Teaching Letter 44

Victory is Certain

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31 NKJ).

When I read a novel, I start at the beginning and read to the end, only finding out how everything turns out as I read the final pages. I know not everyone likes to read as I do, especially if the story is has lots of intrigue, twists and turns. Some people want to know from the beginning how the story ends.

Some stories have surprise endings. Some have unhappy endings. I don't like those. Some end positively for the hero. That's always nice, in my opinion. I like to win and I like the good guy to win. That may seem uninteresting to some, but I like the story to end with a sense of all is well.

I can tell you—in God's story of humankind and His dealings with us—from the beginning, in the middle, all the way to the end—God is for us and victory is certain! Jesus, the good guy, and His people win. I've read this story many times and never tire of it.

Though the Bible is filled with stories of people who faced severe trials, setbacks, and even defeats, still clear evidence is woven throughout that He is with and for His people. It is crystal clear. Our victory is certain if we stick with Him and His plan. Even skipping to the final pages won't ruin the story. On the contrary, knowing the end will inspire and encourage us. God and His people reign forever together.

Though here and now we have an enemy—Satan—who has been given a time to try to deceive all people, he has already been defeated and his eventual removal foretold. He works hard to keep the truth

about God hidden and to oppose all who would speak the

truth. We, however, have a Friend and elder Brother, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace, the Wonderful Counselor, the Everlasting Father, our Savior—Jesus—who is on our side and has already defeated Satan and everything we will ever face.

Though we will face our enemy more than once throughout life's journey, there is no uncertainty about Satan's defeat. Christ's death on Calvary sealed Satan's doom. But he doesn't want us to know that —nor to believe it; and he doesn't want us to know God is for us.

Yes, sometimes life and circumstances appear to contradict even the Word of God. I have thought before—"Since I am a child of God, my dog shouldn't die, my child should never get sick, I should never lose my job, I should be on the mountain top all the time—life should be easy and wonderful with no battles and NO enemies to face."

When I bring myself back to reality, I remember no matter what I face—God is for me. And if He is for me, who can be truly stand against At first, our foe may appear successful in his efforts to defame us, wound us, block us, hinder us or We should not be surprised at the defeat us. viciousness of his attacks. We should, however, stand firm in our knowledge that our victory is as rock solid sure as God Himself. If we call on God, trust Him and conduct ourselves in a manner pleasing to God, our situation will either turn around or God will get us out of it. You say, Really? Yes. When God's set time arrives, it will happen if we persevere. Didn't God send Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt? God is for His people! And until He says, Enough! He will walk with us through the fire and through the floods.

Should we even face the death of a loved one or our own death—is there defeat in that? Jesus is the resurrection and the life! If we are a child of God, because Jesus defeated death, hell and the grave, so will we. Scripture tells us that death will be the last enemy to be destroyed. conclusion of the Great White Throne Judgment, John the Apostle tells us, "Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death" (Revelation 20:14 NKJ). We shall stand before God and see every demon, every principality, every power, and death and Satan himself banished before our eyes.

We already have eternal life in us. Jesus said, "If anyone keeps My Word he shall never taste death" (John 8:50-51 NKJ). The Pharisees' response to that was, "Now we know that You have a Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death" (v. 52). Jesus was saying, those in whom the Spirit of Life dwells will live forever. There is victory—even eternal life—though we may pass through death. Paul wrote: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22 NKJ). Death will be "the last enemy that will be destroyed" (1 Corinthians 15:26 NKJ). Jesus has made provision for us—victory even in death. God is still for us even then. "... Death is swallowed up in victory' " (1 Corinthians 15:54 NKI). This is our final victory.

Before that final victory, however; we will have many others. God has made it possible that we may reign in life over sin. We do not have to be slaves to any sin. Jesus' death and resurrection placed Satan's kingdom under our feet and freed us from sin's dominion (power to rule). Paul wrote: "... those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17 NKJ). If we sometimes struggle with sin, we must remember we have One who is for us. He won the victory over sin, so that we too may overcome. No matter what our struggle, we have the help of God.

Also, we must understand what has happened for us through our identification with Christ in His death and resurrection. Paul explains in Romans 6: ". . . our old man was crucified with Him, that the

body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin" (Romans 6:6 NKJ). Sin no longer has its former power to reign over us because Jesus died and rose again and so did we.

Paul continued: "Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God" (Romans 6:11-13 NKJ).

Often, in the case of addictions, victory comes after a difficult battle. God, however, joins the battle with us. We may think our situation is impossible. Jesus said with men some things are impossible, "but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26 NKJ and see also Luke 18:27). We need the help of ministers, counselors, family, friends, and sometimes doctors, but it will be God who is for us who will get us all the way to victory. Our enemy wants us to think we cannot win. But he's a liar!

God wants you to Know He is for you. Your victory is certain!

GOD'S WORD FOR TODAY
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