

**General Topics :: THE SECRET OF VICTORY OVER SIN****THE SECRET OF VICTORY OVER SIN , on: 2009/1/31 17:35**

From BORN CRUCIFIED by L. E. MAXWELL

2. THE SECRET OF VICTORY OVER SIN

These days of war remind us afresh of the man who reported to his commanding officer, "I have taken a prisoner." His commander said, "Bring him along with you." "He won't come," complained the soldier. "Well, then, come yourself," replied the officer. "I can't. He won't let me," was the final acknowledgment. I fear there is a great deal of Christian victory that is no deeper than that. All Christians have indeed been freed from the penalty of sin. But what about sin's power? Are we to camp forever around the truth of our justification, that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound"? Were we justified that we might be legally safe, or that we might become morally and spiritually sound? Were we not declared righteous in Christ that we might be holy in life?

Most of God's children seem to have assumed the position that, having been justified, it is quite optional whether or not we live unto ourselves. Our restless and uneasy consciences would often stir us up to heart conviction of our unholiness. But we have contented ourselves with our judicial standing in Christ. We have misused and abused the blessed truth that "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Perhaps unconsciously to ourselves, we have settled down to an ordinary and defeated Christian life, a customary unholiness. When the Captain of our salvation looks to us to be more than conquerors, to triumph in every place and take captivity captive, we cannot bring our sinful lives into obedience. "Well, then, come yourself," cries our Captain. But indwelling sinful self "won't let me."

Some Christians have been affrighted by the fanatical extremes of perfectionism. Their fears are not without foundation. However, we commend to the reader the wise words of Dr. A. J. Gordon:

Divine truth as revealed in Scripture seems often to lie between two extremes. If we regard the doctrine of sinless perfection as a heresy, we regard contentment with sinful imperfection as a greater heresy. And we gravely fear that many Christians make the apostle's words, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," the unconscious justification for a low standard of Christian living. It were almost better for one to overstate the possibilities of sanctification in his eager grasp after holiness, than to understate them in his complacent satisfaction with a traditional unholiness. Certainly it is not an edifying spectacle to see a Christian worldling throwing stones at a Christian perfectionist.

But what saith the Scripture? "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid" (Rom. 6: 1, 2).

Is the reader one of those souls who has discovered that, whereas you thought you had taken a prisoner captive, you find yourself a slave, a veritable victim of self and indwelling sin? You find yourself double-minded and unstable in all your ways? You cry with Paul: "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." You have watched and prayed. You have struggled and fought, you have, mourned and wept over the futility of your effort to, live for Christ. You may have tried to pray all night, or to "pray through" in order to "get the blessing." How often you have been filled with disgust and shame and secret weeping over your inward wrongness! But in spite of all your agonizing and strivings, you find your resolutions only so many ropes of sand. Self can never cast out self. You are becoming weaker and weaker in your struggle against sin. Even your faith seems to be fading out. When you "would" take sin a prisoner, bring him along, lock him up, and let him have no liberty, you find that you are actually the captive. Sin and self are in virtual control of the entire sweep of your life. What inward tragedy and conflict and defeat! Oh, the folly and futility of self-effort!

But there is a redeeming feature. Faith is often born in despair. To become exceeding sinful in our own eyes may bring us to Paul's heart-rending cry: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7: 24.)

God is a tower without a stair, And His perfection loves despair.

What is the matter? Wherein is our trouble? We have proceeded on the wrong basis. We have missed God's way of victory over sin. James H. McConkey well says: "God lays His foundations deep. Victory over sin He lays in the deeps of death. The Holy Spirit begins His triumphant teaching of the believer's victory over sin by one terse, striking, graphic phrase

e, ' dead to sin." Notice in Romans 6 the Spirit's emphasis on this death to sin: "dead to sin" (v. 2); "died unto sin" (v. 10) ; "dead indeed unto sin" (v. 11).

In verse 10 we have the truth that Jesus Christ died not only for sins, but that "He died unto sin."

When He was "made sin" God exacted of Him sin's penalty to the full. That penalty was death. In death, sin's penalty and power were exhausted. Sin's power, as well as sin's claims, are no more. Hence we read "death hath no more dominion over him." Christ died unto sin. He now lives forever unto God beyond the touch and reach of sin.

Paul asks: "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6: 1-3, R. V.) Note that Paul does not say we have actually died, neither is he saying we are literally "dead to sin." But Paul is saying that which is true of every believer, namely, that he is dead to sin through his union with Christ.

