's standing before God and cleanses him from all unrighteousness. It should be remembered, however, that *the blood never cleanses the flesh.*

³ The flesh cannot be cleansed. It must be crucified. This involves the *Cross* aspect of our Lord's atoning death, as distinct from "the blood." The blood ⁴ justifies the sinner before God, and that eternally. The Cross in its daily application keeps the flesh experimentally in the place of death, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The extreme holiness teaching to which we have alluded, centers around the complete eradication, the destruction, of the carnal nature.

¹ Hebrews 10:14 ² 1 John 1:7 ³ Jeremiah 2:22 ⁴ Romans 3:24

As we have seen already, there is no Scriptural authority for such an assertion. The believer is exhorted to “reckon” himself to be dead to sin. It is obvious that if the old man is annihilated there is no need for the exercise of such a *reckoning faith*. The whole significance of faith is that it takes an objective or potential fact in Christ and makes it real in experience. Only by this means can it become practical. Cease to exercise faith and it will be quickly discovered that the flesh is present and very much alive. In other words, the root of indwelling sin is still there, but it must not be allowed to ¹ reign. So long as we live in these bodies, therefore, we cannot be “faultless.” One day the Church is to be ² presented “*faultless* before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” Then we shall be sinlessly perfect because we shall be exactly like the

Blameless and Faultless

sinlessly perfect One, with bodies changed into the likeness of His glorious body. In the meantime, though we cannot be “faultless” in that sense, we are called upon to be perfect in the sense of being

³ “*blameless*.” There is a difference. I am not blamable in the sight of God for the presence of indwelling sin. That is a matter of natural generation over which I have no control. I *am* responsible, however, to appropriate the victory that God offers over all conscious sin, and immediately I fail to abide in Christ—with its resultant defeat—I become *blamable*, and need to confess my sin before the Lord. A small boy may write a loving letter to his parents which is full of bad spelling and grammatical mistakes; it is far from faultless, but it may be quite blameless. Do you see the difference?

Further, if there is constant victory in Christ over the resident carnal nature, what need is there in any case for the extreme teaching of eradication? It cannot provide any more than complete victory over sin, and this is available through a moment by moment reckoning of our crucifixion and resurrection “with Christ.” Let us beware of an unnecessary, unscriptural, and sometimes dangerous emphasis. Many an advocate of extreme holiness teaching along this line has forfeited the blessed truth of the ⁴ eternal security of the believer. The whole trouble centers around the failure to understand the difference between the believer’s *objective position* in Christ, and his *subjective experience* day by day. It has been accurately put this way: It is not that the believer is NOT ABLE to sin, but that he is ABLE NOT to sin. Let us preach a practical, Bible holiness. ⁵ “This is the will of God, even your sanctification.” Do not be led astray and injure others by extremes which find no warrant in the Scriptures of truth.

¹ Romans 6:12 ² Jude 24. ³ Philippians 2:15 ⁴ John 10:28-29 ⁵ 1 Thessalonians 4:3

CHAPTER SEVEN

HOW TO “REIGN IN LIFE”

We now come to the last of our talks, and the climax of the blessed experience of victory in Christ. ¹ “If by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness REIGN IN LIFE *through the One, even Jesus Christ.*” It is the privilege of every believer to “REIGN in life.” This is something more than the possession of eternal life. It is ² “life more abundant.” I see a sick young man in the hospital. His cheeks are pallid, his eyes are sunken and his pulse is low. Standing by him is a young man in all the robust vigor of healthy manhood. Each of these possesses life, but in one case it is only a matter of existence; in the other there is life more abundant. Why should we be content to live poverty-stricken Christian lives when God invites us to appropriate ³ unsearchable riches? Why should we be spiritual paupers when God’s ⁴ banqueting house is open to us? Why paddle in the surf, when we are invited to ⁵ “launch out into the deep?” Our blessed Lord said, ⁶ “He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his inner man shall flow *rivers of living water.*”

One day when Robert Annan, the Dundee hero, was speaking about heaven, Mrs. B. said, “I’ll be satisfied if I manage somehow to get in.” “What,” said Robert, pointing to a sunken vessel that had been dragged up the Tay, “would you like to be pulled into heaven by two tugs like the ‘London’ yonder? I would like to get in with all my sails set and colors flying.” Let us never be content with a half-blessed Christian experience or be like Ephraim, ⁷ “a cake not turned!” God’s will is that every one of His children should live up to his income. Why wander in the wilderness when God invites us to journey through a land ⁸ flowing with milk and honey? To be a wilderness Christian is to *endure* salvation rather than *enjoy* it. It means a fluctuating joy, a fickle experience, and oftentimes a lack of assurance. I would remind you that the victorious Christian life is not only the possession of eternal life but it is the ACCESSION to a throne. I want to quote to you two further translations of this same text:

Weymouth:--“For if through the transgression of the one individual, death made use of the one individual to seize the sovereignty, all the more shall those who receive God’s overflowing grace and gift of righteousness REIGN AS KINGS IN LIFE through Jesus Christ.”

