



My Bible School Lessons

Exploring the Word of God

Lesson #24: "Living in Christ"

VICTORY BY CREATION? or EVOLUTION?

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2 Corinthians 2:14 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

Notice what the Word of God says in 2 Corinthians 2:14, It doesn't sound like when you're in Christ that you have to have any sins. "Now thanks be unto God which "sometimes" causes us to triumph in Christ." Is that what your Bible says? Are you sure? Your Bible says, "Now thanks be to God which always causes us to triumph". What does that mean? But it says "In Christ." It's not your own power doing it.

How can we quote this text, and many have put it to memory, Jude verse 24, "Now unto Him that is able, to keep you 'sometimes' from falling and to present you 'sometimes' faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." Is that what the text says? Well, that is what many preachers teach. They don't believe that, "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless, blameless, before the glory of God." You see the Bible is not contradicting itself. There's no excuse for the Christian to sin.

So here the Bible speaks plain language "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless, what does God mean? What does He mean? I'll never forget when I wanted to stop smoking cigarettes; I wanted to stop smoking cigarettes so bad! And I would go home at night and I would get on my knees and I would take those cigarettes before I got down on my knees and I would tear them up and flush them down the toilet. I would get on my knees and I would say, "Oh God of heaven, please forgive me for smoking," I would say "Please give me the victory over these cigarettes". And I would get into bed and go to sleep and in the morning, guess what would happen? The urge would come for a cigarette.

I would look at God and say, "Lord, I just asked you to help me; I just asked you to forgive me; I just asked you to give me victory and you didn't do it! And I would go to the store and I would argue with God all the way. Some of you have problems that you have been in and out of. How many times have you confessed the same thing over and over and over again and somehow you believe that once you get that thing out of your life, then you'll be ready and be like Jesus. You see we believe in the theory of evolution and yet we're Christians!

You see the concept of evolution is something that evolves gradually over time. And as Christians too often, we find ourselves believing that we'll get better day by day by day, and we even boast about past successes. As a matter of fact, we're proud of past successes. We're proud that we have a victory in this area and a victory in that area. And we say, "Look, I'm better than what I was." And then we look at someone and we say, "Wow, look at what he is doing," we say, "but hey, he is a lot better than what he was."

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It is because we don't understand what we have the right to receive when we accept Christ! We don't understand. Let me tell you something, the devil wants to blind the world from the power of God because he wants us involved in a 'works' religion. He wants us to believe that we can add to what Christ has done. You can't add to what has been done nor can you take away. As a matter of fact, the Bible says, if you add to the Word, and we believe the Bible teaches in John chapter 1 that Jesus is the Word, if you add to it, all the plagues of this book will come upon you. So we can't add or take away, He was a perfect sacrifice. So what does it mean? When I get on my knees and I confess my sins to God and I say, "Oh God of heaven, I come before you and I agree with you, I am a sinner." I am not telling God anything new, and then you say, "Lord. I want to invite You into my heart, into my life."

But let me explain something to you, the Bible says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to do what? Let's look at it. Go with me to 1 John 1, Heavenly Father, this subject is the most serious subject that I could ever preach and today there is not one sin, there is not one chain that can bind anyone who really just opens their heart to receive You. Please, let it be clear, remove any distraction any demonic forces so that You can tell the world of how sweet it is to be in You! In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

Everyone here today, I don't care what it is, can have complete victory, right now, this day, not tomorrow, not theory of evolution where you evolve. We believe in Creation, and Creation speaks and it is done! Complete! "Wilt thou be made whole?" Is the question Jesus asked the man, "Arise, take up your bed and walk," Jesus told the man. Jesus came back and said, "Go now and sin no more." How do we play with that? Jesus told the man to "go and sin no more." Because the man had power of the Holy Spirit, the power of Christ's Word that would keep him from falling.

Notice John chapter 1 verse 9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Now notice what happens, when you confess your sins. The Promise is that "I forgive you and I cleanse you from all." Christ comes into your life, when He comes into your life, He shelters you, more like He pulls you into His life and now every victory that He has obtained, belongs to you. You are shielded by Him now.

And so now when the devil comes and says, "Listen, I want a cigarette." You look to Christ and say, "Lord, the devil is trying to play with my thoughts, We don't smoke! You had victory over this. I don't have to worry." And you say, "Wait a minute, is it that easy? It is that easy! Do you know what the devil used to try to do to me? Every time I got on my knees and said, "Lord, I invite you into my heart", every time I got on my knees and said, "I want to give drugs up I want to give up alcohol, and I drank liquor for 9 years and I smoked cigarettes for 13 years, I smoked PCP almost everyday for almost 9 years, every day I was putting some type of drug into my body and I didn't go to any rehab!

