

ARTICLES AND EXCERPTS

by

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SO YOU WANT TO BE A PREACHER?

(Reprinted from the book “My Cross”)

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies ...” (Romans 12:1)

“If any man will come after me, let him DENY himself, and take up his cross daily ...” (Luke 9:23)

Since there are thousands of ministers here and thousands of lay members who eventually may be preachers, I want to pause and ask every one of you a question:

WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO GOD A REASONABLE SERVICE?

Many of you are talking about supernatural things. Many of you are talking about the gift of healing. Wonderful! Many of you are desiring the gift of miracles. Great!

You’re talking about signs and wonders, and strange and mighty things. Marvellous!

But I’m going to bring you down out of the sky tonight, and talk to you about a reasonable service!

Don’t get mad at me, now. It’s all right to get up in the sky. But there’s only one right way to get up there, and that’s to get on the ladder and start climbing! And you can’t start on the tenth rung first! You must start on the bottom rung. And that’s old-fashioned holiness, giving your body to God, a living sacrifice, which is none other than your REASONABLE SERVICE!

I’m preaching to you, not about signs, wonders, and miracles, gifts of healing, discernment, and prophecy. I’m preaching to you about your reasonable service - giving your body to God, letting him fix it up new, and fashion it like unto His glorious body.

I believe in miracles!

I believe in signs!

I believe in wonders!

And I believe in HOLINESS!

I believe in healings. But I believe in reasonable service, too.

There are too many people today who are walking around with their heads in the sky, who don’t even have their feet on old-fashioned holiness ground. They seemingly are finding demons in everybody. But they don’t even know how to cast one of them out!

“If any man - (I add, or woman) - will come after me, let him deny - (say no) - to himself, and let him take up his cross, [SEVEN DAYS A WEEK]!”

It says daily, but seven days a week means the same thing.

“Let him take up his cross DAILY, and follow me.”

Can you take it, if I give it to you right between the eyes?

I believe in shouting. I believe in clapping my hands. I believe in leaping for joy. I believe in doing it because I feel like doing it! But unless you live clean and godly, you haven't any business feeling like it! And if you feel like doing it when you are not walking on holy ground, you are the biggest hypocrite in the world.

Preacher, if you are here tonight, and you are a hypocrite, you are not going to like what I'm saying!

Lay member, if you are here jumping up and down, and talking about supernatural things, with a dip of snuff in your mouth, or if you left your cigarettes in the car so you wouldn't be seen bringing them in here, I'm preaching at YOU! If you're here tonight, and your guilty of committing adultery, even through your eyes, I'm after your hide!

I believe in miracles! I believe in signs! I believe in gifts! I believe in prophecy!

But I believe first of all in taking up an old-fashioned cross! And I've got sense enough to know you can't take up your cross until first you DENY YOURSELF!

My Bible says if any man follows after Jesus, he is going to have to deny himself! That means everything fleshly. Every unscriptural fleshly lust. It means many of the desires of the body.

I mean, there is going to come a time when you are going to have to say to yourself, to the old man, to the world, and to the things of the flesh, NO!

The old man that used to enjoy those things is DEAD! And if a man is dead, how in the world can he enjoy those things?

There are going to be some of you here tonight who may not like what I am preaching.

You may be saying to yourself, “I'm not so sure I want to belong to this miracle revival fellowship!”

Could it be what you are really saying is, “I'm not so sure I want to take up a cross. I'm not sure I want the blood of Christ to cover me! I'm not sure I'm going to walk in all the light of God's word!”

My Bible says to me, “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin!”

I believe in the BLOOD! And I believe in FELLOWSHIP! And I believe in walking in the light.

Hear me, friends. If we are going to do the work that Jesus Christ did, we are going to have to live the same kind of life that he lived.

He took up a cross. He denied Himself!

And if we ever expect to accomplish the things that Jesus accomplished, if you ever get into the supernatural realm, heal the sick, and cast out devils, there is one thing that you are going to have to do. You are going to have to give your body a living sacrifice, and put it on the altar. Alive, yet dead! And that's what makes it hurt. If your body were really dead, you wouldn't feel some of these things!