Each and every believer has been baptized by the Spirit into Christ. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" one with the Crucified. When Christ took upon Himself my humanity, apart from which He could never have borne the penalty for my sins, He made me one with Himself. I am identified with Him. He not only died for me, but I died with Him. He took me with Himself into death, and His death was my death to sin. He took me through the Cross, down into the tomb, and out of the tomb on and beyond the reach of sin's dominion. This is the great basic fact. The Holy Ghost says to you and to me: Know ye--know that Christ took your place, fastened you to Himself (Himself being in your very humanity), and took you into death, and through death out into glorious resurrection and emancipation from sin's dominion.

Regardless of our feelings, we are to reckon on this great fact, --of our union with Christ in death and resurrection. "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 6: 11, R. V.). Note that Paul does not say, reckon sin dead to you. God's way of victory over sin is not through the suppression of sinful desires, nor through the eradication of the old nature, nor yet through the cleansing of inbred sin. God's way of victory is through crucifixion--deliverance is only through death. There is a vast difference between reckoning myself dead to sin and reckoning sin dead to me. Every attempt to make sin dead to me, through self-effort, or struggle, or blessing, or make-believe, is not following the scriptural pattern. God says I am to reckon myself dead to sin. If I am willing to be rid of sin, let faith fasten on the fact of my death to sin through my actual life-union with Christ. I am "in Christ." And to be in Him is to be "dead to sin." Oh, to believe it! Never mind the feelings. Each time I come up against some particular sin, let me there say: I died to that in Christ. If it be a worldly attraction: I am crucified to the world and the world unto me. If it be proud, haughty self, again let me reckon: One died for all, all died. Then I should not, and need not, live unto myself--I am dead to my selfish pride and conceit and haughtiness. Let me do as the two young women who replied to an invitation to attend a hall: ' We are very sorry, but it will be impossible for us to attend. We died last week. We are Christians.' They had declared their testimony in baptism the previous week, as dead, buried, risen, and henceforth Christ-ones only.

It is said that Emperor William refused request for an audience prepared by a German-American. The Emperor declared that Germans born in Germany but naturalized in America became Americans: "I know Americans; I know Germans; but German-Americans I do not know." Even so, I was once bound in Adam. I am now freed in Christ. The cross cut me off, killed me outright to the old citizenship and life. I am no Adam-Christian. Such a position will get me no audience with my King, bring me no deliverance from bondage to the old man. Let me cease at once any such unholy duplicity. Let me declare that I am Christ's and His alone. Let me yield fully unto Him as one "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6: 11).

Re: THE SECRET OF VICTORY OVER SIN , on: 2009/1/31 17:38

3. THE SECRET OF VICTORY OVER SIN

Continued

It means everything to me, as a Christian, that I was "born crucified,"--born all over again through death, the death of Jesus Christ. When I was saved, I accepted death as my only deliverance.

My sins deserved eternal death But Jesus died for me.

Christ died in my place. I was indeed a dead man but for Christ. He died my death. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness" (1 Pet. 2: 24). 1 must be either "dea

d in sins" or "dead to sin." If I am lost in Adam, I am "dead in sins." If I am saved through union with Christ, I am "dead to sin." When I accepted Christ's death for my sin, I could not avoid accepting my own death to sin. Christ died, not only for sin, but unto sin. I am committed to the cross. To attempt any other position is to involve myself in an infamous moral contradiction. My only logical standing is one of death. I have been "born crucified." It is a first principle of the Christian life.

This is no mere mechanical thing, no mere legal fiction. I am actually and vitally joined to Christ. But, like every other Bible truth, it calls for my hearty consent. That Christ indeed "liveth in me" is a glorious truth. If I am saved, that is no mere cold, lifeless imputation. It is a fact. But it is a truth that calls for my most cordial "Amen." That I may realize His indwelling, I am commanded to reckon myself dead unto sin but alive unto God in Christ Jesus. Such reckoning is not make-believe or, as someone said, "Trying to make yourself believe what isn't so." However, the reckoning of a lively faith implies more than is usually realized.

Reckoning, in order to be real, includes self-renunciation. Our reckoning is doomed to failure unless we renounce self. In the power of Christ's death I must refuse my old life. On the basis of Calvary and of my oneness with Christ in His death, I must refuse to let self lord it over me. I must choose whether I'll be dominated by the hideous monster self, or Christ. The life that "Christ liveth in me" must have a happy "yet not I" at its very heart. How can I have the benefits of Christ's death while I still want my own way? Self must be dethroned. I am indeed promised newness of life, but only on the basis that I put off the old. If Christ went into the abysmal depths of self-emptying and self-renunciation, I must sink my old self-life into harmony with His ignominious departure. Let me with Samuel Rutherford "put my hand to the pen and let the Cross of the Lord Jesus have my submissive and resolute Amen."

