

Continuous Victory



Facing the Future (Part 5)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we draw near to the close of another week. Our theme throughout this week has been "Facing the Future."

In my previous talks I've emphasized the importance of forming a right attitude toward the future since our attitude will, to a large extent, determine what we experience. And I've stated two main requirements for such an attitude. First, we have to realize and lay hold of the fact that we are waiting for Christ, not antichrist. This waiting for Christ promotes holy living in us and sheds the radiance of eternity upon our lives even now when our faces are lifted up toward the light, the light is reflected on our faces. But if we turn our faces toward the darkness, then we lose that radiance.

The second fact we have to realize and lay hold of by faith is that Christ already reigns as King of the universe and will continue to do so forever. There will never be a time from now on when Christ will not be reigning. Furthermore, He shares His authority with His believing people. In Ephesians 2, Paul tells us we've been made alive with Christ, we've been resurrected with Christ and we've been seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. We're on the throne with Jesus, as His people.

Today I'm going to take these truths one important step further. Christ exercises His authority through His believing people and makes continuous victory possible for us. I think I'll say that again, it's so important. Christ exercises His authority through His believing people and makes continuous victory possible for us.

I want to turn, first of all, now to Psalm 110:1-2. Let me mention that these two verses from the beginning of Psalm 110 are quoted more often in the New Testament than any other passage in the Old Testament. Jesus Himself quoted them, as well as other writers. This is what the psalmist says:

> "The Lord says to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, until I make thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet.' The Lord will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion, saying, "Rule in the midst of Thine enemies."

Now we know from the lips of Jesus Himself the application of the first verse. "The Lord" is God the Father; "my Lord" the

Lord of David, is the Messiah. So, God the Father says to Jesus Christ the Messiah after His death and resurrection, "Sit at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet." We saw this has already been fulfilled. Jesus is already at God's right hand, He's waiting for God to put all His enemies finally under His feet. But He's already ruling.

Now, the next verse of Psalm 110, verse 2, goes on like this:

> "The Lord will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion, saying, 'Rule in the midst of Thine enemies.'"

"Thy strong scepter" in Hebrew is literally "the scepter of Thy strength." The scepter was the mark of a ruler in all Old Testament culture and history. And there's an example in God's dealings with Moses and Aaron and the princes of the tribes of Israel at that time where each prince had to engrave his name on his rod or scepter and then God indicated the one He had chosen because the rod of the man whom He had chosen to be the prince and ruler, the high priest, that rod blossomed, budded and brought forth almonds in twenty-four hours. The other rods remained unchanged. So I want you to see the rod or the scepter as the mark of a ruler's authority and to think of it as having the name of the ruler on it so that that authority could never be transferred to another because it was marked with the name of the one to whom it belonged.

So it says, "The Lord will stretch forth the scepter of thy strength from Zion." Now Zion in the Bible means the assembly of God's people met in divine order. So out of the assembly of God's people, the Lord stretches forth the authority of Jesus, which is in His name, and rules over the nation. Now I believe the Lord, who stretches forth that scepter is God the Holy Spirit. So we have all three persons of the Godhead. God the Father raised God the Son to sit with Him on the throne and then God the Holy Spirit, through the assembly of God's people, through their proclamations, through their preaching, through their prayers, through their testimony, He stretches forth the rod of Christ's authority over the earth and thus in this way, Christ through His people, now rules in the midst of His enemies.

It's so important to see two things: that Christ is ruling but there are enemies on every hand. Some people kind of have the impression that Christ will only be ruling when there are no more enemies but that's not true. This is the critical period in God's dealings with human race when Christ is already ruling but the enemies are not fully subdued. One of the problems is that so often we get our attention onto the enemies and we forget that Christ is ruling. So we have to balance the two facts. Sure, there are many enemies, they're very active, they're very vocal, they're very vicious, but Christ is ruling in the midst of His enemies and He's exercising His authority through us, His people, as we meet in order and learn how to use the authority that is in His Name.

Furthermore, Christ sends us as His representatives to exercise His authority on His behalf. This is the final commission of Jesus to His disciples at the end of Matthew's gospel, Matthew 28:18-20:

> "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. [We've seen this stated in many different places. The next word that He says is 'therefore'] Therefore go and make disciples of all nations…'"

What's the connection between the authority and the going? I believe it's this: the authority has been given to Jesus; it's our responsibility to exercise that authority and we do it as we go and do what He's commissioned us to do in His name. And, as we obey His commission, He says, "I'm with you always, right to the end of the present age. If you have any hindrances, if you have any obstacles remember, just appeal to Me, I'm on the throne, I'm there for your benefit and I'll see to it that you can do what I've commissioned you to do."

