Victory in Jesus

Introduction:

The Bible has much to say about the Christian's victory in this life. The apostle John writes, "For whatsoever is begotten of God overcomes the world: and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:4). Through "faith" the Christian will be victorious. The word "victory" (Greek - nike) is defined by Liddell and Scott's Greek English Lexicon as "victory in battle; in the games... victory over opponents... generally, the upper hand, ascendancy... to keep the fruits of victory... Nike, the goddess of victory" (LS 533).

What generally comes to mind when one hears the Greek word nike is the world's leading supplier of athletic shoes and apparel. The manufacturer of sports equipment led the industry in 2008 with $ 18.6 billion in sales and employed more than 30,000 people worldwide. The company is named after the Greek goddess of victory; i.e., Nike. Grand words of success and triumph are used to define nike. Paul tell us that such triumph in life belongs to the faithful. The apostle writes, "But thanks be unto God, who always leadeth us in triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest through us the savor of his knowledge in every place" (2 Corinthians 2:14) (see also John 16:25-33; 1 Corinthians 15:56-57; Revelation 2:7, 10).

Victory and triumph suggest a contest or battle. Paul depicts this battle within the minds of men in the book of Romans. Paul writes, "But I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members" (Romans 7:23-24). The apostle Peter explains that there is a battle for the souls of men (see 2 Peter 2:1-4). Jesus said “And many false prophets shall arise, and shall lead many astray. And because iniquity shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall wax cold” (Matthew 24:11-12). Men may either resist the ways of the world (Jude 3) or resist the ways of God (Acts 7:51-53). The Lord admonishes us not to love the world or the things therein (1 John 2:15-16).
God commands that we "fight the good fight of faith" (1 Timothy 1:18; 6:12). Victory and triumph in battle or athletics does not come without a price. Not only did Christ triumph in his sacrifice for the sins of man but mankind must also do their part in attaining the victory (see Acts 20:28). Christians are depicted as soldiers in the Lord's army (2 Timothy 2:3-4). The Lord's soldiers are filled with faith, conviction, and great stamina. There is a never quit disposition that identifies the triumphant ones in life. Solomon wrote, "If thou faint in the day of adversity, Thy strength is small" (Proverbs 24:10). The battle is against Satan. Satan's desire is to eternally ruin the church (see Revelation 12). The question is, where will you and I stand in this battle for the souls of men? Will we fight worldliness and the tempting vises of Satan? Will we fight through the persecution of man till our last breath of air?

A Closer Look at the Battle

The book of Revelation reveals the Christian's battle to be against Satan (Revelation 12). Satan is the god and ruler of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 6:12). This world is his kingdom (1 John 5:19). Satan's primary devises are worldliness (temptations), false teaching, and persecution (James 1:12-16; Matthew 7:15ff; 2 Timothy 3:12). The Christian is admonished to stand against worldliness, false teaching, and persecution (see Ephesians 6:10-12). The saint of God is to take a stand on truth and not be moved (see Romans 5:1-2; Colossians 2:4-5, 8). This battle is to the death (Revelation 2:10). The word of God encourages the Christian to have stamina and overcome Satan (see Hebrews 10:32-39; Philippians 3:13-14). The apostle Paul wrote, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing" (2 Timothy 4:7-8). The true Christian will have no fear of Satan and his devices (Isaiah 8:12-13; 2 Timothy 1:7). With Christ we will conqueror sin and death. Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (see Philippians 4:13).

An Intelligent Approach to the Battle

Paul wrote, "Times of ignorance God overlooked but now commands that all men everywhere repent" (Acts 17:30). The child of God does not stick his head in the sand when the battle comes to him. The true saint of God will test all doctrines that come before him (see Matthew 7:15-16; 2 Timothy 3:8-9; 1 John 4:1). The temptation to change the word of God to make it mean what your personal convictions and opinions are will be defeated by the faithful (see 2 Corinthians 4:1-7). The saint of God will endure persecution to the end because Jesus warned that this would occur (John 15:18-19). A motivation to endure is the fact that persecutions are temporary as opposed to eternal (2 Corinthians 4:16-17). The saint of God...
will be mindful of the lures of this world (1 John 2:16-17). The tempting vises of this world are powerful. Matthew records Jesus saying, "unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:40-41). The temptation to lust after others (Matthew 5:27-28), to be rich (1 Timothy 6:6-10), and famous (John 12:43) are powerful vises. No one can deny that all these tempting vises of Satan are filled with pleasures (see Hebrews 11:24ff). The saint of God; however, is one who overcomes these temptations and obtains victory throughout all eternity. Triumph comes to those with purpose, drive, and conviction. The faithful will not permit themselves to be swayed in any other direction than heaven (see Ephesians 4:14).

**Weapons of Victory**

The saint of God is armed to the teeth for victory (see Ephesians 6:13-17). We have the distinctive gospel of Jesus Christ to guide us to victory (Romans 1:16). Jesus said, "Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leads unto life, and few are they that find it" (Matthew 7:13-14). At the completion of the Sermon on the Mount Matthew notes, "And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes" (Matthew 7:28-29). There are many directions a man may go; however, only one is approved of God (Ephesians 4:1ff).

Another weapon of victory is the unity of the saints. Rogue members who seeks to pollute the word of God with personal conviction or opinions will be outnumbered and defeated. They will be made to feel the sting and shame of their error and either come to repentance or leave the Lord altogether (1 John 2:18-19). Jesus prayed for this type of unity (John 17) and the apostles commanded it (see Romans 15:5-6; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 5:1ff; Philippians 1:27; 2 Thessalonians 3:6).

Lastly, and most importantly, the saints have God on their side. The apostle Paul writes, "If God is for us, who is against us? ... For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of god, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (see Romans 8:31-39). Throughout the history of mankind Jehovah has proved himself to be omnipotent (see Genesis 18:14; Jeremiah 32:27). The Lord declares the end from the beginning and thereby man ought to align himself with his maker (see Isaiah 46:9-10).

**Conclusion**

Thanks be to God for loving us and granting us the forgiveness of sins so that we have the opportunity of eternal salvation (John 3:16). Before we stand before his judgment seat; however, we must live our lives. The apostle Peter said, "Be sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour: whom withstand steadfast in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are accomplished in your brethren who are in the world" (1 Peter 5:8-9). Though the victory belongs to the saint it will take diligent warfare on all our part to make it to the end unscathed by Satan's polluted devices. Paul writes, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, fore as much as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

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