I would get on my knees and I would plead with God, and say, "Lord, please forgive me." I didn't understand that right then He was willing to cleanse me from all. And what would happen is, I would get off of my knees and I'd get into bed and wake up and all of a sudden the thought would come. You see the devil would come and he would speak in the first person, in my voice into my ear, He would say, "I want a cigarette." He would speak, "I want a cigarette." I would confuse Satan's voice for my own thoughts and I would start thinking and dwelling on it and my thoughts would get caught up with my emotions and when the thoughts and the feelings are combined it makes up the moral character and the minute I think of going against what God has given me victory over, it's like cruise control.

Have you ever found yourself moving towards a sin and in the back of your mind you are saying, I don't want to do it? He works his hypnotic power on you and before you know it you are headed for something that you hate doing. The devil can try to tempt you to allow that temper to rise but you just say to God, "Lord, deal with the devil, that's him. And so what would happen is, when he would come

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and say, "I want a cigarette," I would go to God right then and say, "Lord, the devil is trying to deceive me into thinking I have to fight something that You already had victory over."

I remember telling a man in a crusade and he came up and asked me, "Do you mean to tell me that victory is that easy? Do you mean to tell me that I can have it?" Now by the way, when you have victory, you don't feel like you are better than people. You don't start condemning people, you don't all of a sudden feel I am Holy and everybody else isn't. As a matter of fact, that's a sign of someone who doesn't know God. When I am around someone who is smoking, I never want a cigarette, nor do I condemn the smoker, I accept that I have the victory and pray for them and long for them to have the victory I have.

So when this man came to me and asked, "It's that simple?" I said, yes, it's that simple. He'd been drinking for 30 years or more. He was older than I was, he said, "I mean every day, I've tried everything. I am hooked." I said, "Right now, brother, you can have complete victory." He said, "I can?" I said, "Yes, let's pray." We prayed about it, we prayed that Christ would come into his life and keep him.

About two weeks later he said, "Listen, can I give a testimony?" When he came up to give his testimony he said, "I was going day after day and I was free from liquor, I didn't want it, I couldn't believe it, I just didn't want it. But one night I was driving on the highway and all of a sudden the scent of alcohol came into my car. I could smell it so fresh, it was as if a bottle was right there and all of a sudden my mind started saying, "You want a drink." I pulled the car over on the freeway and got out and went around the side and knelt down and called on the name of God and said, "Lord, this is the devil trying to get back in!" and I felt the presence of darkness move and I felt peace come in."

You see, the devil has the right to challenge your commitment. He has the right to say you're not real. You see when you tell God, "I want victory," the devil says, "Oh sure he does. Give me another shot at him. He doesn't really want victory, he's just saying that now, he's afraid of hell-fire. You put a drink in front of him, he'll drink again." So here this man has not drank for years now. He is still faithful several years later, never touched another drink!

But you say, "what about the physical damage that happens when you disobey God?" Let me show you a text in the book of Exodus chapter 15 and then I want to give you a beautiful example from the gospels that show how it is. In Exodus 15, verse 26 the Bible says, "And said if thou would diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God and would do that which is right in His sight, and would give ear to His commandments and keep all of His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that healeth thee." So God was telling the children of Israel not only will I keep you from getting those diseases, but if you already have them, I'll heal you.

Do you know what PCP does to the brain? It eats up brain cells. I know people right now who used to smoke it with me who do not know their names. They are locked in time, and I don't laugh about it because I am so thankful that God kept me.

It was New Years Eve and I was waking home and wanted to go to church. I had every intention to go to church and I looked up the street and there were two of my friends and they were big drug dealers. I said, let me just go tell my buddies Happy New Year and after I tell them, I will go on to the all night prayer meeting. I thought if I got to that prayer meeting, this time I was really going to do it. How many times have you found yourself saying, "I'm really going to do it?" But you can't do it! And the minute you realize that you can't, the devil wants you to believe that you can do it. He wants you to believe that you can help Christ in some way. All you need to do is just accept what He has done. And you need to say Lord make it real, what does it mean to accept what You have done? There is no reason why you shouldn't have sweet peace today.

