

Bible Studies for Life: April 10

A Life of Victory • John 16:19-22; 27-33

By Lee Faler



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I can remember my home church, Willow Grove Baptist Church in Collins, hosting “Favorite Hymn Nights.” For those of you who may be unfamiliar with Favorite Hymn Nights, this was a night the music minister would ask the congregation for their favorite hymns and we would sing several of them, usually only a verse or two from each one.

Some of the youth (I may or may not have been involved) would occasionally try to stump the music minister by suggesting a song that we had never before sung. He quickly brought that to a halt by saying that if he didn’t know the suggested song, then the one who selected it had to stand in front of the church and sing a solo.

One hymn we could always count on singing every Favorite Hymns Night was Victory in Jesus. This hymn was precious to me then, and is even more so today. It is a reminder that Jesus has won a life of victory for those who belong to Him. Right now we don’t see it, but one day our faith will be made sight. So what should we do in the meantime?

First, we should anticipate seasons of suffering and sorrow.

During His final days with the disciples prior to the crucifixion, Jesus told the disciples that difficult days were approaching. He told them, “you will weep and lament... You will be sorrowful (John 16:20 ESV).”

Jesus was aware of what was ahead, and the disciples needed to know that even though the road ahead of them would be difficult, unspeakable joy was waiting for them on the other side.

Even though they would be devastated after the crucifixion, they would be elated after the resurrection. Their hurt would only be temporary. We should remember the same. Friends, we won't always hurt, grieve, and suffer, and compared to eternity our suffering is only momentary as Paul states in 2 Corinthians 4:17.

Our seasons of suffering and sorrow are real and we shouldn't be surprised by them, but we should never lose sight of the joy that awaits us in heaven.

Secondly, we should remember the Father's love for us. We are reminded of this in verse 28 when Jesus says that He “came from the Father” and was “going back to the Father.” Why did Jesus come? Was it not to give His life for us? Was it not to make THE WAY for us to be saved and reconciled to the Father? Of course the answer to these questions is a resounding “YES!”

As we approach Good Friday, we should be reminded of God's love for us. The cross is the proof of the extent of His love. What great love! Let us not grow weary in remembering His love for us; instead, let us grow deeper into His love!

Finally, we should fight against discouragement by reminding ourselves that true victory has already been achieved by Jesus. As we've already discussed in this lesson, we're promised hardships and sufferings in this life. Jesus did not want His disciples to think otherwise and He desires the same for us.

This is why we read in verse 33 that in this life we “will have tribulation.” That’s a pretty concrete statement, isn’t it? Nowhere in the Bible are we led to believe that the Christian Believer is exempt from persecution, trials, or tribulation; we are in fact promised the opposite.

We will encounter a variety of trials throughout our lives, according to James, the half-brother of Jesus. Our trials can discourage us and often make us want to throw in the towel. That’s why the next words from Jesus are so comforting! He says, “But take heart; I have overcome the world (16:33).”

Absolutely nothing would come into the lives of the disciples that had not already been overcome by Jesus, and the same applies to us today. We need to know that whatever we are facing or fearing, today is not greater than Jesus. He is greater than sin, Satan, death, and the grave, so we can rest in Him now and forever.

We aren’t having to fight an uphill battle, church! Jesus has already won on our behalf! May we glorify Him today, worship Him, and rest in His work on our behalf.

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