

1. We are going to revisit a subject from a couple of weeks ago, and that is the subject of victory.
2. Specifically, victorious living.
3. I do not believe God has created us to experience defeated living, he has created us to live victoriously for him.
4. One of the things I believe God is restoring in this year of Jubilee is the victory that is available to each of us who are followers of Jesus.
5. What is victory? **Victory: The act of defeating an enemy or opponent in a battle.**
6. We have talked a lot about the fact that we are in a battle. We are in a battle with Satan. We are in a battle with our flesh, or our sin nature that wants to rule over us and draw us away from the lord.
7. But thankfully the bible gives us the truth, and when we live by the truth, it brings us victory.
8. What is the truth about this battle we are in with Satan? **1 John 4:4** You are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. (KJV)
9. The truth is, Jesus, who lives in us is greater than our enemy that lives in this world.
10. What is the truth about this battle with our flesh or sin nature? **Galatians 2:20** I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (NIV)
11. The truth is, if we will submit our bodies to the lord and allow him to live in us and through us, He will provide the help we need to have victory over our flesh.
12. God has made provision for us to be victorious. He has promised us in His Word that the life he has given us is a life of victory.
13. So, what is the key to that victory?
14. The key to gaining the victory in the battles and struggles of this life is to lean into Jesus.
15. What I mean is, the key to our victory is to continually draw closer to Jesus, to lean upon him and trust in him.
16. Jesus is the key to our victory.
17. **Zechariah 9:9** Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (NIV)

18. Jesus came to earth. Lived among us. Suffered, died, and rose again on the 3rd day so that we his people could have victory.
19. So, let's explore a little deeper what about following and living for Jesus helps bring us victory.

TEXT: **John 1:1-5** Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 2 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. 3 In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

TITLE: **Ingredients for Victory.**

INTRO:

1. This passage of scripture contains some very basic things that contribute to our living a victorious life.
2. Verse 4 says, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.
3. So, our faith in Jesus is what helps us overcome the world and live victoriously.
4. And what are the ingredients of faith in Jesus Christ?
 - Verse 1, to believe that Jesus is the Christ. The messiah. The anointed of God.
 - Verse 2, to also love the children of God. Other brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - Verse 3, to keep God's commandments.
5. The reality is those are three pretty straightforward ingredients.
6. I'm guessing all of those are things we have heard before.
7. But just because we know a truth from God's word, and just because that truth seems fairly simple to understand, doesn't mean that it will be easy to carry out.
8. There is in fact a difference between simple and easy.
9. I believe part of the reason why keeping God's commands are not always easy is because we are tempted to leave out a step or two.

10. The enemy doesn't mind of we live some of the truth, just as long as we don't live all of the truth. Because living part of the truth isn't very fulfilling.
11. We were talking in my connect group this past Wednesday about all of the things people like to put in mac and cheese.
12. Now, if you are using pre-packaged mac and cheese, the ingredients, and the process of preparing those ingredients is fairly straightforward. (get out the boxes)
13. According to this box, the ingredients are boiled noodles, cheese powder, milk, and butter.
14. I am pretty blessed that I don't have to cook much, that's because I am married to the best cook in the world. But even I can make a box of mac and cheese. When I have all of the ingredients.
15. A few years ago, my wife was out of town, and I decided I would make a box of mac and cheese.
16. I took the box out of the pantry. I got the water started boiling. Put the noodles into the boiling water. Set the packet of cheese powder aside. And then went to the fridge to grab the butter and milk.
17. The butter was right in the top of the door, but when I reached down further to grab the milk, I immediately noticed something.
18. The milk had expired. I opened it up and stuck it to my nose and sure enough, it was sour.
19. We had no more milk. I also couldn't find anything to substitute for the milk.
20. Now, for some of you experienced cooks, you could easily figure something out, but I am not an experienced cook, and I was home alone.
21. And so, I did the only thing I knew to do. I used water in place of the milk. What I got was something that resembled mac and cheese, but sure didn't taste very good.
22. I did not consider my attempt to make a box of mac and cheese a victory. I considered it a defeat. Why?
23. Because you have to have all of the ingredients in order for the mac and cheese to taste right.
24. A person could just boil noodles and eat them plain, but that doesn't

sound very appetizing.

25. I assume you could eat the cheese powder by itself, but that sounds kind of gross.
26. I do know people that eat butter by itself. But you're not going to catch me doing it.
27. And of course, many people drink milk by itself. But if you want mac and cheese that tastes like mac and cheese, you need all of the ingredients to work together.
28. Like that mac and cheese, when it comes to the ingredients necessary to live a life of victory, you can't leave an ingredient out. All of the ingredients have to be combined together or else you end up with something that resembles victory but doesn't satisfy like victory.
29. So, let's mix the victory ingredients together and see how victory comes about.
30. Victory doesn't come by loving God alone.

Loving God and loving others has to be combined together.

1. 1 John 5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.
2. The word child here refers to all true children of God. All true Christians.
3. Here is the truth that we cannot afford to miss. Loving God and believing that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God is incomplete on its own.
4. In order to live a life of victory we must love God, believe that Jesus is the Christ, and... everyone say and.
5. And everyone who loves the father must love his children as well.
6. We cannot separate loving God and loving his children and still experience victory.
7. We cannot separate loving God and loving his children and still overcome the world.
8. And on the surface that is a simple concept to grasp, but in reality, it is not an easy concept to live out. Why?
9. Because loving God is much easier than loving others. Loving others is messy.

