

## *Living in Victory*

*From a message by David van Pelt, Centerville Mennonite Church.*

We greet each one this morning in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Also we are gathered this morning and we need to think of how that we are in a time when our faith is tested and we need to seek out to live in victory and I was thinking of a message concerning Living in Victory.

I invite you to open your Bibles to first John chapter 5.

We have this where John brings out thoughts of how to live in victory and that is our faith.

First John chapter 5 and the first six verses:

[1 John 5:1-6:](#)

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. <sup>2</sup>By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. <sup>3</sup>For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. <sup>4</sup>For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. <sup>5</sup>Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? <sup>6</sup>This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth."

We are gathered this morning as a group of Christians, a group of God's children where each of us could perhaps give a testimony of our deliverance from sin and being brought into the marvellous light of the Lord Jesus Christ, those of us who have had that experience truly that is right and good but we need to maintain a life where we are constantly able to give that testimony.

The devil is out to destroy our connection with God, and we have some simple statements given here to show to us how that we are His children if we love the Lord Jesus Christ and also have love one for another. This then puts us into a relationship that God can bless.

By this we know that we love the children of God when we love God and keep His commandments, so that is a test we can give ourselves if we love one another. If we can't love each other then it is impossible to love God. (1 John 5:2)

And so then as we think of that area and perhaps all seems to be quite well and then we also see how it says: And this is the love of God that we keep His commandments and His commandments are not grievous; there is an area where we need to find ourselves interested in or of great interest to us to just want to know what God's commandments are, what His will is for us, what His design for our life is and that we might find ourselves in that. Then he says those things are not grievous. (1 John 5:3)

Now of course that will put us to the test where it will show whether we have denied self or whether self is standing up yet and we need to be careful that we examine ourselves and realise that self needs to be denied and the cross needs to be taken and we find our way in that.

For whosoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. (1 John 5:4)

That's the thought I would like to base my message on, that we have the world that is about us and there are many things that the world has to offer that we should not be involved in or take an interest in and yet it seems like that. Jesus prayed for his disciples and said not that they should be taken out of the world but that they should be kept from the evil.

There are so many things in our time and age that we are living in that sometimes we come to think: How can we ever continue on being like God would want us to be because of all these things that we are involved or that are about us? and yet God will make a way.

Well there are many things in this world and yet at times it simply comes down to a personal relationship with the Lord and an understanding ourselves.

To be defeated. When we think of one living in defeat, we can say well the one who has come to his years of knowledge and accountability and has not responded, the call of God has come to them and they rejected the call of God, they are living in defeat.

Then we can think of one who has responded to the call of God and is not living in defeat. Now I suppose we can think of our daily experiences on that and that may hit us at times when discouragement, when the pressures of life, when the tests come that we hardly know how to handle and our emotions almost get us down and in this way we are not really doing what we should, that we should magnify the Lord, as we examine that kind of condition we would not be magnifying the Lord, now but I would agree that some people maybe have more struggles with this than others and yet we all have self to live with and we need to look at that.

It is not God's desire that we live in defeat and God made it possible to live in victory over self.

Many times the problem with individuals is that self wants to rise up and self wants to wrap around the individual and there is no way that individual can live in victory until he takes care of self, myself.

Sin and Satan will cause one to go into defeat and discouragement.

There are so many things that discouragement can attack and we need to live in victory over discouragement. Living in defeat will take us down in their spiritual walk of life and that is why we have the teaching here in first John and throughout the Scripture how that we need to live above the things of this world and to live in the will of God.

Living in defeat will destroy peace, that peace and satisfaction that we have in Christ Jesus. Living in defeat will destroy the assurance of salvation that we have through the shed blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Living in defeat will destroy that close relationship that we have with God. We find that is so real to each true Christian that we have a close relationship with God, we can talk to Him and He talks to us and living in defeat continually will destroy that and so it is important that we have victory.

The word of God has given us many things to help us to live in victory. Living in victory is that which we would all want to encourage each other to do.

Jesus as He spoke to His disciples concerning His death we find how that He took three of His disciples up on to a mountain and there He met with Moses and Elias and God spoke to them and said: This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. ([Matthew 17:1-9](#), [Mark 9:1-7](#), [Luke 9:28-35](#)) And Jesus talked to His disciples and He spoke about His decease and from that time on He continued to speak to them at various times about how that He would not be with them continually like he had been here for this time of His earthly Ministry, how He was with them after He had called them and was very close to them, but that He would not be with them like this forever.

There were various times He spoke to the people and how He said that if He destroyed this temple He would build it up in three days. ([John 2:19](#)) (referring to His death) and then in three days He would be raised from the dead.

