

Victory in Christ

W. W. Prescott
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Chapter 1 HE LOVED ME

This is what touches my heart. It has always been easy for me to believe that God loves the world, and that Jesus loves His church, but I could never see any reason why He should love me. I have found, however, that there is no reason, so far as I am concerned. The explanation is simple enough when I look to Him and not to myself. He is love. Love is the very essence of His being. Love is His life. Love is the atmosphere in which He lives. He loves because He lives. His love does not seek out the worthy, but the unworthy. Therefore He loves me.

Jesus deals with us as individuals. His heart is large enough, His love is great enough, His knowledge is comprehensive enough, for the personal touch with each

one. He knows me by name, just as He calls all the infinite number of stars by their names. He knows my experiences. He sympathizes with me in my trials and temptations. He loves me as if I were the only object of His love. He cares for me as if He had no other to care for. I can tell Him of my troubles, and He listens as if I were the only one who came to Him for help. He meets my every

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need as if I were the only one who felt any need. He is mine as if I had exclusive rights in Him.

And this intimate, personal relationship does not interfere in any way with my perfect freedom of choice and action. Each morning I choose to accept His love, Each morning I choose to love and work for Him. Each morning I say to Him, "Thy love has round me and drawn me, and I am Thine." I am at liberty to leave Him at any moment, but I am held by bonds that do not chafe-the silken cords of love. I do not wish to do anything in which I cannot cooperate with Him. He rules me with a rod of love, and life's joy and sweetness are found in the closest association with Him.

Do you know that He loves you? You are missing the best thing in life if your heart is not the shrine of His love. Remember, He loves you as He loves me.

"Wonderful things in the Bible I see;
This is the dearest-that Jesus loves me."

Chapter 2 HE LIVED FOR ME

Jesus took the same flesh that I have. He met the same temptations that I meet. He voluntarily made Himself as I am, in resisting temptation. He demonstrated that it is possible for one as weak as I am, to be obedient to God's holy will, through the grace provided.

He was cruelly misunderstood, yet He refused to approve the least departure from a strictly upright course. Against the dark background of selfishness and sin, of hypocrisy and

self-righteousness, which characterized His time, He set forth, in His personal conduct, the law of self-denial and of self-sacrificing love. He was what He taught.

He lived a truly human life. He became weary, just as I do. He became thirsty when walking in the heat of the day, just as I do. He required sleep to refresh His physical frame after a day of toil, just as I do. He required food for His body, just as I do. He differed in no way from me in all these respects. He was my brother in the flesh.

And yet He was the Son of God, one with the Father from eternity, through whom the worlds were created, and in whom all things cohere.

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Before He visited this world as the Son of man, cherubim and seraphim were His willing servants, and angels were the ministers of His will. He was with God, and He was God. He was at home in the majestic glory of heaven.

What is the explanation of these apparent contradictions of His being? It is found in the simple fact that He lived for me. Only one who is more than a man could become the representative man, the epitome of the race, and could not only assume human nature, but could gather up into Himself every individual member of the human family, and could become my personal representative, and live a life which could be set down to my account as if I had lived it myself, if I accept my place in Him.

This is the true meaning of justification by faith, or being accounted righteous by the acceptance of the life lived by another. It is not a mere theological doctrine, an article of the creed. It is an actual transaction, by virtue of which a life of righteousness is substituted for a life of sin in response to faith. "If you give yourself to Him, and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned."

I shall not try to explain this wondrous provision, which furnishes such a ground of confidence for my personal salvation, further than to say that

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in it "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

I have accepted the life which Jesus lived for me. He satisfies my need. Have you accepted His life?

Chapter 3 HE DIED FOR ME

Jesus Himself has told me this. He has put this assurance in my mind and heart: "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." My iniquity was laid upon Him. He bore my sin. He died in my place: He laid down His life for me, as if I were the only one to be redeemed.

"That He should leave His place on high,
And come for sinful man to die,
You count it strange?-so do not I,
Since I have known my Saviour.