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And I walked up the street to see those friends and I'll never forget, I said, "Look brothers, I just want to wish you a Happy New Years!" and my friend said, "Look here you go, this is yours." And he handed me two oz. of PCP. This is worth a couple thousand. He said, "Look man, this is yours just to party off for the weekend, just go and get whoever you want high." I was hooked on it and said, "Let me just see if it's any good." He said, "Hey, you better only take a couple of hits." I smoked some of it and said "Man this is nothing, give me another", He said, "Man I'm telling you, you better stop, this stuff is powerful!" I smoked another one and I said brothers, this is no good and I put my arms around my partners and said, I want to let you brothers know that I love you, I love you. I... I...

All of a sudden my mind went to heaven, in my mind I was going straight to heaven and I landed and I was saying, Oh, I made it, Oh, I made it. I was hollering for joy because I believed that I had made it; but outside I was fighting the Sheriff. In real life those sheriffs were coming on me and there was too many neighbors outside for them to do what they wanted to do, but I was just throwing the police, I had supernatural strength, demonic power is what it really was. I was throwing them around and saying Oh, I am in heaven and then reality started settling in. And I looked up and saw gas pumps that looked familiar and I saw this garage door that looked a little familiar and I recognized that I was at the Sheriffs station; I wasn't in heaven. I was cuffed up and I became afraid. You see, this stuff destroys your brain.

Not only did God give me victory, but I know He has healed my mind. There is no way on earth that I could retain the things that I retain in my mind without the healing power of Christ. Christ will not only prevent the disease but He will heal you from those diseases also.

The problem is really not with God; some of us don't truly want victory. Some of us, we really want to hang on to a couple of little items that are against God. Some of us want to eat whatever we want to eat whenever we want to eat it. Some of us want to gossip whenever we want to gossip. Some of us want to hold grudges against people. Some of us want to keep watching whatever we want to watch. Some of us are worshipping sports. [Yes! Sports is a religion. It was the foundation and pillars of the Pagan worship of the gods!!] People are all caught up. Do you think Jesus would be playing football? I played ball, I know the attitude of what it is like to be out there tackling people. We spend hours watching. We don't want to give that up. Some of us don't want to give up an affair that we are in.

Let me tell you something, it's ALL or NONE. You must understand that unless you are willing to accept the fullness of Christ, you can't have any of Him. And that's serious. And see the Christian world today is teaching you that you can just do your best. You've heard, "Do your best, God understands." Some teach that if you are moving upward and you die as you're moving upward, then Christ makes up the difference. NO! He doesn't make up any difference; He makes it all up! You are complete in Christ and when the Father looks at you, He looks at you as though you've never sinned; As though you have never, ever sinned.

And He keeps you from falling. Your thoughts may be troubled, but as you flood your thoughts with the Word of God and you keep flooding them with the Word of God, Angels will wake you up. They'll get you up, they'll quicken your mind; they'll help you receive the things of God, they'll orchestrate the affairs and they will even catch your words when you are not thinking and you're about to go off, they will catch them and re-orchestrate them until your brain comes back to a point where you understand. The devil will not be able to affect you. And that is today.

Alcohol, you can be free, tobacco, you can be free, cocaine, free! And this is what we need to tell people. You see we're teaching them this other thing and they don't believe it, so we excuse it because it is humanity, but you tell me if this text says we can be free or not?

2 Corinthians 5 verse 17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ," How do we get in Christ? We say, "Lord I repent. Lord I accept what you have done for me. I accept your victories, Dear God. I am a sinner, you

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were never a sinner, You did not commit any sins. You had a totally victorious life. You were tempted in all points and I accept that life. That's the life that gives you the right to the tree of life. Lord I accept it." And right then He moves in, and you are covered. And that covering is like being in His hand and there is no one or nothing strong enough to go through Christ's hand and get to you!

The only thing that can break that protection is my choice. If I chose to let it go, Then Christ backs up. So the Bible says, "If any man be in Christ, he becomes a new creature." Is that what it says? No, it doesn't say he becomes, Read it with me, "Therefore, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, all things are passed away, behold all things are become new." When the soul surrenders himself to Christ, A new power takes possession of the new heart. Upon surrender a new power takes possession.

We sometimes say, Lord, I can't believe it! But we need to pray, Lord help mine unbelief! It's not in your power, it's because I am so used to going the other way, thinking that I must do something. Ephesians puts it this way, Chapter 3 You see we couldn't die for ourselves; we can't make atonement; and the devil wants to belittle what God has done! In Ephesians chapter 3 verse 20, "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.." We can't even think of what He can do! Notice in verse 19, "And to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." "Christ in you, the hope of glory," Not your works, not what you can do!

