

Lesson for October 4, 2009

Review of Our Spiritual Assets

Delivered from the Power of Satan and the Sin Nature and into God's Kingdom

The Believer's Tactical Victory Over the Power of Satan

God has given us a power system in order to execute His plan, purpose and will, while living in Satan's cosmic system. It is an encapsulated environment in which we can choose to live and it affords the believer all the necessary tools for a successful life as a Christian. Jesus Christ tested and proved this encapsulated life for us and now sits at the right hand of God the Father as a testimony to its effectiveness. As believers, we have been given the same power system that was given to Christ, which enabled Him to live a sinless life. Though we cannot live a sinless life, we can live a life pleasing to God when we reside in God's encapsulated environment and utilize His power system.

Only by residing in God's system can the believer overcome the craftiness and deceit of the Devil. Satan is the great counterfeiter and will do everything in his power to stop the unbeliever from trusting Christ as Savior and to stop the believer from executing God's plan. Satan uses his power and genius to present himself and his followers as ministers of righteousness, while leading the unsuspecting and duped believer into a life of self-righteous arrogance or lascivious lawlessness. However, no one has an excuse when it comes to Satan's ploys. We all possess volition and we choose to reside in either God's system or Satan's system. (Colossians 1:13)

Even when we do fail and fall into Satan's trap, we can be delivered from Satan's power. God, in His matchless grace, has provided a way back into *His* system. The believer does not have to spend time in Satan's cosmic system. The way back into God's system is the Rebound Technique, which is naming or acknowledging your personal sins directly to God. The believer is then restored to fellowship with God and to the control of God the Holy Spirit (God's power system). This is why it is so important to keep "short accounts" with God. When you, as a believer, realize that you have sinned, immediately name it to God. This way you will sustain any momentum that you have and will stay in fellowship with God for longer periods of time. No believer, regardless of geographic location, upbringing, I.Q. or any other factor has an excuse for not living within God's power system.

Delivered from the Power of the Sin Nature

Jesus Christ has paid the penalty for our sin and He now provides the supernatural power to be delivered from it. This power is the control of the Holy Spirit. God has completely blotted out our pre-salvation sins at the Cross and when we use the Rebound Technique He also blots out those sins and does not remember them any longer. Therefore, we have no right to relive them, to think about them, to cry about them, to worry about them or to regret them.

God says that we need to "forget" them. Forgetting means that we are to lose them out of our mind, to neglect them, don't consider them, don't dwell on or ponder them. In other words, don't give them an audience in your thinking. If and when they sneak back into our memory, we can simply use gratitude and thank God that they have already been forgiven and dealt with.... blotted out. God will never use them against you, and in fact, He doesn't even "remember" them!! Therefore, don't insult God by using them against yourself!

We have studied a number of mental attitude sins. Remembering past sins is mental and will normally cause the believer to get out of fellowship. Remembering past sins means that either we don't *believe* God has blotted them out or we don't *feel* they are blotted out. Remembering your sin after God has blotted it out causes discouragement and will often lead to guilt. Therefore, if we are feeling guilty about anything, we have sinned, are out of fellowship and we are very unhappy. As long as we carry guilt about anything that occurred in the past, we will never execute God's plan for our lives.

Divine Viewpoint Thinking is the key to overcoming the power of the sin nature. When we begin to think the way God thinks, we will be able to recognize overt and mental attitude sins in our lives. Once these sins are recognized, we can acknowledge, isolate and forget them. This, of course, can eventually break the power that certain sins have over us. However, we must constantly be on guard.

Divine Viewpoint Thinking can be developed only through the consistent study and application of Bible doctrine. Just knowing Bible doctrine is not enough. Victory over certain sins comes as we apply the doctrine that we have learned. Therefore, it is imperative that the believer has more than mere academic knowledge of God's Word. Academic knowledge (gnosis) must be converted to spiritual knowledge (epignosis) by accurate application (wisdom).

As Divine Viewpoint Thinking permeates *your* thinking, Bible doctrine becomes your scale of values, your norms and standards begin to align with God's, and even your conscience is influenced in a positive way. Thinking divine viewpoint sets up "a standard" by which you can evaluate everything that enters your mind, including temptation to commit personal sin.

Delivered into God's Kingdom

The Bible makes many references to both the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven. Are there differences in the two, and if so, what are those differences? An examination of Scripture and the various passages where these two terms appear will help us determine their meanings.