10. Loving others opens up our heart to get hurt.
11. Loving others makes us vulnerable to having their sinful mess spill over on us, and our sinful mess spill over on them.
12. Loving others doesn't always make us feel all tingly on the inside.
13. But trying to love God without loving others leads to partial victory and partial defeat.
14. You see, verse one of chapter 5 is actually a continuation of a thought communicated at the end of chapter 4.
15. **1 John 4:20-21** Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. **21** And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.
16. We could spend quite a bit of time talking about what loving others includes, but allow me to highlight the most basic part of this kind of love.
17. I don't think it is very believable to say we love other Christians, and then spend very little time around other Christians.
18. I don't think it is very believable to say we love other Christians, and not gather regularly with other Christians through church services, small groups, or just times of fellowship.
19. One of the great mysteries of modern-day America is that when polled, the vast majority of people say they are Christians.
20. But when asked about their church attendance the vast majority spend very little time meeting together with other believers.
21. It's like a husband saying he loves his wife and kids, but he only comes around to see them twice a month. I doubt they will believe what he says.
22. We will not overcome the world and we will not experience full victory unless our love for God is combined with a love for others.
23. And the most basic indicator of a love for others is that we want to be around them as much as we can.
24. Let's look at another set of ingredients that have to be combined in order to have victory.

Loving others is only possible when we love God and carry out His

commands.

1. 1 John 5:2 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands.
2. So, we cannot separate loving God and loving others, and we cannot separate loving others from obedience to God's commands.
3. Let's look at this from two different perspectives.
4. If we don't love others, we are not keeping God's commands.
5. But the reverse is also true. If we are not living in right relationship with God the father through obedience to His commands, chances are we will have great difficulty loving others.
6. Love is not just something we say, love is something we must demonstrate. Both to God and to others.
7. I believe this ties back so closely with the greatest commandment.
8. On one occasion an expert of the Law of Moses asked Jesus which was the greatest commandment in the law. This was Jesus' response.
9. Matthew 22:37-40 Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."
10. If I say I love God, but I know there are areas where I am willingly living in disobedience to God's commands, I am going to have difficulty loving myself because I will know I am being fake.
11. And if I am having difficulty loving myself because of my disobedience, then I will have great difficulty loving others, because I will probably assume they too are being fake.
12. How many are still with me this morning?
13. So, loving God must be combined with loving others.
14. And loving others must be combined with obedience to God's commands.
15. So, that leads us to our final question.

How can we be successful at obeying God's commands?

1. If we look back at 1 John chapter five, John makes a very interesting statement in verse number 3.
2. 1 John 5:3 In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his

commands are not burdensome,

3. The word burdensome is an interesting little word.
4. Burdensome: difficult to carry out or fulfill. Taxing. Undesirable restrictive.
5. So, John states that keeping God's commands are not difficult to carry out or fulfill, and they are not undesirably restrictive.
6. And my response to that statement would be this. If keeping God's commands are not burdensome or difficult to carry out or too restrictive, then why do I so often have difficulty keeping God's commands? Why do I struggle so often?
7. How many by a raised hand would say, my experience of keeping God's commands seems different that what John says about keeping God's commands.
8. After taking quite a while to study this out and flesh out the meaning, and after reading several different bible commentaries, I have come to believe that this is what John was saying.
9. Keeping God's commands is not burdensome when I allow God to change me from the inside out, rather than the outside in.
10. What do we mean by that? If I focus on behaviors. Lord help me to do this or help me to not do that, then often times I struggle with keeping God's commands.
11. It's like Paul said in Romans 7:18-19 For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. 19 For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.
12. If I focus on changing behaviors, then those behaviors are hard to control.
13. Not that our behaviors shouldn't change. When we accept Jesus and as we grow more mature in Jesus, our behaviors most definitely should change.
14. But I have found the best way to see a change in my behaviors on the outside, is to allow Jesus to change me on the inside first.
15. In other words, internal change comes first, and external change comes second.
16. And that seems to line up perfectly with Romans 12:2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, (external) but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. (internal) Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his

good, pleasing and perfect will. (external)

17. The words in parenthesis are mine.
18. So how are we transformed internally?
19. We are transformed internally when we continually, regularly, and daily present ourselves before the Lord and we submit to him.
20. Holy Spirit. Here I am. And I believe you are in me. So, while you're in there take a look around. Look in all the corners and dark places. And if you see anything that doesn't need to be there remove it. Holy Spirit.
21. Holy Spirit change me. Make me different on the inside. Cleanse me. Mold me and make me into whatever you think is best.
22. Wake up each morning and start your day like that and you will begin to see internal transformation that leads to external obedience.

Conclusion:

1. So, let's put all the ingredients together. What are we making? We are making victory.
 - Submit to His changing us on the inside.
 - Which helps us obey His commandments on the outside.
 - Which makes it easier to love ourselves, and others.
 - And when we are consistently being changed by God, obeying God, loving others like God, and putting our faith in God, victory is right around the corner.
 - We will overcome the world.
2. I know I have given you a lot today. My notes can be found at batesvillefirst.org.
3. But as we close, I am going to ask you to focus with me on one single area.
4. Inviting the Holy Spirit to change us from the inside out.
5. Would you stand with me.
6. Pray.
7. Have you expressed your faith in Jesus by accepting him as your savior? Salvation call.
8. Invite the Holy Spirit to change you.

9. Talk to Him like he's real because he is.
10. Submit and surrender to Him.