And this caused great sadness and a great troubling experience for His disciples but they didn't really understand all that He was saying and yet He was telling them something that they were troubled about. And Jesus told them in [John 14](#): Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in Me. ([John 14:1](#)) and He went on to tell about heaven and how that they would be with Him, that where He is they would be with Him also ([John 14:3](#)) and there were many lessons that He gave there.

And then in [John 16](#), I want to take some thoughts from [John 14](#), [15](#) and [16](#), how that Jesus spoke to the needs of His disciples and I believe that we can make practical applications. I don't know the individuals here very well but I think that humans, that Christians are experiencing quite the same thing and we need to live in victory and as we think about how Jesus spoke to the needs here of the disciples I believe that we being His disciples He can speak to our needs as we would relate to Him in this way.

In [John 16:33](#) He says:

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Now the disciples He had said that they were glad now that He was not speaking in parables and that he was making His thoughts clear to them then He ended up with this verse that these things have I spoken unto you.

Now Jesus has spoken to them in various ways and he says "these things have I spoken unto you" and what are "these things" as we would wonder at this point in Christ's experience with his disciples how that he was nearing the end of His earthly ministry. Well in chapter 17 ([John 17](#)) is what we call the high priestly prayer and He praises His disciples in a very personal way and relates to them that they would be going on and would be drawing closer and closer to His crucifixion, His death.

So these things stand out, these things are brought to us and I already brought one of these thoughts. One of "these things" would be: Let not your hearts be troubled ye believe in God believe also in me.

And we dare not allow our hearts to be troubled, be overcharged with tears and concerns of this world. Certainly we do carry a burden for lost souls, we have a burden for the things maybe family concerns, the various family needs, maybe there are those that are sick and afflicted, maybe there are some that are having struggles with the various areas of life, we have concerns that we share but let's not be troubled.

I remember going into a garage one-day and this mechanic I had gone to in various times for the purpose of having my car worked on and he was a foreigner, very broken in his speech but he says: What you have today, problems or troubles?

Well problems you can fix but trouble well you know that is something different.

And so as we think we can have a burden but let not your heart be troubled and there is a way to live in victory and to have peace and rest there.

Jesus said: These things have I spoken unto you, ([John 14:25](#)) I am the way, the truth and the life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by me. ([John 14:6](#)) and that is right. In John 14 also brings this thought how that we need to come to Him and He is the way, the truth and the life.

Now if we simply tried to work them out, sure there is a part that we need to take an interest in and do our part in this, you know even in salvation we say that there is nothing that we can do for our salvation, God has supplied all that is needed, and that is true, the Lord Jesus Christ giving Himself on the cross at Calvary, and yet by the grace of God we need in faith to reach out and receive it.

So there is a part that we need to do as we have a troubled heart or we have some difficulties or problems that we need to work through and we need to go in the right way, we need to go to the source of victory.

He says I am the way, the truth and the life. And He is that through which we come to the Father. And when we think of first John chapter 2 He says that He is the advocate ([1 John 2:1](#)) and so Jesus is the way and if we do have problems we can come to Him in this way.

We also notice in John 14 verses 15 through 17 that brings out the thought here that Jesus was concerned that as He was going to be leaving them He would be sending a Comforter. If you love me and keep my commandments that I will pray that Father and he shall give you another Comforter that he may abide in you for ever, even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but you know him for he dwelleth in you and shall be in you. ([John 14:15-17](#)). That Spirit of truth, the Comforter. Jesus said that He would be leaving them and that is a comfort.

And so as we think of Jesus these things have I spoken unto you that you shouldn't be troubled or that you should understand where your strength this, where your victory is, it is by that Spirit.

In Romans chapter 6 it tells us how that that same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead will also quicken your mortal bodies and that we might have life by that same Spirit. ([Romans 8:11](#)) And that is what Jesus is speaking about here as He speaks about the Comforter, that Comforter will be there, and that is victory when we can have that indwelling Spirit there and be faithful followers of Him, his leading and his teaching.

Well so notice in [John 14:21](#):

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

Now I would like to associate the thought of having assurance.

You know someone that is living in defeat just doesn't have the assurance, there are questions that come about their salvation, whether they are truly ready to meet their death, they are troubled whether they are really living a pleasing life to the Lord, whether they are following close enough, and there are so many things that come into those that just have a lack of assurance that will cause defeat.

So we need to have this commandment, to keep the commandments. And some feel like they well they just haven't measured up yet to what God would want them to do and say they can't claim salvation, they can't claim assurance, they can't claim that.

Well we certainly need to come to realise that that there are conditions that people claim assurance of salvation when perhaps they should not, perhaps they are found wanting, and yet by the grace of God when we find ourselves in a Scriptural church and when we find ourselves following the Word to the best of our ability then we need to trust God - have faith, and pray earnestly that He would give us that satisfaction of knowing that we are in His will and that if He would take our life that all would be well.

