

The Basis of Our Victory



Spiritual Warfare (Part 5)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we draw near to the close of another week. All through this week I have pictured for you two opposing kingdoms: the kingdom of God, of which we are the representatives here on earth: and the kingdom of Satan, a highly organized kingdom of evil spirit beings, persons without bodies, whose headquarters are in the heavenly realm.

Yesterday I established two main points. First, God has provided us with spiritual weapons that are appropriate to the nature of the warfare which itself is spiritual. Second, the battlefield on which the war is being fought is the mind of humanity. Satan has built strongholds of prejudice in the minds of humanity to prevent them from receiving the truth of the gospel. It is our responsibility, with the spiritual weapons God has given us, to break down these mental strongholds and thus bring men's minds under the control of Christ instead of Satan.

Today I am going to explain the most important single fact that we need to know in order to be assured of victory in our spiritual warfare. I am going to turn first to Colossians 2:13-15. In these verses, Paul describes what God has done for us, as believers, through the death of Christ on the cross on our behalf. This is what he says:

> "When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross." (NIV)

The great essential fact which we have to lay hold of is this, and let me warn you that Satan is extremely determined that we shall not grasp this fact. He wants to keep us from understanding it, because it is the key to his defeat. The fact is this: Christ has already defeated Satan and all his evil powers and authorities totally and forever. I am going to say that again. If you remember nothing else, remember that.

Christ has already defeated Satan and all his evil powers and authorities totally and forever. He did that through His death on the cross, through His shed blood, and through His triumphant resurrection.

To understand how this was accomplished, we have to recognize Satan's primary weapon against us and that weapon is guilt. Let me read a passage from Revelation 12:10:

> "Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: 'Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.'" (NIV)

Who is the accuser of the brothers? We know that's Satan. I have already pointed out in the previous talk this week that Satan does have access to the presence of God and one thing that he does, his chief occupation, is accusing us who believe in Jesus. Now why does Satan accuse us? What is his objective? It can be stated in one simple phrase, to make us guilty. So long as Satan can keep us feeling guilty, we cannot defeat him. Guilt is the key to our defeat. Righteousness is the key to our victory. That's where the real, basic issues lie.

Now let's see how God, through the cross, has dealt with this problem of guilt. God has dealt both with the past and with the future. He has made complete provision for both. How did God deal with the past? It is very simple. Colossians 2:13:

> "He forgave us all our sins..." (NIV)

Through the death of Jesus Christ on our behalf, as our representative, carrying our guilt and paying our penalty, God is now able to forgive us all our sinful acts, every sin we've ever committed, without compromising His own justice because His justice has been satisfied by the death of Christ. The first thing we have to understand is that all our past sinful acts, no matter how many or how serious, have been forgiven when we put our faith in Jesus.

Then God made provision for the future. Colossians 2:14:

> "...having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross." (NIV)

What is the written code? It is the law of Moses. Jesus, on the cross, did away with the law of Moses as a requirement for obtaining righteousness with God. Now, as long as that was the requirement, every time we broke even one of the most minor requirements of the law of Moses, we were guilty before God. But when the law was taken out of the way as a requirement for achieving righteousness, then provision was made for us to live free from guilt because our faith is reckoned to us for righteousness.

Let me show you two related passages. Romans 10:4:

> "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." (NAS)

That is an important statement. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness for everyone who believes." Jew or Gentile, Catholic or Protestant, it makes no difference. Christ is not the end of the law as part of God's Word or as a part of the history of Israel or in many other aspects, but He is the end of the law as a means to achieve righteousness with God. We are not required to keep the law in order to be righteous.

And then in 2 Corinthians 5:21:

> "God made him who had no sin [that's Jesus] to be sin for us, that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (NIV)

That is the divine exchange. Jesus was made sin with our sinfulness that we might be made righteous with His righteousness. Once we grasp the fact that we have been made righteous with the righteousness of Christ, then the devil cannot make us feel guilty any longer. His main weapon has been taken from him. Jesus disarmed the principalities and powers by His death of the cross. He took from them their main weapon against us.

