

How to Be a Winner 3

Sermon #1018
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Study Given by W. D. Frazee—December 2,

How many want to be a winner? How many want to be good losers?

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain" 1 Corinthians 9:24.

In the contest of the world someone wins and someone loses. Thank God, it is not that way in the Christian race. I want to be like the winner. We all can be, praise God.

We have found the secret of victory. Satan is wiser than we are and stronger than we are. But God is infinitely stronger and wiser than the Devil and all his hosts. Therefore it is who we are connected with that makes the difference. If Jesus is in your heart, the enemy cannot defeat you. If Jesus is not in your heart, you cannot defeat the enemy. It is that simple. So we have been studying how Jesus gives us His power and victory.

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" 1 Corinthians 1:22-25.

The power and the wisdom of God is Christ. If we have Him we have it. The things that the world calls foolish about the kingdom of God may be the secret of its power.

"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect" 1 Corinthians 1:17.

It is possible to preach the cross and yet in the way we present it make it of none effect. Paul says that could be done not with wisdom of words. One translation puts it, Not in the language of philosophy lest the cross of Christ should be robbed of its power. The plan of salvation will never be understood by those who want to rationalize it and reason it all out. It is received by revelation and simple faith. This is the victory that overcometh the world.

I desire to be very practical. One of the things I would warn you against is filling your mind with much of the material that is available today in religion. Some of it is good and some of it is bad. Some of it is sawdust. But no human presentation can measure up to the wisdom and power of divine revelation. And if you insist on making your mind the receptacle for all the mimeograph releases from this one and that one, and all the books and magazine articles dealing with righteousness or the sanctuary or inspiration of the Spirit of Prophecy, or dealing with any other religious subject, your mind will become confused.

If you insist on eating a dozen things for breakfast and twenty things for dinner, the stomach hardly knows what the signals are. And instead of getting strength and nutrition from the food, you may get fermentation and confusion.

I warn you about all these tapes that are being circulated.

Someone says, Brother Frazee, don't you make tapes?

Yes, they are made from my talks. But if the only way you can keep from being confused by all these different voices is to quit listening to Brother Frazee, I say quit listening to Brother Frazee. The power is in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. You can get the entire Bible on tapes. You can get the entire Spirit of Prophecy revelations on tapes. I find a great deal of help out of listening to the Bible. I am trying to get help from the original sources. And I warn you against all these tapes from people who are ventilating their view on Sister White or inspiration or righteousness or the plan of salvation or on the atonement, or whatever.

Someone says, Don't you think there is some good in them?

Sure, there is some good in a lot of them. That isn't the point. The power is in the cross of Christ as presented by divine revelation. And God has things to tell you that He won't tell anyone else.

To listen to some of these tapes you would get the idea that you really can't know very much about the Bible and the plan of salvation unless you listen to the scholars. But now listen to the testimony of Jesus. He knows more than all of them. Listen to what He says:

"The Bible with its precious gems of truth was not written for the scholar alone. On the contrary, it was designed for the common people; and the interpretation given by the common people, when aided by the Holy Spirit, occurs best with the truth as it is in Jesus. The great truths necessary for salvation are made clear as the noonday" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, page 331.

I grant that there are some mysteries dealing with linguistics and translations that can be delved in by the scholars. But the Old King James translation has guided millions of people in the way of salvation. I am glad we can have any help we can get from any of these translations. But what do we want out of the Bible? I want to know the way of salvation. What do you say?

Let's feed on the inspired word of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. If there are some things we don't understand, let's be willing to consecrate on the things we do understand. Let's never let what we don't know keep us from enjoying what we do know. Let our faith in what is clear never be dimmed by our uncertainty about what is unclear. Faith believes what Jesus says. And we don't believe because we see. We see because we believe. Through faith we understand.

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" 1 Corinthians 1:18.

The power of God is the preaching of the cross.

"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" 2 Corinthians 4:10.

What must we enter into if we have the life of Jesus? The dying of the Lord Jesus. I have given you three ways in which we are to bear about the dying of the Lord Jesus.

First is contemplating His death; beholding the scenes of Calvary. We have been told that it would be well for us to spend a thoughtful period every day contemplating the cross. Morning by morning we behold Jesus as the sacrificial Lamb, the interceding Priest. We behold One who has given His life for our salvation. Oh, what a privilege. And as we behold we are changed.

Second we are to accept that cross not only as the place where Jesus died for us, but where we die with Him. We die to sin.

Three we are to accept the trials and obstacles of life as a part of the cross which we carry with Jesus.

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" Galatians 5:24.

The margin on lust says passions. It includes the whole collection. Our physical and mental desires are to be crucified. In plain English it means to say no to what I want and to say yes to what Jesus wants. And there is no way to live the Christian life unless we die the Christian death. There is no way for the glory of God to be revealed in my life unless sin is denied.

"The Christian will feel the promptings of sin, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit; but the Spirit striveth against the flesh, keeping up a constant warfare" *Messages to Young People*, page 114.