Let me give you a beautiful illustration; Go with me to Matthew chapter 14, there is a very familiar story and I've heard it preached many times but no-one has ever pointed out to me what I am going to point out to you today until just recently. Oh, God of heaven as we start bringing this to a close we need you to break through. Every person here must understand that they never have to worry again about being lost, that they never have to worry about the faults and failures that they do, because in You there is perfect peace, in You there is perfect power, In You there is Salvation! And today Lord, make it clear. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

Beginning with verse 25, "And in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them walking on the sea, and when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled saying it is a spirit and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them saying, be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid. And Peter answered Him and said, Lord if it be thou bid me come unto thee on the water. And Jesus said come." And Peter immediately stepped out of that ship and he started doing what? Walking on water.

Now I want to ask you a question, did Peter have to learn to walk on water? All he had to do was walk because the word of God said he could do it. All he had to do is have faith and walk. Can you learn to keep the commandments? No. Can you ever keep them? No. All you have to do is have faith in what Christ has done and Christ will do it through you. And it won't be something new that He is doing, He'll just live His same life out in you.

When Peter walked on water, did he have within his nature the ability to walk on water? Was there something in him that would give him that ability? No. He had a sinking nature. He naturally was inclined to sink. We are naturally inclined to sin, to go against God. Our nature is contrary to the things of God; we don't want to do it. But by faith when we are in Christ, now Peter is walking but even while he was walking the sinking nature was always there. But the only way that sinking nature could live, is if he took his eyes off of Christ and put them on what? Self.

You see, when you understand the power of what Christ will do for you if you allow Him; The Bible makes strong statements, Have you ever heard the text that says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." We believe that, but then the sister passage is John 15:4, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."

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Even after Peter walked the first time, he never had in his power the ability to do it again. In fact we don't know anyone that's done it again, but you can walk on water today, and in the Christian life every day when we get home, we should have walked on water; because we should have done the impossible. Every day when we get on our knees to pray, we should see that we have lived what is impossible for us to have done on our own, but Christ has done it in us. Not I but Christ in me!

Our problem is that we believe that we can do all things through Christ, but we don't believe the sister text because if we did, we would live closer to God, completely dependent on Him. Notice John 15:4 "Abide in me, and I In you... Now keep your thumb there and flip over to 1 John chapter 3 verse 6 "Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not." When you are abiding in Christ, it is impossible to sin. You have to come outside of Christ now; you can't sin while being covered by God; Because God isn't going to sin. Now Notice verse 5, "I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me, ye can do nothing."

We believe we can do all things with Christ, but we need to understand, without Him we can do nothing! Our acceptance, our victory, everything we have, every move we make, has to be in Christ! And when we are in Christ we become impregnable to the assaults of Satan.

You know, it's time that we study, and stop making excuses because we want to do wrong and belittling; It is almost blasphemy to say that Christ will walk with us when we are sinning, Romans 6:16 says Whoever we yield ourselves to obey, that's whose servant we are. Romans 8 clearly says, that only those who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. Is the Spirit of God going to lead you to sin?

There were these motorcycle riders who were all on their Harleys making a lot of noise; they'd been drinking and laughing and riding around and as they were riding around they saw an art museum. So they parked their bikes and they laughed and they started going through this museum and they were laughing at all these big pictures, they were just cracking up having a good time just disturbing everybody.

But then they came to this one big portrait and it was a beautiful picture of Jesus hanging on the cross and a ladder was leaned up against the cross and a Roman soldier had climbed up and he was taking Jesus off the cross and the artist had depicted it so beautifully that as you would move your eye it would literally look as if he was letting his hands loose. This made all those bikers sober.

Then as they became sober they stared then most moved on and began joking again, but one of them was so convicted he just stopped and his eyes were fastened on the painting and he stared at it. Finally an hour had gone by and it was time to close. The manager came up to him and she was very nice, she said "Excuse me sir, the museum is about to close now. We have to be going." He looked at her and he said, "Well, er... No, I can't go right now." She said, "Sir I am sorry, the museum is closing." All of a sudden tears came in his eyes and he said, "I can't go now, I don't want to leave... until they take Him off the cross." Now the manager was moved as she saw this man weeping and heard his response. Being a Christian herself, her eyes started watering, she looked at him and said, "No, sir, we must go, they can't take Him down, until sin stops."

Friends, every time we sin, we crucify Christ afresh; we need to let Him off the cross. We need to let Him off the cross and allow Him to resurrect in our lives. Stop crucifying Him; stop breaking His heart. We need to stop hurting Christ, by keeping on doing the same sin over and over and then just saying "Forgive me" while knowing we will just go do it again. We need to open our hearts to God, Let Him in! Become sheltered by Him, and with a sinking nature, walk on water; today, right now and forever.