

# THE VICTORY WITHIN



In the beginning there are two areas of warfare in the life of the believer: the "outer warfare" and the "inner warfare". If the believer finds himself losing ground in the outer warfare, this is a warning to him that he has not won the victory within.

**End the inner war.  
Then you will start winning the outer war.**

***For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other to prevent you from doing what you would....***

***.... those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.***  
***Galatians 5:17 & 24***

One of the first things we learn, when our eyes are opened to the things of God, is that the world in which we live is a battleground. Not just between nations and races.

A far deadlier war is raging in the spirit realm between forces that we can't even begin to comprehend with our finite minds.

If you can't get anything else out of the Book of Revelation, one reading of that book will give you the feel of this battle. We don't have to wait until the Lamb of God begins to break the seven seals, or until the dragon with seven heads and ten horns tries to devour the child of the woman clothed with the sun.

Long before we know what these symbols mean we know that a war is raging between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of the Evil One. It would be easy enough for God to end it – to wipe out the devil and his angels with a snap of the fingers.

The problem is that the devil is holding the human race hostage – like a gunman grabbing a careless child and backing out of the bank for a get-a-way.

If God blows up the devil now the human race goes too.

To give every member of the race who wants it a chance to come free from the grip of Satan and live as a son of God is what this war is all about.

Jesus has invaded Satan's territory (which is this world), broken Satan's grip on the human race, and is leading the captives to freedom. When this is accomplished, He will bind Satan absolutely.



As long as you're in bondage to Satan you see none of this. Life is simple – it's what you can see with your eyes and touch and hold in your hands. But when Jesus wakes you up and calls you into freedom, and you begin to follow him – then suddenly your eyes open. You find that you are in enemy territory. You're a child of God living right in the middle of Satan's domain.

Beware of these false prophets who tell you that when you are born again, life is going to be peaceful and prosperous. If following Jesus has made your life peaceful and prosperous, you'd better check again to see whether you're following Jesus.

***Think not that I have come to bring peace; I have not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother--in-law, and a man's foes will be those of his own household.***

***Matthew 10:34-36***

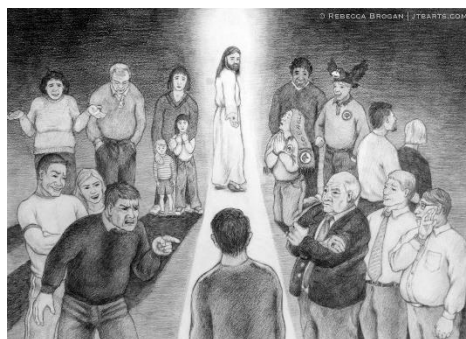
When you're born again you are thrown, whether you like it or not, into battle against the Prince of this world. You become a target for the enemy's darts that will seek to wound you – to bring you back into bondage.

***We are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places.***

***Ephesians 6:12***

- When you go out there and start proclaiming with your mouth and with your life that Jesus is Lord,
- When, in the name of Jesus, you start bringing souls from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, don't ever think that life is going to be peaceful, or safe, or comfort-able.

You are going to start feeling the same things Jesus felt. There will be persecution.



The enemy will be gunning for you. And there are casualties in this battle, This is not a game.

- lives are destroyed,
- people are ruined.

People often start out with great enthusiasm and do remarkable exploits in the name of God, and then run out of steam. Or they compromise, or they become "successful" in the eyes of the world, and spend their lives serving their egos instead of God. And the reason people fall on that Satanic battlefield is because they're not strong on the inside.

In Ephesians 6, where Paul talks about putting on the whole armor of God so that we can make it through this battleground, every piece of armor is an inner thing.

- ***Gird your loins with truth.***
- ***Put on the breastplate of righteousness.***
- ***Have your feet shod with the gospel of peace.***
- ***Take up the shield of faith.***
- ***Put on the helmet of salvation.***
- ***Take up the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.***



To make it out there, we first have to have the victory within. Once we have won the victory in the battleground of our own souls, then we can conquer in the outer warfare.

***The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other to prevent you from doing what you would.***

**There's a war inside between flesh and Spirit – between self and God which must be settled first.**

Don't try to fight against the powers and principalities, if the war within you isn't settled. You can no more handle the flak of the Enemy if you're torn up inside, than a nation can engage in war with another nation when it's ripped apart within by re-volution.

**Settle the war within first.**

Before our Lord started casting out demons and healing the sick, he first settled things in his own heart. Forty days in the wilderness – alone – tempted by the devil, crucifying self, giving way utterly to the will of His Father.