I can hear some little woman say, "I don't believe I could do that!"

No! You are still too much alive!

There are some things you are going to have to die out to. You know what I am talking about. There are some things you will never really be dead to because the body you are going to have to place on the altar is still very much alive. But that is our reasonable service. You are going to have to quit your squirming, your kicking, your criticising, your complaining, and your murmuring.

You are going to have to quit finding fault.

You say you are going all out with Jesus to win souls? Then what do you care whether you have an old Model A or a new Cadillac? If you are dead, you don't know the difference! What do you care whether you sleep in a teepee or a Spartan mansion? If you've taken up your cross and are denying yourself, beans will taste as good as T-bones.

I knew I wouldn't get any Amen's there!

If you've given yourself a living sacrifice, and have sold out to Christ, and you are dead, there are a lot of things you don't feel!

We moved into a new area one time, and we didn't have a bit of milk for our baby, nor a bit of money to buy milk for him. We paid \$10 a month rent for an upstairs hall to have Sunday school and church. We couldn't afford to rent a house, too, so we stretched up a clothesline across the back of the hall and hung up our sheets to make ourselves a room to live in. We had to make car payments, \$12 per month. Back in those days that took a lot of faith!

My wife got desperate. She said, "Jimmie has to have milk. He'll begin to suffer from malnutrition. He needs milk to build strong bones and teeth. He's got to have milk!"

There were farmers coming to our church. Do you think any of them would bring milk for our baby? No! They didn't care whether our baby had good bones, or strong, white teeth, so long as their own needs were met!

If you want to be a preacher, fine! But I'm going to try my best to talk you out of it tonight! And if I can, then God never called you in the beginning! If He has, it doesn't matter what I say, I can't talk you out of it!

How many of you here feel the call to the Christian ministry?

I trust you will still feel that way when I get through!

Wait till the babies start coming, and there's no money for a doctor. What are you women going to do? Pack up and go home to mamma? Are you going to get scared? Or are you going to stand by the stuff, and trust God?

I didn't know much about the Bible when I got married. But my wife knew a verse of scripture. A cousin of hers had known it and stood on it. It says that if the husband and wife both continue in holiness, and faith, without fear (Paul wrote it to Timothy), "Notwithstanding, she shall be saved in child-bearing." (1 Timothy 2:15)

My wife said, "Honey, there's not a thing in the world to worry about. Look what Jesus said. We're not living under the curse. We are living for God. We are clean. We are godly. We are holy. The pain of child-bearing is part of the curse. We are not under the curse. We are serving God, and we have his promise. If we both continue in the faith and trust Him, and do not fear, God is going to spare me and save me from that pain. I have nothing to worry about, doctor or no doctor. This is God's child, and He can deliver it!"

Do some of you girls still want to be a preacher's wife? Well, you may not always have money to go to a doctor for an examination every week! Some of you may not even have money for a doctor at delivery time.

I feel sorry for some of these little sissy girls. They want to be a preacher's wife. But they want to spend their time putting up pin curls and polishing their nails! You had better back up now!

Some of you little boys that think you are called to preach spend your time fixing your hair in drake tails and upsweeps!

You may not love me after this. I'm old-fashioned. How many of you are old-fashioned with me?

I'm talking to you tonight about taking up a cross! Denying yourself. And not getting mad at the man you marry because he's not rich, and because he can't afford the things some other preacher is providing his wife! Not getting mad at him because he must do God's will at any cost.

Thank God for a woman who will stand by a man! But we prayed, "God give us some milk for Jimmie!"

That night, here came a lady with a gallon bucket of milk!

We said, "Thank you, Jesus! Now Jimmie will have some milk to drink!"

She said, "Oh, you needn't mind. We've got lots of it. We just pour gallons of it out to the hogs every day. I thought we might as well bring you a gallon. We had more than the pigs really needed."

When we took the lid off, I could see why they gave it to the pigs!

They used one of those water separators. You know, the kind where you pour the milk into a big container and pour in as much water as milk. Then you wait until the cream rises to the top and gets sour before you skim it off!