As we go on to verse 27 in this same chapter and we see:

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." [John 14:27](#).

We need to have that close relationship with the Lord that we fear Him and that we would respect Him and yet it says: let not your heart to be troubled neither let it be afraid. Having been affrighted we might say, that is having a feeling that not everything is well, where the fear of God is that we desire to do the best we can in every situation and then we can have that peace.

Jesus says: Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.

So we see that in order to live above defeat we need to have that relationship of peace and being settled in our Christian experience and having that settled feeling.

And then in John 15 going on, we notice here a number of scriptures, where the first part is a parable that Jesus gave to His disciples of the vine and branches and that how He is the vine and we are the branches and the branches is where the fruit appears and where there is no fruit appearing on the branches those branches are taken away and burnt but the branches that bear fruit are the ones that special attention is given to and that they may bear more fruit.

And then verse 11 tells us ([John 15:11](#))

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

Again the thought is that these things He has spoken unto us and He has told us about this. And so that as we would have the assurance of salvation, as we would have the comfort and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, as we would have the peace and satisfaction that we are in the will of God we need to be interested in bearing fruit and fulfilling our purpose in life. Being interested in the welfare of those who are about us or perhaps the Lord has called us for service elsewhere that we would be willing to be used in God's service just however and wherever God would want us to be.

And that is fruit bearing.

And we could go on into [Galatians 5](#) there and find the fruit of the spirit brought out to us very clearly. First of all we would notice the works of the flesh and it would say that the works of the flesh are manifest in these and it would go on to give the outline of the works of the flesh which we could perhaps turn to. Those who would be involved in the works of the flesh are not living in victory, they are living in defeat. But those that are led by the Spirit and walking in the Spirit, if you are led by the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit and bringing forth the fruit and the evidence of that Spirit within us so we might have the fruit of the Spirit. And when this happens then there is joy.

Well we thought about assurance, we thought about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and peace and now we think of having that feeling of joy or admiration and praise to God and how that is a part of our living in victory also. I think that a way that we can give expression and to maintain that victory is to have a song upon our hearts and on our lips and then living in joy in this way.

Well going on we notice in [John 15:26](#) it says here:

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:"

And so when that Holy Spirit or the Comforter is indwelling our hearts then we will have the witness of that Spirit and that is going to manifest itself in the way that we respond to the teachings from the Word, it will manifest itself as to how we respond to the church, the outlines the church has designed, to our parents, our walk of life, our conduct and all that is involved in being a witness or manifesting in this way.

So we see that this is a witness that we have.

Then [John 16:1](#) says:

"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended."

Now there is things that will go contrary to the flesh, our personal thinking and that could vary because of our make up, it could vary because of the background we have, it could vary with the localities where we live in and yet when we have given our hearts, when we have given our commitments to the Lord and to a specified congregation or church that is scriptural then we need to find ourselves giving self up and then we should not be offended when someone would say: Brother here is an area where we think you should or where you could improve upon. And help us to be what we should be and the same thing could go apply to the sisters.

So we see how that we should not be offended in this.

Jesus spoke to His disciples about this that they should not be offended when they would be persecuted or when they would be mistreated and so on. We should not be offended when these things are spoken unto us and that is victory. If we become offended when someone would speak to us about these things or that we would understand how that we need to give up some personal things that we might say hold dear to us, we see that that can become an idol, if we are not ready to give it up for the cause of Christ in the church then I believe it is going on to where we would hold it as an idol and we had better examine ourselves whether we are truly living in victory.

Our victory is in Christ Jesus as we read there in first John five verse four how that faith is in Jesus Christ, that is faith as our sin bearer. ([1 John5:4](#))

if we fail to realise that or fail to have faith that Jesus can take away our sins or that He is the one that has come into the world to take away our sins we are not living in victory.

In [Isaiah 53:6](#): All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way in the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all.

That's what it says: the Lord as laid upon Jesus the iniquity of us all. And we need to realise that by faith that Jesus has taken burden of sin on the cross of Calvary.

By faith, reaching and accepting the blood that He shed there on Calvary's cross we can have that experience of having our sins taken away and He bore our sins for us.

Romans eight, we are not going to turn to all these scriptures, but it is the thought here that He is our Saviour, the one who has gone the way before us.

In [John 13:13](#) there and that scripture for we read how that Jesus after he broke bread and blessed it, broke bread and gave his disciples and also the cup gave that lesson and then he took a basin and filled with water and then laid aside his garment, took a towel girded himself and wash his disciples feet, gave them a lesson, number of lessons there we take from that, but the thought there is He said you call me Lord and Master and so I am. If I your Lord and Master have washed your feet you ought to also wash one another's feet.

