

# THE VICTORIOUS LIFE IN CHRIST



by  
Evangelist Norman R. Stevens

## THE VICTORIOUS LIFE IN CHRIST

Please open your Bibles to Romans chapter six and verse one. I would like to preach a message entitled "The Victorious Life in Christ."

In Romans 6:1-18, the Bible says, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."

I believe that in the words of this text is the great secret to living the victorious life in Christ.

We are going to notice three things: First, the statement of victory; second, the factual basis of victory; and third, the practical outworking of victory.

Please notice, number one: the statement of victory. In Romans 6:1, Paul said, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?"

What is Paul talking about? Paul is talking about sin as a ruling principle. The fundamental question that Paul is posing here is not whether or not we are going to sin from time to time occasionally; but he is talking about the believer's very relationship to the sin nature out of which acts of sin come.

Now it is important that you understand that. If you do not understand what I have just said right now, the rest of Romans 6 will be a total disaster to you.

Take the word "sin" out, and put in the words "the sin nature;" and the whole thing would take on new meaning.

Now, when Paul is talking about sin here, he is talking about the rule and reign of the old sin nature that you have. You could ask the same question this way, "Should we remain under the dominion of the old sin nature that grace may abound? Should we remain under the controlling power of the old sin nature that grace may abound? Should we remain under the rule and reign of the old sin nature that grace may abound?"

That is the question. Notice the answer he gave in Romans chapter 6 and verse two. "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

What is Paul saying? Paul is saying this: Perish the thought; away with such a notion.

The Apostle Paul is making a clear reference to something that is unconceivable as being consistent with the Christian life.

In other words, Paul said, If you say "yes" to that question "Shall we continue in sin?" that is utterly inconsistent, utterly inconceivable for a Christian to think like that.

What is Paul saying? Paul is saying, for a Christian to abide under the control, under the dominion of the sin nature is totally inconsistent.

You need to get a hold of that. God's people have such a low view of godliness and holiness that they have totally missed the boat.

My dear friends, if you sin, that is not an acceptable activity. If a Christian lives dominated by his sin nature, that is not acceptable. Now I wish it were not true, but I know it does happen.

It is possible for a Christian to live dominated by his sin nature. It is possible for a Christian to live his life, at least for some period of time, dominated by his own carnal desires, appetites, lusts, and behaviors; but Paul says, to do so is absolutely inconsistent with being a Christian.

I wish you would get a view of sin like that. I wish you would understand what the Bible's view is about sin. God says it is inconsistent for you to call yourself a Christian and live a selfish life. It is inconsistent for you to call yourself a Christian and live a lustful life. It is inconsistent for you to be a Christian and live a bitter life. It is inconsistent for you to be a Christian and live a godless life. Those are absolutely inconsistent.

Shall we continue in sin that [so that] grace may abound? Perish the thought! Away with such foolishness! How shall we that are dead to sin, or dead to that dominating force, continue therein?

We are dead to that sin. What does that mean, "dead to sin"? It is simply saying this, by the work of Jesus Christ upon the cross; we are separated from dominion and the controlling power of the sin nature.

Listen! We have been spiritually set free. God has, by His own power, delivered us, set us free from the dominating power, the ruling power of the sin nature.

My dear Christian friends, you might not know this, but you are dead to sin. You might not be practicing that. That may not be your experience; but if you are saved, God says that once and for all, through the work of Jesus Christ upon the cross, you have been set free from the dominion of the sin nature.

Not from the presence of it, but its power to rule and reign in your life. God has taken and broken the back of the sin nature.

You have a new nature. As a child of God, you have the very presence of the Holy Spirit of God living in you. Therefore you have the power to turn off the old sin nature that you have.

How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Under the power of the Holy Spirit, you have the same power over the sin nature that you ought to have over a bad TV program.

For example, you are sitting home tonight after church and something comes on TV; and you say to yourself, that is not fit for a Christian to watch; and so what you do is you get up and turn the thing off. So let me ask you something. Does it cease to exist? No! It exists out there somewhere but you have turned off the reception.

Listen! Your sin nature exists in you. It existed when you got up this morning. It exists in you right now. It will exist when you go to bed. It will be there when you get up but you have the power to turn that thing off.

You do not believe that do you? That is what the Bible says. God says you have the power to turn it off. You can shut the thing off – not its presence, but its power to rule; not its power to exist, but its strength to dominate.

Beside that Paul says, not only have you been set free from this dominating power; but there has been placed into you the very nature of God Himself.

You have the Spirit of God who indwells you, and He has imparted to you the very nature of God Himself.

You are partakers of the Divine Nature. The Holy Spirit of God indwells you. And Paul says, because of that, you have been set free.

