

THE WORD OF

TRUTH

Bible Study Course

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 8:32



THE PROMISE OF VICTORY

In the last few lessons we have learned how to receive the salvation offered to us through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, His raising from the dead and His atoning ministry in the heavenly places.

We noticed the application of such terms as surrender, contrition, confession, repentance, and the forsaking of sin. We saw that faith, or belief was essential and that the belief that saves produces joyful obedience to whatever Jesus desires of us.

We learned also, that it was by the *grace* of God, that we received *time* to make our decision for life or for death. But there is another dimension to grace and that is the *power* that comes from God. It is this power that enables us to surrender, be contrite, confess, repent, believe, and to forsake sin. It takes God's power (*grace*) and man's co-operation with that power that can produce the character that has ceased from all known sin -- victory!

1. What attribute of God has brought salvation to all men?

Titus 2:11 Compare Ephesians 2:8 _____

Note: People are not automatically saved because of the grace of God. But the grace of God makes salvation available to all men for them to accept or reject.

2. What character is Christ seeking to instil into man and when is it to take place?

Titus 2:12,14 _____

3. What is the blessed hope of those who gain these characteristics?

Titus 2:13 _____

4. What is it about us that alienates us (separates us) from God?

Colossians 1:21; Ephesians 2:12 _____

Note: Compare Isaiah 59:2. Salvation is truly a miracle. To be reconciled to God is the work of the reCreator. To reconcile is to make compatible, or not opposed, remove enmity.

5. What character has Christ formed within His people with which He presents them before Himself and His heavenly Father, that they may be reconciled to God and no longer opposing Him?

Colossians 1:22; Jude 24 _____

6. The work of Christ presenting us holy, or righteous is described by a simple metaphor. Relate this illustration and indicate its meaning.

Zechariah 3:3,4 _____

Note: To see what is symbolised by a garment, refer to:-

a) Revelation 19:7,8; Isaiah 61:10. A clean garment is: _____

b) Isaiah 64:6. A filthy garment is: _____

7. Referring back to Q2 and Q5, if this is the character of God's people, who are reconciled to God, what are the conditions upon which this character will continue to grow, or develop in this life?

Colossians 1:23; Ephesians 4:21-24 _____

Note: It is by the knowledge of the Word of God and the exercise of that knowledge that we grow and develop into strong Christians; the character of Christ being more fully revealed in us, as we grow (Hebrews 5:13,14; 1Peter 2:2; Philippians 2:12-15).

By the grace of God, Jesus is working to recreate in us a righteous character. The removal of the old and the putting on of the new. It is the power He gives us, by which we have victory over sin, that forms within us the character which is the copy of His own. We are said to be "born again". It is this holy character that makes us reconciled to and compatible with God.

8. How do we, who are of a corrupt mind, become born again? Also what is described as the incorruptible "seed" ?

1 Peter 1:23

Note: To be born again is to have a changed or converted mind. A mind that has ceased from unrighteousness and now delights to do righteousness (1John 2:29; 2Corinthians 5:17).

9. When we are born again, what is said to be in the mind of the born again, or converted soul? Describe the behaviour of such a one.

1John 3:9

Note: This text may cause confusion and stress to some people, for they think that they will never be able to reach the standard portrayed here (lesson 7 will discuss the growing Christian). But fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom (Luke 12:32). Here then is hope, God wants to save us and He is on our side. In fact, He actually limits Satan to keep the temptations within our ability to bear (1Cor.10:13). What a wonderful Saviour! (Isa.45:21,22; Rev.3:10).

The recognition of our hopeless inability to reach the mark of the high calling of God, leaves us with no other alternative but to fly to the Saviour and declare our unworthiness and deathly despair. To look to Him as the ONLY ONE ABLE to take away our sin and make it possible for us to not sin. This awakening to our wretched condition and turning to Jesus as our only hope, may be referred to as "the foot of the cross experience".

16. What is the work that Jesus came to do for all who would likewise turn to Him?

Luke 4:16-19; Isaiah 61:1-4 _____

17. What is it that sin is said to do to us?

Proverbs 5:22; Jeremiah 17:1; 2Timothy 2:26 _____

18. If David could be delivered, what is required that we too may be delivered from sin?

Acts 10:34-35 _____

Note: So we can now see that when God says that we are to stop sinning He does not leave us powerless, for all His biddings are enablings. This is the grace of God, the power to overcome sin. Let us now examine some of the promises of Him who has assured us the victory.

19. What is the reason we turn to Jesus when we become aware of our sin and realise our helpless inability to break loose from that sin?

John 15:4,5, compare Luke 18:26,27 _____

20. How does Jesus receive such a petitioner?

John 6:37 _____

21. What assurance does Jesus give to reinforce His promise of deliverance from sinful acts? To what end (objective)?

2Timothy 4:18 _____

22. When we start to realise victory over sin, what fills the heart of the one who uses the power of Christ to keep him from falling?

Jude 24; 1Peter 1:3-8 _____

23. How does the reality for 1John 3:9 (Q9) now appear to us, in the light of the promises of our Father-God and of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Philippians 4:13; Matthew 17:20 _____

If we were there at the crucifixion scene at Calvary, we would kneel at the foot of the cross of our bleeding, dying Saviour. There we see Him as dying just for our sin alone, as though there were no other for whom He needed to die (Hebrews 6:6; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53: 4,5,6,11).

So great is the burden of sin upon our mind and the realisation that this is my only Saviour, somehow it seems to be that His death was just for me. The love of Christ and His power to save is so great, that it is big enough to embrace all people, such that all who come to Him will see Him as their exclusive sacrifice.