I said to myself, “Allen you might as well deny yourself! You said you would take up your cross! You gave yourself a living sacrifice. You put yourself on the altar. Now, keep your mouth shut, and keep sweet in your soul. God will provide milk for your baby!”

My wife looked at it and smelled it. I saw a tear running down each cheek. She said, “I prayed God would send Jimmie milk. But God didn’t send this!”

I said, “What will we do with it? You couldn’t even make gravy out of that!” Back in those days no one could say we were preaching for the money, or because it was easy! I could have made more money cutting logs. And I loved it. I’d rather work hard than anything else in the world. I’d trade my job for yours any day in the week if God would let me! But God won’t let me!

Well, we had a prayer meeting. We prayed, “God, somehow, send our baby some milk that is fit for him to drink! Get hold of that woman’s heart and make her save out some good milk tomorrow. Make her bring some whole milk!”

You may as well stay sweet. There’s no use to lose the victory and fall out with God because He put you in such a hard place! Didn’t you sing, “I’ll go with Him all the way?”

But next the night (we were in revival) here came the same little lady. In her hand was a bucket just like the one she had brought the night before. But when I felt it, it was still warm. She said, “It’s fresh! When I got ready to come to church tonight God rebuked me for the milk I brought last night. He told me to strain out some of this sweet, warm milk, and not dare to take out one drop of cream. Forgive me for bringing that milk last night!”

Friends, listen to me. God is faithful. No one has ever given himself to God a living sacrifice, laid himself on the altar of God and meant it, and God let him go hungry very long. You may be tried, and you will be tested, but God is victor.

David said, “I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” (Psalm 37:25)

MY VISION OF THE DESTRUCTION OF AMERICA

(Atop the Empire State Building)

As the elevator shot upward to the first of the Empire State Building observatories, 86 floors above the ground, my ears began to close as the altitude increased. This was my first time to go up the great ascent to the top of the Empire State Building, and I was thrilled with the expectation of seeing all of New York City, New Jersey, Manhattan, the Bronx, and on across the Hudson River to Westchester, in a great panoramic view. But little did I realise that God had an even greater view awaiting me, as through a supernatural vision. He would let me see that which is soon to take place on the whole North American continent.

As I stepped off the elevator and went onto the outside terrace, just to the south of me, on Bedloe's Island, I could see the Statue of Liberty, illuminating the gateway to the "New World" as she held aloft her torch. To the north extended Manhattan Island, and although there was some fog, I was able to see glimpses of the city stretched in every direction. As I looked about me, I saw a giant telescope, of the kind into which one may drop a dime and for a certain period of time be able to see everything distinctly for a distance of about 15 miles. With my dime in hand, I stood waiting for the man in front of me to be through viewing the scene. Suddenly, he swung the telescope in such a way that its giant eyes seemed to look directly at me. To my amazement, I felt a great surge of the Spirit and power of God.

Then suddenly, I heard the voice of the Lord, clear and distinct. It seemed to come from the very midst of the giant telescope. But I knew it was a voice directly from heaven. It said, "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly. Therefore, from henceforth, thou shalt have wars."

The ticking of the telescope had stopped. The man before me had used up his dime's worth. I was next.

As I swung the telescope to the North, suddenly the Spirit of God came upon me. In the Spirit, I seemed entirely caught away. The fog which had prevailed moments before had vanished, and I could see clearly, not Manhattan Island alone, but a much larger view. There, clear and distinct, lay all the North American continent, with all its great cities: Chicago, New York, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New Orleans, and the Gulf Coast cities. There were the towering ranges of the Rocky Mountains, and I could trace with my eye the Continental Divide. All this, and more, I could see spread out before me as a great map upon a table.

And as I looked, suddenly from the sky a giant hand reached down toward the Statue of Liberty. In a moment her gleaming torch was torn from her hand, and instead was placed a cup. And protruding from the cup, a giant sword, shining as if a great light had been turned upon its glistening edge. Never had I seen such a sharp, glistening, dangerous sword! It seemed to threaten all the world! As the great cup was placed in the hand of the Statue, I heard these words: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Drink ye

and be drunken, spew and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send.”

