

Your Spirit-Filled Strategy for Ultimate Victory

Proverbs 21:31b, TPT, makes it clear: "...ultimate victory comes from the Lord God."

We alone cannot discover it, accomplish it or sustain it, because ultimate victory is not only a win against overwhelming opposition, it's also a divine gift.

Defined and Delineated

The gracious gift of ultimate victory Jesus offers to us is the complete establishment of mastery over darkness by love. It includes the foundational elements of deliverance and salvation.

Ultimate victory was accomplished once and for all time by Jesus' finished work of redemption at the cross for our sins and His resurrected life in heaven, on earth and in the believer's spirit.

Ultimate victory is never subject to change (James 1:17).

We Need Him

We receive the gift of ultimate victory by our Savior's triumphant grace and faith.

Whether we believers reign truly victorious in life on earth is based on God's power of grace and our humble obedience to live out the Lord's finished work, even though we go to heaven afterwards.

2 Peter 1:2-4 reminds us:

May grace and perfect peace cascade over you as you live in the rich knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. Everything

we could ever need for life and godliness has already been deposited in us by his divine power. For all this was lavished upon us through the rich experience of knowing him who has called us by name and invited us to come to him through a glorious manifestation of his goodness. As a result of this, he has given you magnificent promises that are beyond all price, so that through the power of these tremendous promises you can experience partnership with the divine nature, by which you have escaped the corrupt desires that are of the world.

To Sustain Ultimate Victory

Hebrews 10:36 forewarns us, "You need the strength of endurance to reveal the poetry of God's will and then you receive the promise in full."

We need His resurrected life in us. Since there is life in His Word and in the blood of the Lamb, we need both His truth of Word and Spirit (see Rev. 12:11).

This means hindrances in the heart have to go to grow (3 John 1:2).

This means yieldingness must rise: We must surrender to His will and His ways to produce the greatest yield of fruit of The Spirit in and through us.

Mercy and unending love toward others form the highest rung on the ladder of fruitfulness (foreshadowed by the spies' pole of fruit from their promised land in Num. 13:23, 26-27; Gal. 5:22-23). Truly extending authentic mercy and unending love is our final step of obedience before we see the resurrection life of God's manifest promises (foreshadowed by Jesus' declaration on the cross in Luke 23:34).

So devote yourselves to lavishly supplementing your faith with goodness, and to goodness add understanding, and to

understanding add the strength of self-control, and to self-control add patient endurance, and to patient endurance add godliness, and to godliness add mercy toward your brothers and sisters, and to mercy toward others add unending love. Since these virtues are already planted deep within, and you possess them in abundant supply, they will keep you from being inactive or fruitless in your pursuit of knowing Jesus Christ more intimately. But if anyone lacks these things, he is blind, constantly closing his eyes to the mysteries of our faith, and forgetting his innocence—for his past sins have been washed away. For this reason, beloved ones, be eager to confirm and validate that God has invited you to salvation and claimed you as his own. If you do these things, you will never stumble. As a result, the kingdom's gates will open wide to you as God choreographs your triumphant entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Messiah (2 Pet. 1:5-11).

Jonah's Story

In studying the topic of victory during the month of April, the Lord highlighted the story of the prophet Jonah to me.

We know Jonah spent three days in a fish's belly because he ran from God's assignment to deliver a warning of repentance to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria (modern-day northern Iraq). We know Jonah finally delivered God's message and that the people of Nineveh took God's Word to heart, believing Him and repenting for their sins.

This resulted in a revival of over 120,000 people.

God proved faithful even when Jonah did not.

These pagans and longstanding enemies of the Israelites were *destined for victory*, regardless of Jonah's ungodly attitude and behavior.

Psalms 98:2, NLT, assures us, "The LORD has announced his victory and has revealed his righteousness to every nation!"

The Ninevites humbled themselves unto God and extended overcoming faith to believe Him for their victory of salvation, even though Jonah did not value them.

Since one of the elements of faith is value, this reveals that Jonah lacked faith, hence his depression. He had trouble believing God would rescue Israel's abusive enemies. God's strategy was to send one of His covenant people (Jonah) to do a work of outreach and, in the process, convict him of his own limitation to lead him through his own deliverance into greater maturity.

But Jonah got stuck in his lack of faith, the victorious power that overcomes the world (1 John 5:4).

Jonah was commanded to go where he didn't want to go to, in part, to confront his own attitude of prideful self-justification for the purpose of breaking through to love on a higher level of true justice: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34b, MEV).

Is this not our daily commandment and standard?

To love our enemies beyond ourselves (Matt. 5:44, Luke 6:27).

Grudge-holding is a sin that hinders blessing.

God calls us higher.

How can we prevail or ascend by superior power (to be victorious) above petty grudges if we are not synced with God's ways of faith and grace?

As submitted followers of Christ, who are we to pick who we minister to? After all, Jesus died for us while we were still sinners (Rom. 5:6, 8).

“Is it right for you to be angry?” God asked Jonah twice (Jonah 4:4b, 9a).

This rhetorical question reveals that we are not entitled to self-justify our ways. If we desire to see maximum fruit in our lives, we must maximize our yield to God to see God’s maximum yield through us.

Mercy Over Judgment Is Critical

“Mercy triumphs over judgment” (James 2:13b).

Both Jonah and the Ninevites were desperate for God’s mercy.

God desired to give all of them life over death.

Victory to not be overthrown by evil came to Nineveh through God’s prevailing mercy and grace. But there was no victory coming or going in Jonah’s prideful self-justification.

Jonah stumbled to go the distance as he ran a false race away from God before he reluctantly showed up to finish the task he was sent to do (Jonah 1:3, 10; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Ps. 119:32), all because he did not believe the Assyrians deserved mercy and love since they had been abusive to Israel—God’s covenant people.

By the end of Jonah’s story, he still hadn’t come around in his heart.

Everyone was faithful, except Jonah.

What would you do if you were in Jonah’s position?

Would you decide to value what God values? Even your enemies? Would you humble yourself and ask God to help you receive a new perspective through His eyes of mercy? Would you ask our Lord to fill your heart with His love for them?

Would you decide to break through prideful self-justification? Or would you make it all about you, your pain and your

opinions, ending up depressed with your false pride exalted, like Jonah?

Do you desire to live a powerful life?

Submission to God is our greatest position of power.

We all know it's easy to devalue our enemies. But also, know this: God's will is to use them to provoke us to come up higher. We may be the only one praying righteously for them. God will bring reformation to them, often after we have done our part. He will use all of it to build His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven (1 Chron. 29:11, Matt. 6:10).

Everyone will be better off.

Our greatest victories await on the other side of our obedience to receive and pour out His resurrection life.

God's Strategy for Ascension

"You see, every child of God overcomes the world, for our faith is the victorious power that triumphs over the world" (1 John 5:4, TPT).

"But we thank God for giving us the victory as conquerors through our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One" (1 Cor. 15:57).

"And God has made all things new, and reconciled us to himself, and given us the ministry of reconciling others to God. In other words, it was through the Anointed One that God was shepherding the world, not even keeping records of their transgressions, and he has entrusted to us the ministry of opening the door of reconciliation to God" (2 Cor. 5:18-19).

"However, I say to you, love your enemy, bless the one who curses you, do something wonderful for the one who hates you, and respond to the very ones who persecute you by praying for them" (Matt. 5:44).

“You love him passionately although you did not see him, but through believing in him you are saturated with an ecstatic joy, indescribably sublime and immersed in glory. For you are reaping the harvest of your faith—the full salvation promised you—your souls’ victory!” (1 Pet. 1:8-9). {eoa|

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This article originally appeared at .