

## THE VICTORIOUS LIFE — ABSOLUTE SURRENDER

### Background

The victorious life that is the gift of the Lord Jesus to every believer may be summed up in this affirmation in Paul's letter to believers in Rome: *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.* This freedom from death (death being the wages of sin), and God's gift of eternal life through the Lord Jesus, was achieved when God sent his own Son, who knew no sin, and *made Him to be sin for us . . . that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him* (KJV). Jesus' death upon the cross secures victory over sin in our lives, if we are 'in Christ Jesus', and 'walk after the Spirit'. Our response to this amazing gift of love is to offer to the Lord, in thanks, a life of absolute surrender, with *our mind governed by the Spirit, which is life and peace.* Romans 6:23; 8:1–6; 12:1; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Colossians 3:15.

Absolute surrender, however, is not inactivity or apathy. When we totally surrender to God, and submit every area of our life to him, he quickens us, in spirit, soul and body, for his service. He puts a new heart and a new spirit within us; having said: *and I will put My Spirit within you* (KJV). This is the victorious life, when his Spirit has total freedom in us to do his will. The Lord calls us to submit three crucial areas to him: his Lordship, our obedience and our love. Ezekiel 36:26–27; 1 Corinthians 6:17–20; 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

### Lordship

There are over 250 titles of the Lord Jesus in Scripture. In the Gospels, the most frequent appellation is 'Lord'. He is the Lord over all creation, of the living and the dead, and of his church. The decision to acknowledge him for who he is (Maker and upholder of the universe, and the source of life), and for what he has done (laid down his life for us), and to receive his gift of eternal life, is a vital step for new believers. We are encouraged in this to humble ourselves before him and to cast every care and burden upon him, for he desires our peace with him. John 13:13; Acts 2:36; Revelation 19:16; Colossians 1:16; Romans 14:9; Ephesians 5:23; Hebrews 1:2–3; 11:3; Genesis 1:30; 2:7; Psalm 139:14–16. John 6:68; 1 Peter 5:6–7; Jeremiah 29:11.

If (as Thomas affirmed) Jesus is, '*my Lord and my God*', then I will give him every area of my life to rule over, as King and Lord, and allow his Spirit to keep me on the path of holiness and obedience, often through the Father's correction in love. Leviticus 20:7; Deuteronomy 4:30–31; Psalm 89:14–18; John 14:15, 23; 20:28; Acts 5:32; 2 Corinthians 6:17; Ephesians 1:4; Hebrews 5:9; 12:9–11.

### Obedience

The Bible underlines the importance of hearing the voice of the Lord and obeying his instructions and commandments. The important text known as the *Sh'ma* (Deuteronomy 6:4–9) is so called after the first word of Deuteronomy 6:4, which means 'Hear' in the sense of 'Obey'. This injunction is relevant today to individuals, churches and nations. God has set before us *life and death, blessings and cursings*, and says, *Now choose life, so that you and your children may live . . . may love the Lord your God . . . may obey His voice . . . and may hold fast to Him: for He is your life.* We know that if we keep God's laws, that is proof that we love him. Those who trust him in faith will obey him. When we listen and obey him all the blessings listed in Deuteronomy 28 will not just come upon us, but overtake us. But if we will not listen to his voice and observe the law of Christ we show that we do not love him, and not only hinder his blessings but bring ourselves under a curse.

Because Abraham obeyed God's voice, all nations of the earth have been blessed through his descendants. When the people of Israel obeyed God's voice, he protected them from sickness, and from their enemies. Our obedience to Jesus as the Lord of our life is part of our surrender to him and of our victorious walk in the Spirit. Genesis 22:18; Exodus 15:26; 23:22; Deuteronomy 11:26–29; 28:1–68; 30:19–20; Isaiah 50:10; Luke 11:28; John 14:21; Hebrews 11:8.

### Love

The principal way of showing our love for and obedience to the Lord Jesus is to know his commandments and keep them; this is accompanied by the most wonderful promises – that the Father will love us, Jesus will manifest himself to us and make his dwelling with us. This brings us his peace and joy, and dispels anxiety and fear. Jesus

loved and obeyed the Father; we are to love and obey the Son. As he abides in the Father's love, so are we to abide in his love, fulfilling God's command to love him with all our heart [including our will and mind; pursuing good and rejecting evil], all our soul [including our emotions and desires – even the desire to hold on to our life] and all our strength [including resources, time, wealth, belongings, skills, energy, etc.], and to love our neighbour as ourselves. Deuteronomy **6:5**; Mark **12:28–34**; John **12:23–26**; **14:15–15:27**; Revelation **12:11**.

So mature believers who want to be Jesus' disciples in absolute surrender, walking in obedience to and love of the Lord of lords and King of kings, must fulfil his requirements, so that they may live lives worthy of him – denying themselves (saying 'No' to their own will), taking up their cross daily (which sometimes entails suffering), following him (having counted the cost first); hearing his voice *and* doing his will. Jesus submitted totally to his Father's will. Our victory in him is to be found through an absolute surrender to his will, in holiness and obedience to him (that we may abide in him), so that we might be clean *vessels unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work* (KJV). *For we preach Jesus Christ as Lord . . . [to show] the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ . . . and we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God, and not from us.*

Matthew **7:24**; **10:38**; **26:39**; Luke **8:21**; **9:23**; John **4:34**; **5:19** (KJV); **10:27**; **13:37**; Romans **6:6–7**; 2 Corinthians **4:5–7**; 2 Timothy **2:20–21**; Hebrews **10:5–10**.