"Nay, had there been in all this wide,
Wide world no other soul beside,
But only mine, then He had died,
That He might be its Saviour.

"Yea, living, dying, let me bring
My strength, my solace, from this spring,
That He who lives to be my King,
Once died to be my Saviour."

When I think of what He left for me, of how He

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lived for me, of how He was treated in the judgment hall for me, of what He suffered for me when He was mocked and spit upon, and when He finally poured out His soul unto death; then when He stretches out those hands that were pierced for me, and pleadingly says, "Come unto Me," in sorrow but yet in joy I answer, "Yes, my Saviour, I come." What less can I do?

The law pronounces me guilty, and I must own that the verdict is just. The penalty is death, and justice demands it. Every subject who in time of war betrays his sovereign-and this is what I have done-is a traitor and worthy of death. But He died for me, and I accept His death as my death, and I say to the law, "I paid the penalty on Calvary when Jesus died in my stead," and I am acquitted. And so I find peace and rest in Jesus.

I earnestly wish that every person in the world knew that Jesus died for him, and would accept Him in his life and in his death. What joy there would be in heaven, and what blessing on earth!

Jesus died for me, and I have accepted Him. Jesus died for you. Have you accepted Him?

Chapter 4 HE SAVES ME

Jesus loved me and died for me. Jesus was raised from the dead, ascended to heaven, and now lives as my personal Saviour. In Him I have redemption, even the forgiveness of my sins. With Him I have fellowship day by day, as I live with Him and walk with Him. I recognize His presence with me, and I depend upon Him to keep me from doing anything contrary to His blessed will. I have surrendered to Him, I have definitely accepted His will in all things, and He fulfills His promises to me. In the joy and comfort of His love I go forward from day to day.

This is what I mean when I say that He saves me. I have not reached heaven yet, and it depends upon my daily choice whether or not I ever enter in through the gates into the city; but I know that I enjoy the blessing of present salvation through my acceptance of Jesus as the Lord of my life, and I trust Him moment by moment.

"Not for worlds would I exchange it,
This sweet faith in Thee!

Earthly treasure cannot equal
All Thou art to me."

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I have found that "it is not enough to believe about Christ; we must believe in Him." The difference may seem small—a mere change in a word—but it is vital. I can believe about Christ with my mind, but to be saved by Him I must believe in Him with my whole heart. I am fully assured that what He has promised, He is able also to perform, and I yield myself that He may perform in me the good thing that He has promised. This is the basis of my Christian experience.

My effort is directed, not toward doing things myself, but toward not hindering Jesus from doing. My only fear is lest I should in some way lose my personal fellowship with Him, for I know that as long as that is fully maintained, He will take care of the rest. He will work in me "both to will and to do," if I say to Him from the depths of my heart, "Thy will be done." This is not a sentimental religion. This is not a life of selfish ease and enjoyment. This means complete devotion, and going about doing good; but it is no longer I that live, "but Christ liveth in me."

And so Jesus loved me, and died for me, and saves me. He loved you, and died for you. Does He save you?

Chapter 5 HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS IS MINE

Jesus the Son of God, who became the Son of man, bestows His righteousness upon me as an absolutely free gift. As I meditate upon this, I know not how to express in a worthy manner the thoughts which throng my mind. Without flaw, without defect, His righteousness is perfect. He is the only man of whom this can be said. And He wove this beautiful robe of righteousness that He might clothe me with it. This is the wedding garment which the King furnishes for every guest. When thus clothed, I can go in "with Him to the marriage feast."

My own garments are defiled with sin, and my own righteousness is as filthy rags. He provides for me the white raiment, that the shame of my nakedness may not appear. At infinite cost to Himself, but "without money and without price," He imparts to me the riches of heaven, the most precious treasure in the universe, His own righteousness. This He does by giving Himself to me. He Himself becomes my righteousness. His righteousness, His life, Himself, are inseparable. This increases my joyful wonder. He does not divest

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Himself of what He bestows upon me. He Himself is the gift. He asks me to give myself to Him in order that He may give Himself to me.

