



# Higher Ground

Box 151, Strathalbyn, SA 5255

May 2007

Volume 2, Issue 2



## DAILY VICTORY

*"Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset."*

Daily victories lead to greater victories. Many fail to live the Christian life on a daily basis. They try, and fail, and fail again. Is that your case? Of course, we excuse ourselves – we can't be sinless – but we should be 'sinning less'. Have we not learnt I John 1:9 – he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to *cleanse* us from all unrighteousness? If we are cleansed, we really have no excuse to go back and get dirty again – do we?

The key: live victoriously **DAY BY DAY – EVERY DAY**. Sound simple? It is, until you try to practice it.... Do remember, however, that the Christian life is like a long distance race – not a 100m sprint. If we stumble, we are not out – it is still worth pressing onward for the prize!

How can we have victory daily?

Start the day by presenting your body to Christ. We are not for sale – we have been bought with a price. Our only right is to do the will of God. Remember that you have been regenerated, and now have a truly free will – you *can* choose to do the will of God; you *can* choose to do what is right!

Renew your mind. Memorize and meditate on the Word of God. Be still, and worship Him. Ps 1:1-2, 119:9. Learn how to chew the cud – chew over the Word, and think upon it – what it means, to you in particular, and how you will

## NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. This year is passing so quickly! What have we done for Christ? Have we made efforts to enlarge His kingdom? Have we drawn closer to Him? Have we **TAKEN TIME** to learn the things of God, or have we allowed business to keep us from doing and being what we should?

These articles are included with the intention that they will be a blessing to you. Thank you all who passed on quotes or articles. It is exciting to see God working in this way! Don't be afraid to send anything you think may be worthwhile – the worst that can happen is that it could be left out! Go on, be a blessing!

Joshua

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practice what it says. Feed daily. Look for Christ in the Bible. The manna was fresh every morning, but it required effort to get it on the table. Memorizing requires discipline. Work at it – review regularly. Remember to salt your life with praise.

Seek God's will, and yield your own will. Lk 22:42. The Christian should not aim to be happy, but to be holy. Just because it seems right does not make it right. The world may spell success MONEY, but the Christian should not! The way to real success is spelled out in Joshua 1:8.

Finally, determine by God's grace to stay away from sin, and alluring situations. Think of David and Bathsheba – had David been out with his army as he should have been, he would not have been tempted as he was. Don't be conformed to this world. Don't be a liquid Christian. Don't take the shape of the things around you. Don't be squeezed into the world's mold.

From message by Alan Moravek – Easter Bible Conference

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The editor of Higher Ground is Joshua McPherson. He is a young man who desires to walk closer to the Lord each day, and encourages others to do the same.



## WORTHLESS GIFTS

*I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer... unto the Lord my God of that which dost cost me nothing II Samuel 24:24*

Let us take a moment to consider what we give to the God who made the universe; the One who saved us by His grace. In II Samuel 24 David sees the angel of the Lord, and is commanded to make an altar to sacrifice to God at the threshing floor of Araunah. Araunah offers to give all necessary items for the sacrifice, but David refuses, saying he must pay for this. *He will not offer unto God that which cost him nothing.*

We find this principle throughout scripture. Think for a moment of Cain and Abel. Cain offers some of his veggies or fruit – they were nothing special – they really didn’t cost him anything. Able offers the firstlings of his flock – his *BEST*.

Again think of the widow in Mark 12:42-44. Christ said that her two mites were worth more than the great riches cast in by others, because they were all her living. It was *EVERYTHING* she could give. Think what that cost her.

## THOUGHTS FROM PHILIPPIANS

*Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: (Philippians 1:6)*

The verse above gives us a promise: “...he which begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” and we are “to be confident of this very thing”. In verse 11 we should be “filled with the fruits of righteousness”, and “in nothing...be ashamed, but that with all boldness...Christ shall be magnified in [our] body...” (v20). “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure” (2:13). We were created *by* Him, and *for* Him! “...this one thing I do, *forgetting* those things which are *behind*, and *reaching* forth unto those things are *before*, I press toward the mark for the *prize of the high calling* of God in Christ Jesus” (3:13-14).