Question! Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

Paul's response is, that is nonsense. That is unthinkable. That is totally inconsistent. O that you would have that attitude.

How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Now that is the statement of victory.

But notice number two the factual basis of victory. This truth that you are dead to sin, the truth, the fact that you have been delivered, set free, set loose from sin's power, the fact that sin has been dethroned, that theological truth is illustrated in your baptism.

Romans chapter 6 is probably the clearest passage in the New Testament explaining baptism as we understand it.

Baptism is the immersion of the believer in water. I believe that it is the only kind of baptism that is legitimate.

There are those who believe sprinkling or pouring is baptism. I think that is totally inconsistent with the Scriptures.

In Romans chapter 6 Paul says, I want to tell you that this wonderful truth of being set free is illustrated by baptism.

Listen! Baptism does not create the reality. If baptism creates the reality, then you believe in baptismal regeneration. You believe you got saved when you were baptized. No! Baptism merely illustrates that which has already taken place.

Notice in verse three that, in baptism, you picture that you died with Jesus Christ. Verse three says, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into [means unto] Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"

When you stand in the water, you are identifying yourself with the death of Christ.

In verse 4, the Bible says, "Therefore we are buried with Him into death."

When the preacher takes you and places you under the waters, you are picturing that you not only died with Jesus Christ, but that you were also buried with Christ. Then he says we are also identified with His resurrection.

In verse four, the Bible goes on to say, "That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

When you stand in the waters, you are saying to everybody watching, "I died with Christ."

My friend you did. You died with Christ. When you are placed beneath the waters, you are telling everyone watching that you were buried with Christ.

By the way, you were. In the mind of God when Jesus Christ died. You died on that cross.

The Bible says that, when Jesus was placed in Joseph's tomb, you were buried with Him.

You say, Preacher! That is just religious talk. No, it is not. It is the truth. That is actually how it happened. When you come out of the waters, you are telling everybody watching that you were raised with Jesus Christ.

You died with Christ; you were buried with Christ; and you were raised with Christ. And it is because you died with Christ; it is because you were buried with Christ; it is because you were raised with Christ that you can say today, I am free from the dominion of my sin nature.

You say, Preacher! What does all that mean? It basically means two things. First, it means the power of the sin nature has been broken. We do not serve sin.

In Romans 6:6, the Bible says, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that [in order that] the body of sin might be destroyed."

Why did you die with Christ? Why were you crucified with Christ? The Bible says, "In order that the body of sin might be destroyed."

What is that talking about? The body talks about this body – a body dominated by sin, that is, a body dominated by the sin nature.

You often let your body tell you what to do. You wake up Sunday morning and the body says, "Now look, you were up late last night. Now you just skip Sunday school. After all, you probably know just as much as they do. You have been saved a long time. You do not need Sunday school. You are spiritual. You do not need it." And you say to yourself, "Well, body, I am going to obey you." Yes, sir. That is what Paul is talking about. The body says, I want to see something on TV. I want to have this, and your body craves it. Yes, sir, I will do it. That is the body of sin, the body dominated by sin.

Paul said you died with Christ. You say, "I don't feel dead." That has nothing to do with it. You died with Christ.

You say, Preacher! How do you know? The Bible said you died with Christ so that this body of sin might be destroyed.

Now destroyed sometimes means annihilated, reduced to nothing. That is not what this word is. This word destroyed means, not loss of being, but loss of well being; set free; put out of office, that is, dethroned.

Your sin nature still exists. God says it doesn't wear a crown. It may climb upon the throne of your life by your permission, but has no right to the throne in your life.

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed that [so that] henceforth we should not serve sin, that is, serve sin as a monarch.

God is simply saying this. When My Son died, you died with Him. When My Son was buried, you were buried with Him. When My Son rose, you rose with Him. This is illustrated by your baptism. God said that indicates that the power of the sin nature has been broken.

As a child of God, you pray, Dear Lord Jesus, deliver me from a gossiping tongue. I have news for you. You have already been delivered. You have been delivered ever since you got saved.

You say, "Why am I not living like it?" You are delivered. You ought to say something like this, "I am delivered. I am set free." You say, "Is that the power of positive thinking?" No, that is just believing what the Bible says.

Do you believe that? If you do not believe that, you can kick victory goodbye. If you think you get victory if you work real hard, if you have done the best you can, if you have gone to enough services, if you have memorized all the verses you can, then finally, at last, after a long ordeal, God grants you deliverance, then you do not understand the first thing about victory.

My friend, you have been delivered ever since you have been saved. That is what the Bible teaches. The power of the sin nature has been broken ever since you got saved. The sin nature is disengaged. You are no longer in bondage to sin.