So that's the picture. Christ is on the throne but He's ruling, He's exercising the authority that's in His name, through His people as we obey Him. And that's going to continue right to the end of the present age.

Let's look at this truth of Christ's victory manifested through us from another aspect. In Colossians 2:15, Paul says about the death and resurrection of Jesus:

> "Having disarmed the rulers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross."

So when Jesus died on the cross and shed His blood and subsequently rose from the dead, He triumphed over all the satanic opposition, all the satanic authorities and powers that resist the purposes of God and resist God's people, Jesus triumphed over them.

Now, it's important to understand what a triumph is. A triumph is not the winning of a victory, it's the celebration of a victory that has already been won. In the Roman Empire, when a Roman general had been victorious overseas and added territory to the Roman Empire, when he came home the Senate of Rome voted him a triumph. This is how it went: They placed him in a chariot drawn by two white horses; the chariot was led through the street; the people of Rome lined

the street and applauded. And behind that chariot were led the prisoners of war and the people whom that general had conquered, they were the evidences of his victory. So, when Jesus died and rose from the dead, He triumphed over the forces of Satan. He led them behind His chariot in public display and the whole, unseen universe applauded at His victory.

But it doesn't end there. In 2 Corinthians 2:14, Paul goes on to say:

> "But thanks to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him."

Not merely is Jesus moving in triumphal procession, but we are sharing His triumph. We not only share His victory, but we share His triumph, the celebration of His victory. We are identified with Him. We are not there just on the sidewalks applauding, we're certainly not amongst the captives that are being led behind Him in chains, but we are in the chariot with the Victor sharing His triumph. And, as we share His triumph, something beautiful and wonderful happens. Paul says, "God, through us, spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him." There's a kind of fragrance that comes out of our victorious living that permeates the atmosphere where we live. People who don't understand the gospel and don't appreciate theology are aware of our victorious living. And Paul says just two things I want to emphasize: God always leads us in triumph; and through us He spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him. Put together those two words, always and everywhere. That means in every time, in every place there's total victory possible for us as the people of God if by faith we learn how to share with Jesus His victory and His public triumph. Isn't that glorious!

All right. Let me briefly recapitulate the three basics for a right attitude toward the future that I've been telling you this week.

First, we are waiting for Christ, not for antichrist.

Second, Christ already reigns and will continue to reign.

Third, Christ exercises His authority through us always and everywhere.

And when we grasp those facts, we're going to face the future with strong confidence.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again next week at this same time, Monday through Friday. Next week I'll be continuing with this theme of "Facing the Future." I'll be dealing with signs of the close of the age.

This week I'm making a special offer of my book, Foundation for Faith. This book explains the authority and reliability of the Bible. It gives examples of Bible prophecies that have been fulfilled in detail. It will both strengthen your faith in the Bible and help you to understand it better. Also, my complete series of talks this week on "Facing the Future," Part 1, is available on a single, carefully edited cassette. Stay tuned for details.

Radio Program

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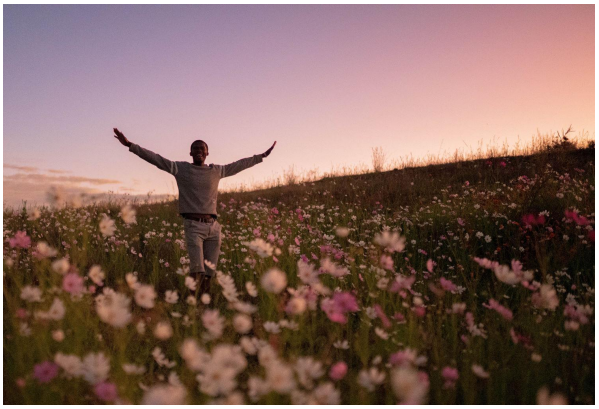

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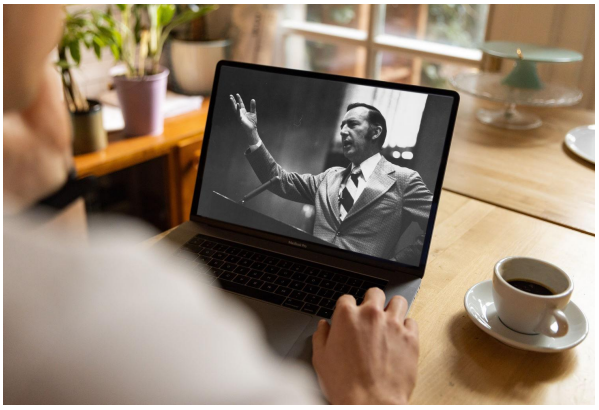

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