The Kingdom of God vs. The Kingdom of Heaven

The *Kingdom of God* is God's eternal kingdom to which every believer (perhaps even angels) belongs from all dispensations. It is God's spiritual kingdom, which is entered at salvation only by faith alone in Christ alone. (Matthew 6:33; Luke 13:28-29; John 3:3-7; Hebrews 12:22-23) Within that kingdom there is the *Kingdom of Heaven* or the kingdom of the heavens. The Kingdom of Heaven is only part of the entire Kingdom of God, and refers to the millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth. Since the Kingdom of Heaven is a part of the Kingdom of God, they are sometimes used interchangeably.

It is this earthly kingdom that was announced by John the Baptist and offered to Israel by Jesus Christ and rejected by the Jewish nation. Since it was rejected and the Messiah crucified, the Kingdom of Heaven was postponed until after the Tribulation. Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven and the Millennium are the same period of time. This period will be the time when "David's greater Son," Jesus Christ, will rule on earth. It is a time when all the covenants to Israel will be fulfilled. It is a time of peace and prosperity. (Matthew 3:1-3; Luke 1:31-33; Zechariah 12:8; II Samuel 7:7-10)

When John the Baptist announced that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, it simply meant that the Messianic ruler was on the scene and ready to set up His kingdom on earth. Even the disciples of Jesus thought that the Kingdom of Heaven was going to be set up at that time. (Acts 1:6) In Matthew 13 Jesus teaches the multitudes about the Kingdom of Heaven in parables. These parables and their meanings apply only to the Millennium, not to the Church Age. In the end, the nation of Israel rejected Jesus as Messiah and with the assistance of the Romans fulfilled prophecy by crucifying the Savior. (Matthew 27)

Therefore, we see that there is a difference between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven. The first is a spiritual kingdom and the second is an earthly kingdom. Both, of course, are God's kingdoms.

It is the Kingdom of God into which the Church Age believer has been delivered at salvation. Prior to faith in Christ, the person was merely a part of Satan's kingdom, the World.

Christ's Strategic Victory over Satan
(Hebrews 6:17-20; Colossians 2:9-15)

Jesus Christ won the *strategic victory* (planning and directing of operations to counter the enemy) over Satan. God told the Serpent (Satan) that He would put "enmity between Satan and the woman; between his seed and the seed of the woman." The seed of Satan (those who crucified Christ) would bruise the heel of Christ (a non-fatal blow), but the woman's seed (Jesus Christ) would bruise the head of Satan (a fatal blow). (Genesis 3:15) This prophecy was fulfilled at the Cross when Satan dealt a non-fatal blow to Christ (since He came back from the dead and is alive today). Christ, on the other hand, dealt Satan a fatal blow that will be reality at the end of human history (when Satan and his fallen angels are cast into the Lake of Fire for all eternity).

It is because of Christ's victory over Satan that the believer can win the *tactical victory* (the method or procedure carried out against the enemy) over Satan, be delivered from the power of the sin nature and be delivered into God's kingdom. The filling of the Holy Spirit supplies the power to accomplish this. The Christian Way of Life is a supernatural way of life and it requires a supernatural power to live it and to overcome the tactics of Satan, his demons (fallen angels) and his world system. (John 16:33; I Corinthians 15:51-57; I John 5:1-21)

A casual approach to the execution of the Christian Way of Life will result in a casual, powerless relationship with God. It is not enough for a believer to occasionally study and apply Bible doctrine. It must be a deliberate, consistent, persistent, ongoing habit if we are going to win the tactical victory, bring glory and honor to our Heavenly Father and have the happy, wonderful life He wants for us.

God's system is the method that we are to use to cope with and overcome any problems that we face in life. God has provided the necessary resources (Bible doctrine resident and circulating in our soul) that can be called upon at any time to solve personal challenges and the circumstances that confront us. These resources include the three spiritual skills: 1) the filling of the Holy Spirit 2) metabolized Bible doctrine 3) Utilization of the ten problem-solving devices - as our **tools** for daily living. Remember that we still live in Satan's world. However, we do not have to succumb to his evil influences in our lives. The guardian of your soul is Bible doctrine that is being applied everyday. Failure to continue your spiritual growth and failure to use the Problem-Solving devices that God has provided will result in *failure*. You and you alone are responsible to God for the execution of His plan, purpose and will.

"Study to show yourself approved unto to God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, handling with accuracy the Word of Truth." (II Timothy 2:15)