10. How did David express his feelings when he had this same realisation of his wretched and desperately sinful condition?

Psalms 116:3 _____

11. What did he do about it?

Psalms 116:4 _____

12. How did God respond?

Psalms 116:5-8 _____

13. Was David happy with the result? How did he express his feelings?

Psalms 116:1,2 _____

14. How did David show his appreciation and thanks to the Lord?

Psalms 116:12,13,14,17 _____

Note: Verse 15 states that God sees the death of His saints as precious.

This may be understood in two ways:-

a) Corporal death - sealed and beyond Satan's reach (Rev.14:13).

b) Dead to self and sin, or born again in Christ (Romans 6:2,6

Galatians 2:20).

15. What did God do for David, that enabled David to become His servant?

Psalms 116:16 _____

24. To receive this life giving power that can change the heart of the vilest offender, there are two positive moves required of the sinner.

What are they?

John 1:12 _____

Note: Review the meaning of "believe" in lesson 4.

25. To gain the victory over every known sin and to achieve any task the Master may place before us, what is required on our part? Also what is the assurance of success?

Matthew 17:20, Compare Matthew 19:25,26 _____

26. The Christian road has its trials, but this does not mean we are forsaken of God. Regardless of our hardship, how are we kept in Christ and with what attitude do we face life's experiences?

1 Peter 1:3-9 _____

27. When we petition God for power to overcome sin, there is an essential ingredient on our part? What is it?

Hebrews 11:6 _____

28. From the same text, what has God promised to the believer?

Hebrews 11:6 _____

In the course of our study, we have learned that God has set a standard for man that will befit him for the perfect environment of heaven. There is not a man that has ever lived that can reach that perfection in his own strength. Jesus could have, but even He used God's strength (see lesson 6). When God says we are to be holy (Leviticus 19:2), He does not leave it there, but provides the power to achieve it.

By the grace of God, He has given us time and the power to overcome sin. His power is in the promise and because He has said it, it is guaranteed. You cannot trust the word of men, but you can trust the Word of God. All you and I have to do, is to "believe" those promises and call upon Him for the power to fulfil those promises in us. This is what is meant by "belief",

or "faith" in Jesus, it means believing to the extent of implementing His promise to remove sin from our lives. God has never promised to save us while ever we hold on to our sin (1Cor. 6:9,10; Psalm 66:18; Rev. 21:27).

Saving faith will result in righteous actions (James 2:14-18), because we have asked for and received the power to do right. This is why we are saved by grace through faith and not by works (Ephesians 2:8-9). It is the changed heart Jesus wants, not a mechanical, legalistic conformity to the letter of the law (2Corinthians 3:4-6). Yet, to the converted, doing God's will is a natural consequence, or result of surrendering to Him and ultimately loving Him (1John 2:4-6).

May I describe how this principle has been implemented in my own life and proven to work. The first step was to realise the magnitude of my sin and my great need (ask God to reveal your sin to you; John 16:8; John 6:44. See lesson 4, Q10,11). Then to confess all known sin and to ask God to forgive these and all the sins that I could not remember.

Following this was the surrender of every part of my being. What I could not surrender, I asked Him to take. I seemed unable to be truly emptied of self (Mark 9:23,24; Jeremiah 17:9). I pleaded with Him to save me in spite of my weakness and inability.

As our every action and response is determined by the thinking, I then asked God to take every thought pattern and impulse of my mind and fashion it after His likeness (2Cor. 3:18; Eph. 4:22-24; 2Cor. 10:5). Having made this plea unto God, I then determined to do everything He wanted me to do, be it of a religious nature, or of a temporal nature. I knew from countless failures in the past, that such a determination would be useless without the power of God. I then asked Him to give me that power, that from hence forth, I should not serve sin, but obey from the heart (Romans 6:6,16,17,18; 1John 2:6; 1:9).

I got up off my knees, knowing that I had finally done it right. My surrender was as TOTAL as I could possibly make it. I **believed** that Christ was my Saviour and had forgiven me my sin and now would keep me from sin.

It was not long before I was required to put the promises to the test. Temptation was staring me in the face. The only way I could get the victory over that temptation, was, at THAT INSTANT, to literally ask God to take away the desire for the thing that would draw me into sin. I consciously spoke the words, *Please God, take away the desire for this and keep me from sin, as you have promised to do.* IT WORKED and with variations to suit the occasion and my growing faith, has continued to work at every succeeding assault of the destroyer (James 4:7; Matthew 4:10,11). I literally lost interest in Satan's seductions. Viewed through the eyes of the converted, how empty and unfulfilling the temptations now appeared. God rewarded me with a peace and joy I had never known before. My heart just overflowed with thanks and love for Him. The reward FAR exceeded the sinful pleasures I had denied. Wonderful Saviour! Wonderful victory! Free at last! (Hebrews 11:6; Psalm 18:20-24; 1 Peter 1:3-9).

It must be emphasised at this point, that this only works when there is a resolved determination to follow Christ and use His power to do it. To ask God for the power and then go ahead and do the sin anyway, claiming that God did not help, is a blasphemy against the holy Spirit (Hebrews 10:26,29; Matthew 12:31,32; Ephesians 4:30). God never removes our power of choice. His power is not a restraint of the will, that we may no longer choose, but a strengthening of the will, that the suppliant may bring to fruition his choice to do righteousness (John 15:5).

May the Lord bless, as you exercise the "faith of Jesus" in the promises of God and lead a victorious life.

Our next lesson will discuss how Jesus overcame the world and got the victory over every temptation. We will learn the methods that He used and how His victory relates to ours. See Revelation 3:21 and 1 Peter 2:21.