The righteousness of Jesus is not a theological creed, but a living experience. It not only changes my standing with God, but it also determines my conduct. The gift of His righteousness is not an entry on the credit side of my ledger account in the books of heaven to balance a troublesome account, a transaction entirely devoid of any personal touch with me. It has to do with my inmost being. It purifies the current of my life, and sweetens my thinking, my speaking, and my doing. It makes me a new creature in Christ Jesus.

When a gift of such infinite value is offered to me, what am I to do? Accept it, of course. Yes, but how? There are four simple steps: First, I must admit my lost and helpless condition, and my need of more than human help; second, I must fully submit my will to God's will; third, I must commit my life entirely into God's hands; fourth, I must permit Him to reveal His righteousness, not only to me, but also in me. Admit, submit, commit, permit-these are the steps, and they must be taken anew every day.

The real experience of a biblical faith covers this whole ground. By that kind of believing which takes God at His word and acts accordingly, I enter into the full possession of

"the righteousness which is from God by faith." How God does His part, I

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cannot explain. How I can do my part, I know, and so do you. "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

Chapter 6 HIS VICTORY MINE

For a long time I tried to gain the victory over sin, but I failed. I have since learned the reason. Instead of doing the part which God expects me to do, and which I can do, I was trying to do God's part, which He does not expect me to do, and which I cannot do. Primarily, my part is not to win the victory, but to receive the victory which has already been won for me by Jesus Christ.

"But," you will ask, "does not the Bible speak about soldiers, and a warfare, and a fight?" Yes, it certainly does. "Are we not told that we must strive to enter in?" We surely are. "Well, what then?" Only this, that we should be sure for what we are fighting, and for what we are to strive.

Christ as a man fought the battle of life, and conquered. As my personal representative He won this victory for me, and so His word to me is "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." I can therefore say with deep gratitude, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." My difficulty was due to this: that I did not give heed to the fact that victory is a gift, already won, and ready to be bestowed upon all

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who are willing to receive it. I assumed the responsibility of trying to win what He had already won for me. This led me into failure.

This victory is inseparable from Christ Himself, and when I learned how to receive Christ as my victory through union with Him, I entered upon a new experience. I do not mean to

say that I have not had any conflicts, and that I have not made any mistakes. Far from it. But my conflicts have been when influences were brought to bear upon me to induce me to lose my confidence in Christ as my personal Saviour, and to separate from Him. My mistakes have been made when I have allowed something to come in between me and Him to prevent me from looking into His blessed face with the look of faith. When I fix my eyes upon the enemy, or upon the difficulties, or upon myself and my past failures, I lose heart, and fail to receive the victory. Therefore, "Looking Unto Jesus," is my motto.

The fight that I am to fight is "the good fight of faith," but the weapons of this warfare are not of the flesh. I do not believe in myself, and therefore I have no confidence in my own power to overcome evil. I hear Him saying to me, "My power is made perfect in weakness," and so I surrender my whole being to be under His control, allowing Him to work in me "both to will and to work," and when I act upon the faith that He will do this in the way of victory, He does not disappoint me. By living His

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life of victory in me, He gives me the victory. This means that I offer my body a living sacrifice; that I must not willfully choose the way of disobedience; and that I will not consent to any known sin. Such a course, which is the life of faith, makes it possible for Him to impart to me the victory that He has won for me.

His victory is my victory. Have you taken Him as your victory?

"O glorious victory, that overcomes the world."

Chapter 7 HE IS MY ADVOCATE

I know that I have sinned, but I also know that I have "an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Jesus lived for me, He died for me, and He was raised from the

dead and ascended to heaven to be my personal representative before the Father.

Since Jesus is not ashamed to call me His brother, I can confidently regard Him as my brother. It inspires me with hope and joy to remember that I have a Brother in heaven who is both able and willing "to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." "It behooved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren," and therefore like unto me, "that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people," and therefore for my sins. As the Son of man, and my brother, Jesus entered "into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for" me.

