



Believe and Rejoice

BY BECKY COMBEE

It is in the nature of man, especially Christians, to rise up and conquer, to pursue and win. Therefore, if we face defeat, failure, and loss, our heart is crushed. We do not want to make wrong decisions that cause us to bow our heads in great despair. No one wants to face life in shame and disgrace. After all, it was Satan who was meant to slither in the dust of the earth, not man. Man was destined to be more than a conqueror because of the Resurrection power of Christ.

God's desire is for a victorious people. The apostle Paul emphasizes this when he tells the church at Corinth that God will always cause them to triumph.¹ Similarly, it is recorded in the First Epistle of John that every Christian can overcome the world.² In the book of Revelation, we note that this world-overcoming victory is because of Jesus' great sacrifice for man.³

The death of our Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation of man's victory. The sin of man was laid upon Jesus, and for three days and nights, Jesus battled our enemy Satan, suffering in man's place. When Satan was defeated, Jesus arose in great triumph. This victory was man's victory. Because of Jesus' sacrifice, we can overcome every obstacle in life.

Our faith is in the risen Lord. It is not in our own ability, wisdom, talent, or influence. The

Jesus Alone

BY SUZANNE D. WILLIAMS

*"Their vision of Jesus Christ and Him crucified has become cloudy. They no longer see Him and His work on the cross as the center of their Christian lives, now it is **Jesus plus** ..." (David Guzik commentary on Galatians 3:1)*

There is no Jesus plus.

Jesus plus our job, our bank account, our years in church. Jesus plus charity work, generous contributions, an hour in prayer every day at five a.m. As if He needs our help. No, He needs our faith.

Not, Jesus in our pocket, and we pull Him out like a repair kit. Jesus, hocus pocus. Wave Him over your problem and recite a few psalms.

"Jesus plus" implies He's not enough. Run, quick, because Jesus can't handle the mountain we've started to climb.

It sounds ridiculous, but the Galatians tried something similar. They mixed faith with carnal works and forgot about the time-altering moment when faith became faith in the first place. "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you ...?" Paul asks. "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?"⁹

There's no Jesus formula. Buy now, the five-step program toward success! Take these spiritual

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Scripture says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.” It also records, “Be not wise in thine own eyes.”⁴ Man’s wisdom is always insufficient. Worldly wisdom falls short of the magnificence of God’s plan. BUT we are God’s children, bought and paid for by Jesus Himself. We are not subject to the world, the flesh, or the devil. We are God’s temple and Satan is under our feet. The Spirit of God dwells in us and we have the mind of Christ!⁵

God is at work in us, constantly declaring His mind to us! We must no longer depend on natural reasoning and resources. We boldly confess “The Lord is our helper.” He is our Great Shepherd, leading us in paths of righteousness.

But, will we trust Him? Will we choose to hear His voice and obey?

Certainly. Because of His sacrifice, we trust



Him. We obey His Word because He carried our sin, stood in our place, and won our victory. We seek His mind and follow His plan because He is Lord. With the songwriter, we ask ourselves, “Got any rivers you think are uncrossable? Got any mountains you can’t tunnel through?” Then we echo his glorious answer, “God specializes in things thought impossible. He does the things others cannot do.” Isn’t this why we trust Him? Doesn’t He lead us from victory to victory when we place our faith in Him? When we open our heart to Him, doesn’t He make all things possible?⁶

Jesus said, “All things are possible to Him that believeth.”⁷ I believe! I believe in Jesus’ sacrifice! I believe in Satan’s defeat! I believe in Resurrection power! I believe God’s mind is far greater than man’s! I believe in victory! Hear the words of the apostle John. “This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.”⁸ Today, believe and rejoice!

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vitamins and call me in the morning. Faith requires living in God’s Word. It’s burying your head in the water of the Good Book and drinking deep.

My mom tells a story about a woman who meditated on Acts 10:38 so long that when the grocery store clerk said, “That’ll be \$10.38,” she recited the verse instead. That’s awesome. We should be that full.

Full of **Jesus alone**. Our every breath, knowing that He answers prayers spoken in faith. Faith that’s grown in us because we’ve spent so much time in His Word, we’ve totally overlooked the distractions. We’re focused, instead, on the Author and Finisher.¹⁰

Notice: He started the ball rolling and has provided the happy ending already. **Jesus, singular,**

enduring the cross, in spite of all the voices howling around him. In spite of the fear lumped in His throat, knowing He had to die and be disconnected from the Father, He saw the Resurrection as completed.

Jesus, victorious. Consider that next time you want to give up.¹¹

“But they should consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, and be encouraged, not discouraged, knowing that they are following in the footsteps of Jesus.” (David Guzik commentary on Hebrews 12:3)

¹2Co 2:14 ²1Jn 5:4 ³Rev 12:11 ⁴Pr 3:5,7 ⁵1Co 2:16 ⁶“Got Any Rivers” by Oscar C. Eliason ⁷Mk 9:23 ⁸1Jn 5:4 NIV ⁹Gal 3:1,3 ¹⁰Heb 12:2 ¹¹Heb 12:3