When the cup was withdrawn from her lips, the sword was missing from the cup, which could mean but one thing. The contents of the cup had been completely consumed! And I knew that the sword merely typified war, death, and destruction, which is no doubt on the way.

Then as one drunken on too much wine, I saw the Statue of Liberty become unsteady on her feet, and begin to stagger, and lose her balance. I saw her staggering and splashing in the Gulf.

Then as I watched, another amazing thing was taking place. Far to the North-west, a huge black cloud was arising. It was as black as night. As it rose higher, it took the form of a skeleton. I saw the entire North American Continent, spread out like a map upon a table, with this terrible skeleton-formed cloud arising from behind the table.

Then out of the horrible, great gaping mouth began to appear wisps of white vapour, blown first toward the East and then toward the West. Each puff spread over a large area, enveloping cities. And then the white vapours began to spread around the head of the Statue of Liberty where she stood staggering drunkenly. She took one gasping, and then began to cough as though to rid her lungs of the vapours.

What were these white vapours? Could they signify bacteriological warfare, that could destroy multitudes in a few minutes time? Or could they be the new G-gas, the horrible never gas recently made known to the American public?

Then I heard the voice of God, as He spoke again: “Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.”

Then suddenly the silence was shattered by the screaming of sirens. They seemed to be everywhere - multitudes of sirens. And as I looked, I saw people running everywhere. But none of them ran more than a few paces before they fell.

Then suddenly I saw from the Atlantic and from the Pacific, and out of the Gulf, rocket-like objects coming up like fish leaping out of the water. On the ground, the sirens screamed louder. And up from the ground I saw similar rockets begin to ascend. Up from the ground I saw similar rockets ascend. These appeared to be interceptor rockets, but they seemed not to be successful in intercepting the rockets from the ocean, which suddenly exploded all at once, over the land, with an ear-splitting explosion. I saw a huge ball of fire. (This resembled the pictures which I had seen of the explosion of the hydrogen bomb.) The vision was so real, I seemed to feel the searing heat from it.

Then as the noise of the battle subsided, to my ears came this quotation: “Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand; A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon

the mountains: a great people and a strong ... A fire devoureth before them: and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.”

Then the voice was still. The earth, too, was silent, the silence of death.

And then to my ears came another sound - a sound of distant singing. There was joyful shouting, and sounds of happy laughter. I knew it was the rejoicing of the saints of God. I looked, and there high in the heaven, above the smoke and poisonous gases, above the noise of the battle, I saw a huge mountain of solid rock. The sounds of music and rejoicing came from a cleft, high up in the side of the great rock mountain. God's own people were singing, dancing, and shouting with joy, safe from all harm which had come upon the earth, for they were hidden away in the cleft of the rock, protected by the great hand which had reached out of the heavens, the hand of God, until the storm be over-passed.

(The above is a brief excerpt from A. A. Allen's book, "My Vision of the Destruction of America" - the most amazing, startling book of this generation. This book tells the dramatic story of a supernatural vision-revelation which God gave Brother Allen, atop the Empire State Building. As Brother Allen received this great vision, it was accompanied with scriptural references, the Lord himself speaking the scriptures that prove this revelation is real and scriptural. Filled with new scientific information that proves YOUR HOME is about to be INVADED. One military leader, hearing this vision given in a sermon, declared, "Either this man has truly received a vision from God, or else has somehow come upon some of the Army's top military secrets!")

HOW TO HAVE POWER OVER THE DEVIL

“Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” (Luke 10:19)

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation, also make a way to escape that ye may be able to bear it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

“But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil.” (2 Thessalonians 3:3)

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.” (Jude 24)

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which 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)

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.” (Isaiah 61:3)

Here is good news - the news that Jesus Christ came to bring to a darkened world! The same good news that he preached, and that he sent his disciples and apostles to preach, is the news that I bring to you tonight - the good news of the gospel! The good news is that Christ came to proclaim liberty to the captive and the opening of the prisons to them that are bound; the news that you can desert your ash heap of discouragement and find beauty - the beauty of holiness - as you look to the promises of God.

Quit mourning, my friend! Christ has promised you the oil of joy! This very moment, you can trade that horrible spirit of heaviness for the garments of praise! If you will accept the good news of the gospel that I bring to you now, all these things and more are yours.