It is like this. It is like pulling the plug. You have a vacuum cleaner at home. That thing works; but you pull the plug out, and you can flip that switch all you want, and it is not going to come on. You have got to plug the thing back in for it to work.

Listen! When you died with Christ, when you were buried with Christ, when you were raised with Christ, God reached over and unplugged the plug. The sin nature has been broken so it cannot dominate you. Now you can walk over there and plug the thing back in; and often times you do it, but that is inconsistent with the Christian life.

You say, "I am still a sinner, and you know that is how sinners are." Don't plug that thing back in. You have no business of plugging that thing back in. It is inconsistent. How shall we that are unplugged get plugged back in? How shall we that have been disengaged get reengaged?

The power of the sin nature has been broken. Furthermore, we are free from sin. This is an additional thought. In Romans 6:7, the Bible says, "For he that is dead is freed from sin." For he that is dead. That is you. He that is dead that is who? If that's you, raise your hand. I am looking. If you have your hand down it is because you are unsaved.

He that is dead – that's you. He that is dead is freed from sin. It is the word "set free." He is cleared from the sin nature. He is set free. That is your position.

Secondly, your new nature has been implanted. In Romans 6:8, the Bible says, "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him."

Now if we be dead.... Who is that? That is you. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.

We are dead on one account; but on another account, we are alive. That is what Paul meant when he said "I am crucified with Christ." That is the dead part. "Nevertheless I live." That is the live part. "Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

You are set free, justified, cleared because you are dead to sin. You have been disengaged and unplugged that's the negative. But on the positive side, something else has been put in its place – the very power of the nature of God. You have been made alive unto God. That is what happened to Jesus Christ.

In Romans 6:9-10, the Bible says, "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead [that is you, you have been raised from the dead] dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God."

If I got up here and said Jesus could die again, you would call that heresy. For a Christian to enter into a relationship with the sin nature is practical heresy. Now folks do it all the time but it is still wrong. You could blame it on the boss at work and say, "It is his fault that I am in such a backslidden condition." No, it is not. It is your fault. "Well, it is my husband's fault. If he were a better husband, I would be a better Christian." No, it is not his fault. It is your fault. It is your fault if you are backslidden. Don't you blame your husband. You say, "If my wife were a better Christian, I would be a good Christian." Don't blame her. It is your fault that you are backslidden. It is not her fault. It is your fault.

Don't blame the church. It is your fault if you are backslidden. It is your fault, because you are dead to sin. You have been unplugged and disengaged. Sin has been dethroned. And if you put a crown back on the sin nature's head, if you put him back on the throne, if you plug him back in, if you engage him again, don't blame anybody else but yourself.

God never intended a Christian to walk dominated by the sin nature. You are dead. Not only are you dead. You are made alive in Christ. Just as death has no more dominion over Christ, so also the sin nature is supposed to have no more dominion over you. In that he died unto sin once he liveth unto God.

Notice number three: the practical outworking of victory. There are three key words here. The word "reckon," the word "yield," and the word "obey."

Reckon is a book keeping term. It means "to apply to your account." It means "to act as if you have what God says you have." That is the practical part.

The sin nature has been dethroned. When you act like it, that is reckoning. You are free from the sin nature.

You say that is boastful. No, it is not. It is no more boastful than to say I am saved. Because God says I am free, you need to go home and say "I am free, I am disengaged, I am cleared, and the sin nature has been dethroned. I am not a slave. I do not have to serve sin." That is a Biblical truth; and when you reckon upon it, you act like what God says is true. You need to reckon on the promise.

In Romans 6:11, the Bible says, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Reckon; believe; apply to your account that you are in fact set free from the sin nature, and you are in fact alive unto God.

In Romans 6:12, the Bible says, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye shall obey it in the lusts thereof."

You can say to your flesh "no." You say, Preacher! I just cannot say no. That is a lie, and you believe the devil's lie that you just cannot say no.

Well, you don't know how strong it is. I may not know how strong it is, but God said it. If God tells you "let not sin therefore reign," He never told you something you could not do. You need to start calling God the truth and calling the flesh the liar. It is about time you look at God's Word, say that it is the truth; and look at how you feel, and say that it is a lie.

I am simply saying this. When God says "let not sin reign," that means you can let not sin reign.

Are you preaching sinless perfection? I am not preaching sinless perfection.

You are making too many excuses for the flesh. You need to realize that God never intended you to sin. Period!

In I John 2:1, John said, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not."