Because of this, we should rejoice and not worry, but “in everything by prayer and supplication *with thanksgiving* let [our] requests be made known unto God. And the *peace of God*, which passeth all understanding, shall *keep* [our] hearts and minds *through Christ Jesus*” (4:6-7).

Verse eight is a challenge, but our responsibility. It’s all about our thoughts; the things we think about and ponder.

“If the gift we bring has no value to us, why should God accept it?”

*Pastor Greg McPherson*

Again, go to Malachi 1:8. The Israelites were offering their dud animals to God. God says, offer that to your governor – will he be pleased with your refuse?

*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Matt 6:33*

Of course he will not! God is not pleased when we just give to Him what we have left over – our scraps if you like. Give him the *FIRST* part, not what is left (if there is any).

The question is simple.

### What do you give to God?

If you truly know Him and love Him, surely you will want to improve what you give to Him in time, talent, etc.

By J. McPherson

We are to think on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and that are of good report. Really, if *all* the things we ‘run through our minds’ fit into the aforementioned categories, how triumphant, obedient, and blessed our lives will be! Again, the apostle Paul instructs us to *do* the things which we learned, received, and heard of him (v9). It’s pointless to just *hear*, and not *do* what we know we should.

Once we have come thus far, we then can say as Paul did in verse 11, “I have learned *in whatsoever state I am*, therewith *to be content*”. When we “know how to be abased, and to abound...to be full and to be hungry, to abound and to suffer need” (v12), we can say believing, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (v13).

The epistle ends with a commendation from Paul to the Philippians for their willingness to give to the needs of others. Only when we are faithful to give to others in need, whether it be time, talent/skill, money, resources, or whatever, can we really claim verse 19: “But my God shall supply *all your need* according to his riches in glory *by Christ Jesus*”. You see, *its always all of Him*, and *nothing of ourselves*, but *humble obedience* to God and His Word.

*“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen”*

By B. Crampin

Phil 4:23

## STIRRING UP

"...I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance." II Peter 3:1

There are times in the Christian life when we can become discouraged. After all, the Christian life is not easy, and often it looks as though those around us have lots of fun, and no troubles or trials, while we have numerous difficulties. What are some of the things we should remember at such times?

Remember the price that was paid for your redemption. What did it take for God to be able to wipe out your sin? What was the price that He had to pay in order to redeem us from eternal loss? The price was his only Son – the perfect Lamb of God. If any lamb would have been acceptable, you can be sure God would have accepted it, but it was only His Son that would do. With that in mind we should aim to sin less, even if we are not yet completely sinless (I Peter 1:17-19). James reminds us that we should remain unspotted by the world, that is, we should not allow ourselves to be influenced by the world's ways and thinking.

Remember the pit Christ drew us out of. We were stuck in a nasty pit of miry clay, slipping and sliding further away from God. Any attempt to get out in our own strength simply caused us to sink further, and become more splattered with mud and grime. How thankful we ought to be when we consider where we would be if it were not for the grace of God.

Remember the public is watching. God should be glorified through our life. It is wise to remember that unless our heart attitude and life match we will not glorify our Saviour. We may dress well, go to church, read our Bible, etc, but unless we are doing all this for the right reason, we will only be classed as a hypocrite. Hypocrites only bring shame upon themselves; they do not bring glory to God.

Remember the person to whom we must give account. One day every person must stand before God. Those who rejected Him in this life will stand to be judged as to their eternal destiny. Those who have settled that question of life and death will stand to give an account of what they have done. II John 8 reminds us that we should look to ourselves, that we "lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward". If we have not looked to ourselves; if we have not walked as we should have, we will suffer loss. (I Cor 3:13-15)

Remember the people around us that are on their way to Hell. Surely if we really believed this we would want to get out and tell others about Christ. We would not care what they thought about us; we would be happy to risk offending someone if we really believed that this was a serious matter. We may not know who will accept the Lord as Saviour, but we ought to share the Gospel with them as we have been commanded (Matt 28), and leave the results to God.