This is the gospel of GOOD TIDINGS!

The word Gospel means “good news.” But even good news, in order to bring blessing to your heart, must be accepted and believed.

Believing what I give to you now, the glorious gospel of GOOD NEWS, will give you POWER OVER THE DEVIL! It will give you power over every temptation of this present world, and make you victorious over all the power of the enemy.

Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Certainly, this is contrary to many testimonies I have heard in Church. Some people testify of what a hard job it is to serve the Lord, and of how filled with thorns is the pathway. They declare it is hard way, this serving the Lord.

My friend, this is contrary to the teaching of God's word. The scripture says that the way of the transgressor is hard! The yoke of the Lord Jesus Christ is easy! If it is your opinion that serving the Lord is a "hard old way," what you need to do is take on you the yoke of Jesus. If your yoke is hard, possibly you are yoked to the wrong person - perhaps even Satan! For the yoke of Christ is easy. He has declared that it is so.

Are there burdens, serving the Lord? Certainly, but they are light, for Jesus said they were!

Paul said, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31) Of course, Satan will be against you. But the power with which Satan attacks you is in the minority compared to the power that God gives you to overcome the devil. The scriptures declare that Christ "came to destroy the works of the devil." He defeated Satan at the cross of Calvary. My friends, no matter who you are, or where you are, you too can defeat the Devil, with Christ in you heart.

My friend, if you want power over the devil, then put on Christ. You can put on Christ, if you will. "For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ." (Galatians 3:27) Let Christ abide within your heart.

"Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." And surely, with

Conversion - with an old fashioned, born again experience - Christ is within us!

"I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith of the son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20)

So, the Christ who won the victory at the cross of Calvary, over Satan and all the powers of hell and darkness, and even the grave, is in us and is still victorious over Satan and those powers of sin and darkness. If that Christ is IN YOU, you have his power. Jesus declared, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matthew 28:18) But that power was not limited to Christ alone, for he said to his followers, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." (Luke 10:19)

So in Christ, and in the Christian experience, is power over the devil, victory over temptation, a victorious walk with Christ down the highway of righteousness that leads to eternal life in heaven!

Don't be discouraged, my friend, if you have tried and failed, and have found that you have many weaknesses. Remember, His strength is made perfect in weakness! It will never be your own power or your own strength that gives you the victory, but his strength perfected in you. But you must yield to the Lord, and believe God's promises

if this power is ever to become yours, and is to work and operate through you and in your life.

In Christ, we are bigger and more powerful than sin and the devil. “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.” (Romans 6:14-15)

God has ordained that the Christian, with Christ in his life, shall have dominion over sin, which is dominion over the devil.

“How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:2-11)

Here in verse 11 is the secret of victorious Christian living. We are to **RECKON OURSELVES TO BE DEAD UNTO SIN, BUT ALIVE UNTO GOD!**

Along with multitudes of other Christian people who are living a victorious life, I have found that we are dead to sin only as long as we reckon ourselves to be dead unto sin. We are alive unto God through Christ Jesus only as long as we reckon ourselves to be alive. The old man is the person who once sinned and yielded to every temptation. He is dead only as long as you reckon him dead. The moment you fail to reckon the old man dead, he is very much alive. Remember that you are only victorious over the devil and over sin, as long as you reckon yourself alive to God, and are yielding to the Lord, and believing and standing on his promises.

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that ye may be able to bear it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Friend, when God has given such marvellous promises as these, there is no excuse for living in the beggarly elements of this world. There is no reason why a person can not and should not be living a victorious Christian life. When God says he will, with every temptation, make a way of escape, he means exactly that. With **EVERY TEMPTATION** he has made a way of escape if you desire to find it! Remember, God is faithful. He is faithful to provide in **EVERY** temptation a way of escape! No temptation that has taken you is any greater than the temptations suffered by other people. The scripture says they are “common to man.” Men before you have overcome! And men even after you will find the way of escape if they will stand upon

the promises of God, and look for the way of escape! The Lord in this verse has promised. And “the promises of God are in him yea and in him amen, unto all that believe.”