I find comfort in trouble and assurance in perplexity by "looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who... hath sat down at the

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right hand of the throne of God." Although He has been exalted "far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come," yet He does not forget me and my need. He knows that I have no righteousness of my own which would entitle me to heaven, and so as my Advocate He pleads His own righteousness in my behalf, and thus I find acceptance.

He knows my frame, and remembers that I am dust, and so as my priest He ministers unto me His own Spirit of grace and power to meet my need. He encourages me to come with confidence to the throne of grace; and when I come, I find Him there to hear my call, to grant forgiveness, and to dispense "grace to help in time of need." I do not mean that this is done apart from the Father, but the love, the mercy, and the forgiving grace of the Father find expression through His Son, Jesus Christ, my priest and advocate, and I come to God through Him.

I know from the Scriptures that I must render my account to Him "who without respect of persons judgeth according to each man's work," and that "the hour of His judgment is come." Therefore I must not indulge in any false sense of security, but must rest only upon "a hope both sure and steadfast and entering into that which is within the veil; whither as a forerunner Jesus entered for us." He is my advocate. He, as my personal representative,

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pleads my case. I have committed the keeping of my soul unto Him, and I rest wholly in His work for me.

I am glad to testify to others concerning Jesus, my all-sufficient advocate. I would that He might be your advocate. Will you accept Him?

Chapter 8 HE WILL COME FOR ME

It is the desire of Jesus that I should be with Him where He is. He Himself has said so in plain words. In order that this desire might be fulfilled, He came from heaven to this world; He lived for me, He died for me, He rose again, and now "He ever liveth to make intercession" for me. All this was necessary in order that He might save me from sin and consequent separation from Him, and might reveal His own life in me to make me ready for His coming. He "loved me, and gave Himself up for me."

Union with God, in Christ, through the Holy Spirit, is Christianity as it has been revealed to me in my experience. Nothing else will satisfy the heart of God, and nothing else will satisfy the longing of my own heart. This fellowship commences here and now, and will be enjoyed in its full blessedness when I shall see Him face to face.

However much I may long to be with Him, I cannot go to Him. He must come for me. This He promised to do, and I know that He will fulfill His promise. So I wait for Him with confident assurance.

He will not disappoint me.

His coming for me will be the consummation of all His work for me, and of all my hope in Him. The prophets have foretold this crowning event. The psalmists have sung concerning it. The saints of all ages have prayed for it. It is the goal of all history. During the long centuries it has been the expectation and the consolation of all the faithful. With them I wait for it.

He Himself has given me a variety of signs that I may know when my redemption draws near, and I see that these signs are now being fulfilled. He has displayed these signs in the heavens, and has written them in current events on earth. They unite to testify to me that "the great day of Jehovah is near, it is near and hasteth greatly." To me He says, "Yea: I come quickly"; and my heart answers, "Come, Lord Jesus."

In that glad day I shall not be simply a unit in a mass of humanity, unknown by name and unrecognized by Him. It cheers me to know that He thinks of me individually, that He loves me personally, that He is my own representative before the Father, and that He will welcome me and give me a new name when He comes for me. I do not intend to disappoint Him by not being ready to meet Him. The preparation that I am making is to seek His presence with me in the Spirit every day.

But while He tarries I do not idly wait for Him. He has commanded, "Occupy till I come," and I

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gladly obey. In willing service I testify to my truth in Him, and to present salvation through faith in Him, but amid care and sorrow, in labor and pain, in days bright and happy with heavenly joy, or in nights dark and sorrowful with earthly disappointment, the hope abides, He will come for me.

"Jesus, my Saviour, shall come from on high.
Sweet is the promise as weary years fly;

O, I shall see Him descending the sky,
Coming for me, for me."

He is coming for me. He is coming for you also. What does your heart say?

Chapter 9 HE WILL SHARE HIS THRONE WITH ME

The thought almost overwhelms me. How can it be possible! I am a weak, mortal creature, and He is almighty, eternal, "God over all." And yet He has said it, and He has pledged Himself to fulfill it. "He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with Me in My throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in His throne."