¹ Romans 5:17 ² John 10:10 ³ Ephesians 3:8 ⁴ Songs 2:4 ⁵ Luke 5:4 ⁶ John 7:38

⁷ Hosea 7:8 ⁸ Leviticus 20:24

Moule:--“For if in one transgression death came to reign through the one offender, much rather those who are receiving the abundance of grace and free gift of righteousness shall in life (life eternal begun now, to end never) REIGN over their former tyrants through the one, Jesus Christ.”

It was ever God's purpose that man should be a creature of dominion. In Genesis 1 the Church is typified by “the lesser light,” to function as a heavenly body during the period of spiritual night when the sun (the Lord Jesus in His glory) is hidden from the eyes of men. Notice the verb which the Holy Spirit uses to describe this fact. “The lesser light to *rule* the night.” To rule suggests kingly authority. It is a regal privilege. It suggests victory over every foe. Then again, the purpose of the creation of man is stated very clearly in verse 26, “And God said, Let Us make man in Our image after Our likeness, and let them *have dominion* over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” Man was destined to be a creature of dominion. The three classes of creatures in earth, air and sea are typical of the believer's threefold enemy in the spiritual realm. “Let THEM have dominion!” Why the change of number to the plural? The next verse explains that they are “male and female,” an authoritative type of ¹ Christ and His Church, joined together in holy union.

“The Head and Not the Tail”

Remember also the injunction and promise to Israel, ² “And the Lord shall make thee THE HEAD and not the tail; and thou shalt be ABOVE ONLY, and thou shalt not be beneath.” There you have the reigning life. ³ “Ye are a chosen generation, a *royal* priesthood,” says Peter. This brings us to the very Alps of Christian experience—⁴ “made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” That is your rightful position, my brother or sister. Marvelous truth! Even though we are “earthy” men and women, treading the dusty pathway of life, facing the problems of an earthly pilgrimage, touching “terra firma,” and up against the hard facts of life day by day, our spiritual position, here and now, is “IN THE HEAVENLIES.” This means that we should manifest a heavenly life, radiate a heavenly joy, speak

Life in the Heavenlies

with heavenly language, conduct ourselves with a heavenly demeanor, and sing the heavenly songs. ⁵ “OUR CONVERSATION (*i.e.*, CITIZENSHIP) IS IN HEAVEN, from whence also we look for the Savior.” What a salvation, and what a position! No flesh can enter that realm. Reigning Christians are not incessantly engaged in fighting “the flesh.” No, they have learned the blessed secret of crucifixion, and have

¹ Ephesians 5:32 ² Deuteronomy 28:13 ³ 1 Peter 2:9 ⁴ Ephesians 2:6

⁵ Philippians 3:20

been lifted by the Spirit into the glorified life—a new realm of conflict. Their testimony becomes strategic in that sphere where ¹ “all things are of God.” This is where the challenge of the evil one becomes a tremendous reality. ² “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” How the Lord is seeking those who will STAND with Him in the conflict, and “REIGN in life” day by day. A carnal believer knows nothing of this. Jordan must yet be passed if he would know the reality of Canaan conflict. No spiritually *strategic* life can be lived on the *flesh level*. There must be a change of position. Position is power. I heard of a Frenchman who lived in England for some years and afterwards decided to become a naturalized Englishman. An old friend ran into him on the following day and said, “Well, I see that now you are an Englishman, but frankly, I don’t see much difference in you.” Said the one-time Frenchman, “There is a big difference. Yesterday the battle of Waterloo was a defeat; TODAY it is a VICTORY!” Yes, and he was right. He had changed his citizenship. That is the heavenly life. A change of position from the realm of the flesh into that of the Spirit. In *that* position the Lord will turn your “Waterloos” of defeat into “Waterloos” of *Victory*.

Where Do You Live?

