

*This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord,*

**Ephesians 3:11**

## Store In My Heart

### 1Peter 4:10-11

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies--in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

We are stewards of what God has given to us. He desires that we use them to serve our fellow man.

All our gifts come from God. We must always remember that we can do nothing of ourselves, therefore we must always act in accordance with God, who gave us all. The things we teach must be what God has provided. The things we do must be what God gave us do. It is not what we want or can do. Only God's will matters.



# Victory In Jesus

**Robert F. Turner**

Respecting victory over physical hardships Paul wrote, *"I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me"* (**Philippians 4:13**). He concluded a magnificent section of the Roman letter with, *"We are more than conquerors through him that loved us"* (**Romans 8:37f**). Of final victory over sin and death he wrote, *"Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (**1Corinthians 15:57**). As most of our readers know, these are but a fraction of the scriptural attestations to Victory in Jesus.

The words, "Victory in Jesus," are readily accepted by all brethren. They are freely and honestly spoken and we must assume believed by all. Yet, they can easily be empty words, negated by much of our writing and preaching. In our zeal to tell others what they must do to be saved, the actions of the lost may overshadow the role of the Savior. We may appear to exalt man's coming to Christ above the Christ who gives meaning to that coming. Erroneous doctrines of "unconditional election" and "faith only" have necessitated emphasis upon conditions of pardon -- the need for obedience. We are painfully aware of the need to "fight the good fight," meet "soldier responsibilities," and "overcome" in our personal battles with Satan. But we must never forget: Victory in Jesus is a gift of God, neither merited nor bought by man.

This victory is according to *"an eternal purpose"* which God the Father purposed in Christ Jesus (**Ephesians 3:11**), *"before the foundation of the world"* (**1:4**). Foreknowing that man would sin, God's part of salvation was to give mankind a Savior, the very Son of God, who would pay the penalty for sin. All agree that salvation is "in Christ," although some might equate this with church membership and miss its deeper significance. For others, emphasis upon conditions of pardon has become more "good news" than the Victory in Christ for which the conditions are given. I once asked a class of 30 brethren to write briefly "the plan of salvation" -- and only two mentioned the crucified and resurrected Lord. Twenty-eight wrote something like faith, repentance, confession, and baptism." These are conditions, but not the means, nor the basic plan of salvation.

## Contact Us

We want opportunities to speak with others about the Lord's Kingdom.

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## For Our Information

Joyce Venable had some difficulty with low blood pressure last week which caused a fainting spell. She is feeling better now.

Gracie Simpson is still in isolation.

Paula Laubach and John Jackson are both still dealing with painful knees.

John Ragsdale is still having some difficulties with his legs.

Brenda Keisler is still dealing with neck pain.

Pray for safety, courage & healing.

To appreciate victory in Jesus we must see ourselves for what we are: separated from Almighty God by our sins, facing justice in irrevocable judgment, *"Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you..." (Isaiah 59:2)*. Sin is the problem, the disease, the slave-holder. *"All have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23)*. The law of God is *"holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12)*, but it classifies sins and makes them more apparent (**Romans 3:20; 7:7-13**). None are free of guilt on a law basis, for none have kept any law perfectly (**Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:10**). Without mercy, we are without hope, lost, utterly undone. It is difficult for our self-sufficient and proud generation to see ourselves in this light. Like David, we may need a pointed *"thou art the man"* to open our eyes; but the remedy will not be applied until we are stripped of pride and throw ourselves upon His mercy (**Matthew 16:24**). In this sense all law *"brings us to Christ" (Galatians 3:24)*. The candidate for salvation presents himself *"Just as I am, without one plea; but that thy blood was shed for me."*

Victory in Christ is a promise of God. Implementing His eternal purpose, God promised Abraham: *"in thee (thy seed) shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:1-3)*. Paul identifies that seed as Christ (**Galatians 3:16**); and the promise became a central part of New Testament gospel preaching (**Acts 2:39; 3:25f**). The curse of law, its demand for perfection, was removed by Christ's death in our stead (**Isaiah 53; Galatians 3:13**). *"While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8)*. Because of His death, the heavenly Father can be both *"just, and the justifier"* of the believer, though he be less than perfect (**Romans 3:26**). The promise of Christ becomes a promise of forgiveness as taught so clearly in Paul's sermon at Antioch of Pisidia (**Acts 13:23,32-38**). God has kept His promise and *"their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 10:14-17)*.

With this understanding and attitude, coming to Christ takes on new meaning. Faith changes our heart (**Acts 15:9**). We recognize His holiness, and are ashamed; we see His mercy (**verse 11**), and gratefully reach out to Him. Our former life hangs heavily upon us, and we sorrowfully acknowledge it, turning from it. The penitent believer submits to baptism (a passive act): as one dead, being buried. We have denied self, and come to Christ for victory over sin (**Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:26-27; Titus 3:4-7**).

Now we live for Christ, or, as Paul puts it, *"Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20)*. The *"new creature"* is perfected as we press toward the mark in keeping with the *"mind of Christ" (Philippians 2:5f; 3:9-15)*. Our faith in the resurrected Lord removes the fear of physical death and our confidence in His advocacy brings us boldly to God's throne (**Hebrews 4:14f**). Well might we say, *"Oh death where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Corinthians 15:55f)*.

We seek only to serve God according to His Will!