So instead of sitting there with a long face, talking about the devil’s power, why not as the scripture says, “Count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations,” knowing that through Christ you are more than conqueror over every one of them?

There is nothing to be downhearted about. There is nothing in the world to frown about. There is nothing to be heavy hearted about, when such marvellous promises of God are yours if you will only believe them and stand on them.

But to claim these promises, you must do more than join a church, or be baptised in water, or have water sprinkled on your head, or be religious. You must be born again. That old heart of yours is exceedingly sinful above all things. Paul, in Romans 6, speaks of the old man, which was “conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity.” (Psalm 51:5) Man comes into this world with a heart that is exceedingly sinful. “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are the things that defile a man.” (Matthew 15:19-20)

This is the reason a man must do more than sign a card, be baptised in water, or be “religious.” This is why he must be born again and have a change of heart.

And this is the very thing that God has promised to do; “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.” (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

Referring to this very thing, Jesus said, “Except a man be born of water and of the spirit he can not enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I say unto thee, Ye must be born again.” (John 3:5-7)

The man who is born of the flesh comes into the world with the old Adamic nature - shapen in sin and conceived in iniquity - with a heart from which proceeds every evil work. But when a man is born again, he is born of the spirit, born from above. Immediately there is a change of heart. A new spirit is placed within him, which is the spirit of Christ. From that very moment, Christ is within that man. Christ is there in power and in glory. And without maintaining this experience, no man can have power over the devil!

Hear me tonight, friends! You can be victorious over the devil, even as Christ was victorious over the devil. “For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.” (1 Peter 2:21-23)

Our example to follow is Christ, and when we take him as our example and stand upon his promises and appropriate them, immediately we become overcomers.

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:4-5)

It is believing in our hearts our Lord and His wonderful promises that makes us greater than the devil.

“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)

In this place, there are many who, because of a lack of knowing God’s word, live in continual sin. In fact, they say of themselves, “I sin every day, and repent every night.”

It is wonderful that God has given us the precious promise, “If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9) But there are many who misuse this blessed scripture. They would use it to defend their continual sinning. They feel that certainly their point is made as they go on to quote the next verse also. “If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” (1 John 1:10)

It is true no man can truthfully say, “I have not sinned.” I can not say of myself that I have never sinned. According to the scripture, “All we like sheep have gone astray.” (Isaiah 53:6) “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23) These scriptures describe the human race in its unregenerate state. They tell us why man needs to be born again, and to have a new heart.

John did not give us the words of 1 John 1:9-10 to encourage us to continue in sin, for he himself goes on in the next verse to declare, “My little children, these things write I unto you, THAT YE SIN NOT.” Many people never quote this part of 1 John 2:1. They skip right over this and quote the remainder of the verse: “And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

Thank God we do have an advocate IF we sin! But the advocate was not provided because everybody has to sin all the time. The advocate was provided ONLY because there are some who do not know and claim the promises of God. The provision was made for those who, through lack of prayer and the reading of God’s word or because of careless, negligent, or perverted teachings, fail to realise the possibility of living a victorious life and are overtaken with a fault, and they stumble and fall. It is far better if one falls to rise again, and keep trying than to give up and stay down. But this provision for sin in the lives of Christians is not God’s best. It is merely his second best. God’s best is that we overcome the wicked one, leave sin alone, and as the first verse of 1 John 2 says, “SIN NOT!”

So lift up your heads, my people, and rejoice. There is victory in Jesus.

Persecutions will come. Surely you will suffer ridicule. But don’t forget, “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.” (Matthew 5:10-12) “Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.” (Luke 6:23)

“Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:37-39)

“The Lord is faithful who shall establish you and keep you from evil.” (2 Thessalonians 3:3)

“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present your faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.” (Jude 24)

Take your stand for God, my friend. Believe these promises today, and the power of God is yours. Indeed, power is yours over all the power of the enemy. YOU can tread upon scorpions and upon serpents, and YOU can shout the victory over all the power of the enemy.

For Christ in YOU is greater than the devil that is in the world.

It is yours tonight!

(Additional scriptures for your reference include Luke 10:19; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; Jude 24; Galatians 2:20; Isaiah 61:3.)