The thought is here that He is our Lord and Master. If we don't have accept Him for our Lord and Master, the one whom we simply trust, the one whom we look to for our guide and one whom we can have confidence in then we are not living in victory. We need to have Him as Lord and Master.

[First John 2:1](#) I believe I mentioned this about that Jesus, we need to have faith that Jesus is our advocate. When we have a problem, when we have a concern about our personal walk of life we can lay it before the Lord and realise that Jesus is our advocate standing alongside to help, that He is there to help us.

Now of going onto the thought of also knowing the Word of God or having victory is that we should be well acquainted with the Word of God.

Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee, ([Psalm 119:11](#)) the Psalmist brought that thought out how that was so important and we need to have that very thing of God's Word in our hearts that when we go down the road and we find ourselves meditating upon or be about in our daily work, and I was thinking more about going down the road where you see billboards that aren't fit to look at and so on, we have the Word of God in our hearts that we might not sin against God, we turn our heads the other way, we are determined and that we are not going to have our minds plagued with the things of corruption and what the world is feeding on and not have our minds on that.

We need to have God's Word hid in our hearts that we might have victory.

Knowing the Bible will equip us to have victory in times of temptation.

Now the temptations vary from people to people but we need to realise that God with every temptation will make a way of escape. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: ([1 Cor. 10:13](#)). So we see that we are in those types of situations where we need to have victory and knowing the Bible will equip us to have victory in time of testing. Certainly God desires for us to become stronger, He desires to us to become closer and He allows things to happen in our experiences that will prove whether we will turn back to the evil or to the devil or are we going to be drawing closer to Him.

He tested Abraham asking him to offer Isaac to sacrifice. [Genesis 22:2](#)

Knowing the Bible will equip us to have victory in times of stress and hardship.

I believe that is present many times with us but stress and hardship we don't choose but those are times that we need to turn to the Lord and find Him very close.

Prayer is another important part for us to have victory. We find that this is a communication with God. God speaks to us as we turn to His Word and as I mentioned we need to know the Word of God and have that in our hearts, hide that in our hearts and that is God speaking to us.

Now then prayer is in turn our part of the conversation with God as we talk with Him. And maybe sometimes maybe we feel like we're involved in this "give me" type of thing, you know it's just for my benefit, but we need to have praise and admiration for God and talk about the things that are happening about us and it just helps us to have a real close relationship with Him.

He says in [John 14:14](#): "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it."

So it is in the name of Christ, that is again showing to us that our victory is through Jesus Christ.

Hebrews chapter 4 shows to us that we can have confidence as we come in prayer that we don't need to hold back as we would feel like He is a harsh God, He is one that is hard to get along with, No, but it says

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." [Hebrews 4:16](#).

So we can come to Him in this way as we would see Jesus as one without sin, see Jesus as the advocate, that we would see Jesus as one who is concerned about our salvation, as we would see Jesus as one that He has spoken these words for our benefit and for the purpose for drawing us closer unto Him.

I have a prayer as we were turn to Ephesians 6 ([Ephes. 6:18](#)) which would show to us that it is a part of our Christian armour as we face the devil and the things that he is attempting to do to us then we have this as a part of our Christian armour and then here is this thought we have that God has given us the opportunity, has opened up the door that we can come to Him and you simply talk to Him.

Now then as we pray to Him, as God has spoken to us then we need to be completely yielded to Him having an open mind to what He has for us, if we have a closed mind in certain areas and we need to be careful that we understand that we won't have victory and one thing will lead to another and we will lose out.

Well self needs to be denied if we are going to be completely yielded to God.

I'd like to think of [Matthew 6:10](#).

Matthew six there has the instructions on how to pray and he says: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. <sup>10</sup>Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." [Matthew 6:9-10](#).

And that thought of "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" has often caused me to think of really how am I doing God's will? Am I completely yielded to him?

I believe and then I think of who is doing God's will in heaven? Why, it can't be other than the angels, it must be the angels are doing His will and then so as the angels are there I wonder how they are responding to God's will? And I don't think there is any complaining about what God would be having them to do, I believe they do it willingly, I believe they do to their best ability and I believe that there is no lack of how that they would respond that they might bring all the honour and glory to God.

And so Thy will be done in earth should be done as His will is done in heaven, so that all might be done so that there might be all glory and honour and God might receive all the praise and be magnified in this way.

So we see that as we would be completely yielded to Him in this way I believe we can have victory.

And then as we think of the things that God has designed for us, how that there are many things that we can have victory in, we need not be living defeat and we can have that satisfaction as spoken of in [John 16:33](#) it says:

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."