But God says, I wrote this that you would not sin. In I Samuel 15:22, Samuel said to Saul, "...to obey is better than sacrifice." It is better to do right than to get forgiveness for doing wrong. You do not have to do wrong.

In Romans 6:13, the Bible says, "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

Neither yield ye your members [that is your body parts].... The word "yield" means "to put at the disposal of another."

What is Paul saying? Paul is saying this. You stop putting your mouth to the disposal of your sin nature. You stop doing that.

That is what the Bible teaches. It is saying stop putting your mind at the disposal of your sin nature. Just stop it.

Paul is saying just stop putting your eyes at the disposal of your sin nature, and your ears at the disposal of your sin nature. You just stop it. Stop putting your body at the disposal of your sin nature. Stop putting your feet, and your hands at the disposal of your sin nature. "Stop it," he said.

In Romans 6:13, the Bible says, "Neither yield ye your members as instruments [as tools as weapons] of unrighteousness unto sin." Don't yield. Don't put yourself at the disposal of sin. Don't say, "Sin, here is my hands; do what you want. Here is my mouth; do what you want." Don't go by the way you feel. Don't go with the flow. Don't do what you think seems right to you. Don't go with crowd. Everybody else is doing it so it must be okay. Don't do that. Everybody else goes mixed swimming so I am going to go too. Everybody else is going to the movies so I am going to go too. You say to the body, "No, sir. My body is not at the disposal of the sin that used to reign without check. It is not available."

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of righteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God. Put yourselves at the disposal of God.

When Paul says, yield yourselves unto God. It is the same thing he said in Romans 12:1, where he said, "...present your bodies a living sacrifice." It is the same thing. Yield yourselves to God as those that are alive from the dead [from the dead], and your members [your body parts] as instruments [weapons or tools] of righteousness unto God."

Then he said "obey." Reckon is a practical term; yield is a practical term; and obey is a practical term.

In Romans 6:16, the Bible says, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey."

If you are yielding yourself to your sin nature, you are a servant of sin. If you yield your mouth to gossip, you are yielding to sin. If your temper goes wild, and you explode, don't blame that on your upbringing. Simply say, I have yielded to king sin.

You ought to confess it, treat it like sin, and forsake it. But if you yield your temper to God, you are a servant of righteousness. If you yield your tongue to God, you are a servant of righteousness.

The victorious life in Christ is a simple life. It is a matter of yielding our lives to the Spirit of God living in us.

You are free today. You say, Preacher! I am ensnaked by some sin. Before you can ever become loosed, you need to realize the fact that you are already loosed.

What you need to do right now is to believe that. That is not the power of positive thinking. That is believing what God said. Believe it. You are free. Then make yourself available to God only and to His righteousness, for only then will you be able to obey what He tells you to do in the Bible. Don't you see that?

Shall we continue in sin, habitually making a peace treaty with sin so that grace will have the chance to be exposed? What an unthinkable idea!

How is it possible that we who are dead with Christ, buried with Christ, raised with Christ, illustrated by our baptism, how shall we that are dead in sin live any longer therein?

## How is a Person Saved?

Salvation is all of God. God does the saving. Just take God at His Word and claim His salvation by faith. You will never be able to work your way into heaven. God does not have a scale in heaven whereby He weighs your good and bad works. That is a lie of the Devil. Romans 3:24; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; I Peter 1:18; Romans 5:8.

Salvation is as simple as believing on Christ as the one who bore your sin, who died in your place, who was buried, and whom God resurrected from the dead. John 1:12, 3:16, 6:47; Acts 16:31; II Corinthians 5:21; Romans 10:9-10; Romans 10:13.

Simply admit that you are a sinner and believe on Christ as your crucified, buried, and risen Saviour. You will receive forgiveness for all of your sins. You will receive His free gift of eternal life by faith. Romans 3:10, 23; I Corinthians 15:3-4.

Jesus did a wonderful thing for you some 2,000 years ago on Calvary's cross. He died for you. He was buried for you. He rose again the third day for you, and nothing would thrill Him more than to save you today.

Won't you go to Him right now in prayer and tell Him in your own words that you will trust Him as your Saviour? Or pray this simple prayer: Dear Lord, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died for me and that He arose from the grave. Here and now I ask You to forgive me of my sin and save me. In Jesus's name. Amen.

If you prayed that simple prayer, I would like to hear from you. Please contact me by e-mail or phone (813) 760-4028.

Evangelist Norman R. Stevens  
602 Canterbury Road  
Kings Mountain, NC 28086-9601  
Phone: (813) 760-4028  
E-mail: [normanstevens@evangelistnormanstevens.com](mailto:normanstevens@evangelistnormanstevens.com)  
<http://www.evangelistnormanstevens.com>