Years ago I heard Elder McElhany, president of the General Conference, say, "A hundred times a day I have to say to myself, 'You are dead.'"

We tend to idealize people. We tend to think there are some people who never have a bad thought or wrong desire. We wish we could be like them. Well, we will when we get to heaven. But in the meantime there is a war on.

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" 1 John 4:4.

It is my privilege to turn from my selfish self with its human desires and fix my eyes on Jesus and say, Jesus, You died for me, I am going to live for You. You died for me and I am going to die to sin. You gave Your life on the cross.

I am going to share a story that Elder Warren used to tell us. Suppose we are out visiting in the country in the old days when people farmed with horses instead of tractors. We see the farmer at the barn. In comes John, his oldest son. We hear him say, John, take it easy with the horses today. Don't push them too much. John gets his team and starts out. Pretty soon James comes out and we hear the father say, James, push the horses today. We have a lot of work to do, so push the horses all you can.

What is the matter with that farmer? He knows his boys. He tells John not to push the horses and he tells James to push the horses. He hasn't changed his mind.

There are some people who are listening to James when they ought to be listening to what John says. And the Devil is so thankful when he can take the cross and make it mean to you scourging and worrying and troubling yourself, and see if there isn't something more you can give up. And finally you find that all you have to give up is potatoes, and you wonder which one of those you ought to give up. I read:

"Said Christ: 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.' We are not to make corses for ourselves, by waring sackcloth, by pinching our bodies, or be denying ourselves wholesome, nourishing food. We are not to shut ourselves in monasteries, away from the world, and do not good to our fellow beings, thinking that this is the cross of Christ; neither are we required to expose health and life unnecessarily, nor to go mourning up the hill of Christian life, feeling it a sin to be cheerful, contented, happy, and joyful. These are all self-made crosses, but not the cross of Christ" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 4, pages 626,627.

There were three crosses on Golgotha. Be sure you get the middle one, my friend. Otherwise you may be adoring a thief.

God wants His people to be the happiest people in all the world. He wants them to be healthy and bear about in their bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus. This

is fully compatible in offering your body a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God.

Some people get so anxious to either get their work done or their study done that they stay up at night. They might even think that is part of the self-denial of the cross to deny themselves of needed sleep. Sister White wrote to two doctors at the St. Helena sanitarium in 1888. Listen:

"By studying after nine o'clock there is nothing gained, but much lost. Teach and practice that the time can be systematically employed, one duty after the other attended to promptly, not allowed to lag so that midnight hours will not have to be employed in laborious study" *Letter #85*, 1888.

I know from the testimonies given me from time to time for brain workers that sleep is worth far more before than after midnight. Two hours good sleep before twelve o'clock is worth more than four hours after twelve o'clock. I wonder if there is anyone who has experimented with this and carried out that plan. That is why you are bright eyed and alert. But if you were up past midnight you are sleepy eyed.

God gave these precious laws of health and life, not as a cross in the sense of being burdensome or hurtful, but to keep us from disease.

"In regulating the hours of sleep, there should be no haphazard work. Students should not form the habit of burning the midnight oil, and taking the hours of the day for sleep. . . . In our schools the lights should be put out at half past nine" *Counsels to Teachers*, page 297.

I have used this as simply one illustration of instruction given not to crucify us in the sense of making our life painful, but to keep us from the pain and trouble and distress that comes from following the ways of the world. It all fits together beautifully. The cross of Christ is not to manufacture ways in which we can make things hard for ourselves. It is simply to accept the providence from day to day as they come in doing duty. There will be enough problems without our making any for ourselves. We don't have to manufacture them. We are to attack every problem in the Spirit of Jesus believing that He will help us.

"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" Romans 8:9.

So we are not following the promptings of the flesh. We have something better. But notice what this program means. It doesn't mean misery. It means the opposite.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" Romans 8:1.

This does not mean that we find our satisfaction in our attainment. It is to those who are in Christ Jesus.

Suppose I have been a slave to tobacco or alcohol. Can I be free in Jesus even though I was using them yesterday? Yes.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" Romans 5:1,2.

The Twentieth Century translates that last line in a beautiful way: "Let us triumph in our hope of attaining God's glorious ideal." That is the ultimate when Jesus come. But in the meantime we are justified by faith. To be justified means to be counted righteous. It means more than a legal transaction. It means an experience in which we have accepted the righteousness of Jesus instead of our sins. And He counts it that way because He makes it that way.

Bunyon suffered many years through dispare and depression. But when the light of the Gospel came into his soul he wrote that wonderful allegory of the Pilgrim's Progress in which many of his own struggles are depicted. I like the one where Christian comes up the road with a heavy burden on his back. He finally sees the cross and the burden is loosed and rolls down. Christian goes on his way singing.

Look away from yourself with all its weaknesses and look to Jesus.

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" John 4:4.

"Look unto Me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth"
Isaiah 45:22

Praise God for the wonderful message of release through Jesus.

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