Now I want to show you the outworking of Christ's victory through us. We have already seen the statement of Christ's victory in Colossians 2:15:

> "And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross." (NIV)

Notice what a triumph is. A triumph is not actually the winning of a victory, it is the celebration of a victory that has already been won. It is the demonstration of the victory that has been won. So Jesus, through His death on the cross, demonstrated to the whole universe His victory over the entire satanic kingdom. However, Jesus won that victory not for Himself, He didn't need it, He won it for us. And it's God's purpose that that victory should be worked out and demonstrated through us. Here is what Paul says in 2

Corinthians 2:14, one of my favorite verses:

> "But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place." (NAS)

No wonder Paul says, "thanks be to God." You couldn't help thanking God if you really grasped the message of that verse. God always causes us to share Christ's triumph over Satan's kingdom. There are two adverbial phrases: "always" and "in every place." That means there is no time and no place when we cannot visibly share the triumph of Christ over Satan's kingdom.

And then look again in Matthew 28:18-20:

> "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.'" (NIV)

Jesus says through His death on the cross He has wrested the authority out of Satan and He's obtained it for Himself, and God has vested in Him all authority in heaven and earth. Then He says, "Therefore go and make disciples." What is the implication of the "therefore"? Jesus says, "I have won the authority, you go and exercise it. You go and demonstrate My victory to the whole world by fulfilling My commission."

Let me conclude by making three simple statements about the victory of Jesus. First of all, in the wilderness temptation Jesus defeated Satan on His own behalf. He met Satan, resisted his temptation, defeated him. Secondly, on the cross Jesus defeated Satan on our behalf, not for Himself, but for us. He didn't need the victory for Himself, He already had it, but He won the victory, He defeated our enemy, He disarmed our enemy, He stripped him, He made a show of him openly on our behalf. Thirdly, now it is our responsibility to demonstrate and administer the victory of Jesus. That's our responsibility.

Let me close by reading again that beautiful verse in 2 Corinthians 2:14:

> "But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place." (NAS)

Remember that always and in every place Christ has made victory possible for us.

Our time is up for today but I'll be back with you again next week at this same time, Monday through Friday. Next week I'll continue with this theme of "Spiritual Warfare." I will be dealing with an aspect of the subject that is of vital, personal importance for each one of us: the protective armor that God has provided for us and how to use it.

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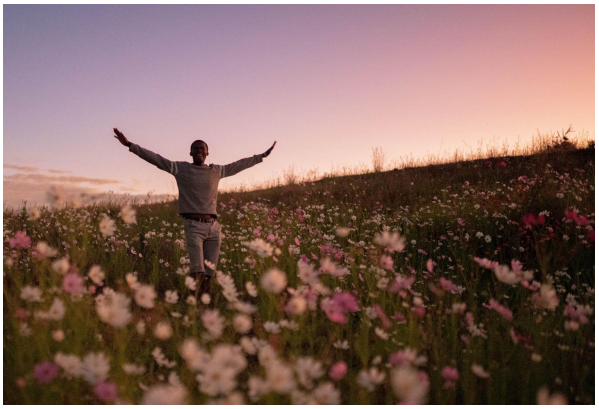

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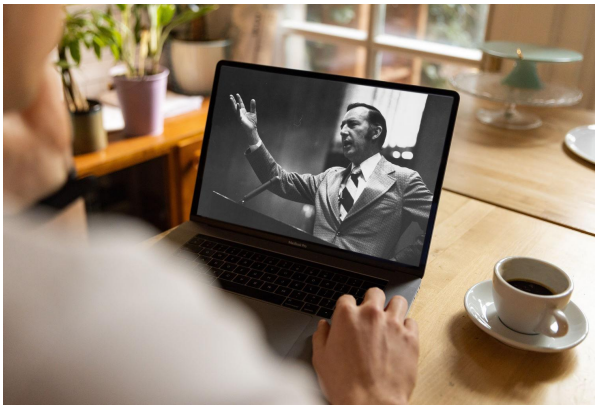

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