Remember the present salvation is offered to all. Not everyone will be interested, but we should, when we recognize that those around us have souls that need salvation, be willing to tell them of what Christ has done, even if they reject the message we give. The salvation Christ won on the Cross is sufficient for all mankind and is offered to all. More than that, we are commanded to go to every creature and preach the Gospel (Mat 28:19).

With all this in mind, there is really no room for discouragement! There is no excuse for feeling like we are useless to God, or that He does not care for us if we only remember these five things. Think of it for a moment. How much must we be worth to God if He was willing to pay such a price for our redemption? Surely He plans to use us if He paid so much to get us for His own!

Again, think of the effort to draw us out of that miry pit! In human terms, it is a dangerous thing to rescue someone out of such a place, and we would hesitate to rush into such danger. As Christ reminds us "greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends" John 15:13.

Think of our witness amongst others. Well may the public mock at many Christians, and say "hypocrite, hypocrite". Sadly, so often that term is true! We ought to have a hope that goes beyond the grave – that is, we DO have a hope that goes beyond the grave, but often we act just like those around us who have no such hope. There *SHOULD* be a difference between us and the world. The way we dress, act, speak, etc should not be an imitation of the world. If it is, most likely it is because we don't want to be different – the Bible calls this friendship with the world. What does God say about that?

It is also important to remember that one day we will stand before God. How will it be? Will we be able to say, "Lord, here is all you enabled me to do while on earth; I give it back to You", or will we feel embarrassed, realizing that we never did anything that would count for eternity? Finally, think of the people around us and their destiny. Think also of the salvation that is offered to them as it was to us. Perhaps that person (most unlikely maybe!) is one who will be thankful you told them about the Gospel. You never know, unless you say something!

May God stir up your minds to look beyond yourself! Look firstly at Him and what He did for you. Look then at the people around you and remember two things: what people see in you is what they will think of God, and the Gospel we know is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe.

Joshua

## PERSPECTIVES

*"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God..." Rom 8:28*

One day, the father of a very wealthy family took his son on a trip to the country with the express purpose of showing him how poor people live.

They spent a couple of days and nights on the farm of what would be considered a very poor family.

On their return from their trip, the father asked his son, 'How was the trip?'

'It was great, Dad.'

'Did you see how poor people live?' the father asked.

'Oh yes,' said the son.

'So, tell me, what did you learn from the trip?' asked the father.

The son answered: 'I saw that we have one dog and they had four. We have a pool that reaches to the middle of our garden and they have a creek that has no end. We have imported lanterns in our garden and they have the stars at night. Our patio reaches to the front yard and they have the whole horizon.

We have a small piece of land to live on and they have fields that go beyond our sight. We have servants who serve us, but they serve others. We buy our food, but they grow theirs. We have walls around our property to protect us, they have friends to protect them.'

The boy's father was speechless.

Then his son added, 'Thanks Dad for showing me how poor we are.'

Isn't perspective a wonderful thing? What would happen if we all gave thanks for everything we have, instead of worrying or complaining about what we don't have?

What have you thanked God for today?

Submitted by E. Brown

## JUST A THOUGHT

*"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness..."*

I wonder what would happen if we treated our Bible like we treat our mobile phone.

What if we carried it around in our handbags or pockets?

What if we turned back to go get it if we forgot it?

What if we flipped through it several times a day?

What if we used it to receive messages from the text?

What if we treated it like we couldn't live without it?

What if we gave it to children as gifts?

What if we used it as we travelled?

What if we bought new ones, just to be proud of what it looked like?

What if we used it in case of an emergency?

What if we got it out to show off to someone our skill in knowing how to use it?

What if we groaned when we dropped it?

What if we always had it close for easy access?

How fast could you put your hands on your Bible? Your phone? After all, the Bible is the most important thing we have. Do we treat it that way?

Of course, not everyone has a mobile phone, but mobiles are not the only thing we place more importance on than the Bible – are they? No, you say, I place more importance on the Bible than my mobile, or my car, or my friends, or whatever I have. Do you? What do your actions say about that?

Remember the old saying...

I can't hear your voice because your actions speak too loud.

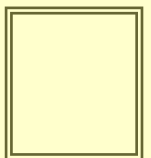
What do *they* say?

Submitted by E. Brown

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