Before Jesus went to Calvary he settled things inside at Gethsemane.

***"Not my will, Father, but yours."***

How to settle things inside is not a matter of "thinking it through". It's not a matter of "seeing the issue" and acting. The issue is clear enough. The Spirit and the flesh are at war with each other and one has to go.

**You settle things inside by crucifying the flesh.**

***Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.***

**1. You crucify the flesh first by faith... by reckoning yourself crucified with Christ.**

You are in Christ as He hangs up there on Calvary. When He dies, you die.

They bury Him; you're buried with Him. You are dead. Your life is hid with Christ in God.

***I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.***

***Galatians 2:20***



When my old self starts stirring in its grave and wants to get up and assert itself, I have to remind it of the truth – I am dead; crucified with Jesus.

But this reckoning oneself crucified with Christ is only the first step. Now you have to make clear that this is not some little trick with words. You have to turn your faith, that you are crucified with Christ, into substance, into living.

**2. You crucify the flesh .... by denying yourself.**

***"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself."***

Which means something quite different from giving up cherry pie for Lent. It means denying yourself in favor of the clear will of God. Your "self" likes to be number one, so you deny self and take that lowest place without making a production out of it.

If your self likes to skip work or sleep in a couple hours, you deny self and get to your job every day in the name of God. Unbelievers do it without even trying. If your self likes to be mentally lazy, deny self and apply your mind to what God is teaching you. If a brother or sister needs you, deny yourself and help.

There are popular movements which encourage you to,

indulge yourself,  
realize yourself,  
express yourself,  
be yourself,  
better yourself.

Jesus says, deny yourself!

- *Not my will, Father, but yours.*
- *Not my way, Lord, but yours.*
- *No glory for me, Lord, none.*

Don't let me even taste it. It all belongs to you.

Deliver me, Lord, from the curse of obsessive self-vindication!

People talk about the gifts of the Spirit – power, and wisdom, and utterance – may they come to us all! But these gifts are not safe in the hands of people who have not learned the simplest of things.... to deny self. Don't go chasing after these gifts until you have learned to deny yourself.

### 3. You crucify the flesh.... by taking up our cross daily.



***“If anyone would come to me let him deny himself, take up his cross daily”.***

Each day afresh you fix your eye on the goal: CALVARY.

**The starting point-** of the born-again life is historic, eternal Calvary where the Lamb of God died for your sins.

**The end point** – the goal is your Calvary where your life in this world is consumed in obedience to the Master.

And every day you take up your cross and carry it one day closer to that destination.

You are not here to do some "great thing".

You are not here to be some “great person”.

**You are here to pour out your life.**

Every day, to pour it out some more. Every day, to give more of it away in Jesus' name until there's nothing left. What am I doing with my cross today? Am I carrying it or is it lying in the bushes while I'm running around doing my own thing?

#### 4. You crucify the flesh.... by – following Jesus.



***"Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me."***

A lot of people say they're following Jesus, but they are absent from the places where Jesus is.

Jesus is out there seeking the lost.

Jesus is preaching the good news to the poor.

Jesus is opening doors for the prisoners.

Jesus is touching the forgotten with the love of God.

And how many of His followers are endlessly sitting around holding each other's hands! Hobnobbing with the rich and powerful of this world. "Fellowshipping" with those who have something to offer in return. Jesus has long since gone up the road to do the needful things, while these professing followers lag behind, indulging the desires of the flesh, catering to the whims of the thirsty ego. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts. They have put "self" on the Cross. They have died---and now they live their daily lives as men and women who have risen from the dead.

If we're going to make it in that warfare out there...if we're going to be of any use to the Kingdom of Heaven as it prepares the way for the new Day of God on this earth, we first have to win the victory within. Only when we have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts will the Spirit of God be able to rule us. God help us to settle the war within us afresh this day, that we may get on with the war that brings in the Day of the Lord. So that when that Day dawns we may be found worthy to live in it.



*Prayer- Lord we need help with this inner battle. Help us to truly experience victory within. Help us to offer ourselves to be willingly crucified with you. Help us to deny ourselves... to willingly do all things your way...always your way. Help us to take up our crosses daily...to pour ourselves out as you call us to...each and every day. And finally Lord help to really follow you...to follow wherever you lead, even the darkest and saddest of places and bring them your light. And yes, yes may the victory be ours because we have crucified our flesh and allowed your Spirit to rule us. Amen.*

*Maranatha Mirror*

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**Maranatha Mirror Messages**

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