There is only one explanation of this amazing yet glorious fact-He loves me. This love led Him to leave His throne in heaven, and to come to this world as the Son of man to take my place, and as my representative to win back that throne which He promises to share with me. He has thus given a new meaning to love.

It was Satan's purpose to drag the whole human family down to the depths of eternal ruin through sin and the consequent separation from God. God pitied us and loved us, and gave His Son to rescue us. Christ pitied us and loved us, and in an infinite self-sacrifice made a way of escape for us. God in Christ reconciled the world unto Himself.

But Jesus Christ does more for me than merely to restore that which was lost through sin, although

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that would be sufficient to win my praise and adoration throughout the eternal ages. Let the simple facts possess our minds: In His preexistent state, in the mystery of the Godhead, Jesus was one with the Father, and shared with Him the dominion of the universe. He was infinitely above all created beings. When He came to seek and to save me, He humbled Himself to my low estate, and accepted for me the consequences of sin. As a mighty conqueror the man Christ

Jesus returned to His exalted station in the heavenly courts, and Himself became the Way-my Way-to the throne of glory. When I accept Him as my personal representative and Saviour, when I become one with Him in that union of life made possible through the gift of His own Spirit to me, although still here in this world of sin and suffering, I am yet an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ. I am in the Way whose end is the throne of glory, and when I go to be with Him where He is, I shall find Him on the throne.

"Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O, what a foretaste of glory divine!"

This is no hallucination. This is not the imagination of a fevered brain. This is sober reality. Heaven and earth may pass away, but His words will not pass away. His righteousness is mine. His victory is mine. His throne is mine. His is mine, and

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I am His. His love has won my heart, and through His grace I shall be an overcomer and sit with Him in His throne. To Him be the glory forever.

Does not this move your heart? Do not search for your treasure in the quagmire of sin, and fail to lift up your eyes to behold the crown offered to you. I urge you to accept the robe of righteousness, and be prepared for the crown of glory.

Chapter 10 HE IS ALL TO ME

I find it difficult to state in a form of words just what Christ is to me. It is easy to repeat the statement, "Christ is all, and in all," but how shall I express my own experience in translating this text into daily life? I have found Christ to be the sufficient supply of my every need as a Christian. All my fears and my dread of the future are calmed when I stay my mind upon Him, and the assurance becomes true in my case: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee; because he trusteth in Thee."

"Peace! perfect peace! our future all unknown;
Jesus we know, and He is on the throne."

I need wisdom that I may discern between right and wrong, and be able to refuse the evil and choose the good. This wisdom from above has been promised, but it is not a mere faculty of the mind which I must exercise. Christ has been made unto me wisdom, and I take Him as my wisdom. This does not make me infallible, or render mistakes

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impossible, but teaches me the way I should go. I learn of Him.

I need power to persevere in the way which He has shown me is right, and through His own personal presence in me by the Holy Spirit, He becomes my power. This does not make me omnipotent, and such personal power is not under my control, but I am rather under His control. When I oppose His will, I lose Him as my power. Self-surrender is the way of power.

He who is my wisdom and my power, is also my righteousness. He clothes me with the robe of His righteousness. He takes away the filthy rags of my own righteousness-my sins-and covers my nakedness with garments pure and white. Thus I am hidden in Him, and my Father sees me in Him, and accepts me in Him. What more can I desire?

I know that of myself I am hateful, and that I naturally hate others, and that "in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." But Jesus is love incarnate, love in life, and as He dwells in me, His love is shed abroad in my heart, and I love because He first loved me. Sweet is the fellowship of His love.

I know that a Christian ought to live the life of victory over sin, but when left to myself, I find that "what I hate, that I do," and "the good which I would I do not." I am glad that I have learned to accept His death as my death to sin, and His life as my life, and that I take Him as my victory. His

victory is mine, as He becomes mine. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," whereby we lay hold upon all His glorious power, so that we may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, whom shall I fear?" "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

He is my peace. He is my wisdom. He is my power. He is my righteousness. He is my love. He is my victory. He is my all. What is He to you?