When we thus begin to renounce self we shall find that this will generally be done through our submission to someone in the family or business circle. Home missions are good; foreign missions are better; but "submissions" at home and abroad are best of all. There are some women who will find practical victory at home through submitting to that husband's temper; some men through accepting the lashes of that long-tongued wife; others through embracing that seeming handicap or infirmity. Often we can believe for victory only around some such practical obedience. There self is renounced. Reckoning without the practical renunciation of self proves mere make-believe. It is just more self-righteousness, more self-effort.

Reckoning also includes rejection of sin. Paul says: "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin," and then adds, "Let not sin therefore reign." We should not let sin reign. That we already know. But better still, we need not let sin reign since we died and passed through death into resurrection beyond sin's dominion. Sin has no claim over those united to the Crucified, and sin "shall not have dominion" over those who yield themselves entirely to the Holy Spirit. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8: 2). But as long as we have any controversy with the Holy Spirit we cannot escape sin's dominion. The Spirit of God is specific and the Scripture is plain. The "offending" member is to be done to death--not pampered, or even prayed about. It is indeed good to pray for blessings, and to cry out for clean hearts, but not when God says "cut off" and "pluck out." God has truly cut us off from all evil at the Cross. He now says: It is yours to break with sin--let not sin therefore reign.

In order to have "a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men" how long has it been since I had to humble myself and be "put . . . to an open shame" before my family, or my business friend, or my Sunday school class, or my congregation? Dare I say that I have offended none and that the Holy Spirit has not pleaded with me in some such connection to obey Him?

Christ was willingly set at naught, willingly classed with criminals. He willingly died to rid me of sin. Let me, then, not pamper, but pour contempt on all my pride. Let me go at once and humble myself. If I will not take my sin to the place of shame, cost me what it may to get rid of it, how can I claim the cutting-off power of Calvary? I am clear out of harmony with the Cross. Confession of sin implies rejection of sin. Its power is broken only as we come into harmony with the Cross. But the Cross is no place of concealment, of hiding, of covering sin. It is the place where we break with sin, the place of exposure, of guilt, of open shame. Let me be willing to lose face and abide by all the consequences. If Christ died to rid me of sin, should I not rather die than retain it? But if we are not yet sick enough of sin to be rid of sin, we can only bow, and bleed, and hug our chains, until we are "sick unto death" of sinful self. We must be driven out of our unholy duplicity and made to own our double-mindedness.

But God is good. Christ is a jealous lover. He wants every believer delivered. He will not shrink from reducing you to shame and despair if only you may be exposed to the power generated on your behalf at Calvary. You must learn by kindness or by terror. God's sword of providence may be laid successively to every tic that binds you to self and sin. Wealth, an

d health, and friends, may fall before that sword. The inward fabric of your life will go to pieces. Your joy will depart. Smit ten within and without, burned and peeled and blasted, you may finally, amidst the dreadful baptism, be driven from the sinful inconsistency of living for yourself. You may at length be disposed (blessed word--sweet compulsion) to yield self over to the victory and undoing of Calvary. Oh, the glorious power of the Cross! How can we longer hold out against it? All the power generated at Calvary is at your disposal.

In Bone of His Bone, F. J. Huegel tells about the strange lot of certain young ladies employed in a laboratory where contact with radium is inevitable. Upon entering this factory they know their fate is sealed. They will die. After a limited time they are released from their work with a handsome check for \$ 10,000. Doctors have examined girls who have thus toiled in contact with radium and have found by means of the X ray that a strange fire consuming the life burns in their bones. This most highly concentrated force is killing them. But a still more highly concentrated force was released at Calvary. There here Heaven's radium was focused upon the great cancer of humanity's sin and shame. Radium kills. There is no power under Heaven that can stand its concentrated dynamic. "The Cross kills. The man who exposes himself to Calvary soon discovers that a hidden fire burns within his bones." Oh, let me, then, put no limit to its concentrated force. May its death-dealing, yea, life-giving and healing rays penetrate my most secret life, until its hidden fire burns in all the bones of my inmost being. Let the radium of the Crucified be applied again and again. It is a process. But let me not fear to expose myself to the divine treatment. If I am indeed sick of shams and hollow-hearted pretense--if my heart is hot with a veritable "furnace of desire" for deliverance--if my soul thirsts for the wells of living water, the full-orbed message of Calvary will be welcomed with joy unspeakable and full of glory. In all the gladness of Christ's glorious triumph let me say again and yet again: I have been and am crucified with Christ, it is no more I that live but Christ that liveth in me,--liveth in me, even me,--His own death-resurrection life, a life of death to sin and aliveness unto God.

Dying with Jesus, By death reckoned mine;

Living with Jesus, A new life divine.

Christ in us the hope of glory - posted by DoulosQuinn, on: 2009/1/31 17:53

HE did pray we would be one...as HE is with the father. Us in HIM, and HE in us.

That is awesome GOD in HIS WORD

My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

May The LORD be magnified.