The important question is—*Where* are you living? On which level do you normally reside? Are you experimentally living in the “heavenly places” day by day? The Savior meant just that when He said, “ABIDE in Me.” So “abide” means, “Stay where you *are*.” Positionally, you are *there*. Then ABIDE in Him, moment by moment. Hold your position by faith. The devil will seek along every subtle avenue to drag you down in spirit—down into depression, down under the circumstances or conditions. Fellow believer, your rightful position is ³ ON TOP. Refuse to come down. This may necessitate an almost cold-blooded faith, even lifting you above your own *feelings*. Never be governed by your fluctuating *feelings*. What is true in regard to your salvation is also true regarding your sanctification. Feelings do not count.* It is God’s FACT that matters. Assert and affirm your position by faith. I was much impressed some years ago, at a Conference of Christians, to hear an aged missionary, recently home from

A Faith Position the field, assert that she had often longed to know this heavenly position, but had never been able to get there—or, as she expressed it, to get “within the veil.” One of the Lord’s counselors was led to take her to the Word at Ephesians 2:6. He explained that in the purpose of God she was ALREADY THERE. This was God’s fact! There was no need to strive for a position that

¹ 1 Corinthians 11:12 ² Ephesians 6:12 ³ Songs 4:8 * *Not a feeling, but a “filling”*—Ed.

was hers *already*. “You ARE there; believe it, and take the position, by FAITH.” It was a joy to see the glow that came into her face, and her blessed release of spirit as she recognized that simple truth for the first time, after forty years in the missionary field. It is not an act to be performed, or an ideal to be realized, but a *fact* to be believed. When distributing tracts at a village in the Yorkshire dales, some miles from any railway station, a Christian worker entered the dwelling of a dear old saint of God, eighty-four years of age, who lived alone. One room was all she occupied, and everything in it bespoke the most abject poverty; for if the contents of her apartment had been knocked down at the hammer, the whole would not have fetched more than five shillings.

Being desirous of cheering and comforting his aged friend, he remarked to her:

“Well, Margaret, soon we shall have done for ever with the trials and difficulties of the way, and be fully happy with the blessed Lord Jesus Christ up yonder.”

“THAT’S MY HOME, SIR,” said she.

Finding he had begun much below the mark, he sped on, with a view of helping her if possible, and said: “Yes, Margaret, soon we shall be in that bright HOME, the Father’s house above, with the Lord Jesus, and around Himself, rejoicing ever in His presence.”

“I LIVE THERE, SIR,” was her bright and smiling reply.

Finding himself still very considerably in the rear, he hastened forward with a quickened step, if it were possible, to offer a little help and cheer to his advanced sister in Christ.

“How blessed it will be, Margaret—will it not? —when we and all the redeemed, from every clime and of every age, are gathered around the blessed One, who has loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood; and when we are praising Him together in the glory for ever!”

“I SING THERE EVERY NIGHT, SIR,” was her overwhelming and joyous reply.

Thus his expectations were far more than realized; for instead of helping her, he was cheered and helped himself.

Set Free

Yes, a reigning life is practicable at all times and in all conditions. It is THRONE-UNION with Christ. It is the domination of the ¹ “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ.” This alone can liberate from the downward pull of the flesh. Take another simple illustration. Imagine an airplane on the ground. It is held to the earth by the power of gravity, and is in captivity to that law. Then a pilot approaches, takes his position in that machine, and after some manipulation of levers, etc., that airplane is seen to move upwards and onward. Where is the law of gravity now? Is it abolished, or

¹ Romans 8:2

suspended? Of course not. It is still there and is just as powerful as it was before. A new law, however, has taken possession of that machine—a law of life, power, and motion—with the result that it has been lifted above the law of gravity and released from its bondage. As long as that new law fails to dominate it, the old law again takes possession and down the machine comes to earth. Now read Romans 8:3: “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath MADE ME FREE from the law of sin and of death.” Hallelujah! This is the “*Reigning life*.” Such a life is pregnant with glorious possibilities. Here alone can be found true joy, heavenly wisdom and spiritual authority. The Lord would ask each

Is Thy Heart Right?

of His children the question put by Jehu to Jehonadab, ¹ “Is thy heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, GIVE ME THINE HAND. And he gave him his hand; and he TOOK HIM UP TO HIM into the chariot, and he said, COME WITH ME, and see my zeal for JEHOVAH. So they made him RIDE IN HIS CHARIOT.”

Beloved, if our heart ²condemn us not, let us put our own hands afresh into His pierced hand today, and be lifted into His heavenly chariot, and there to share HIS vision and zeal—there to ABIDE moment by moment. This will mean a progressive translation into ³His image, from glory to glory, and such a development into His blessed likeness that ⁴“we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.” EVEN SO, may it be!

¹ 2 Kings 10:15-16 ² 1 John 3:21 ³ 2 Corinthians 3:18 ⁴ 1 John 2:28