

# Gethsemane

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## CHAPTER TEN

The importance of any victory depends upon four factors: What enemies were engaged in battle? What price did the victor have to pay? How completely were the enemies conquered? And what steps were taken to secure the fruits of victory?

We speak of the resurrection as a glorious victory. It was. It is the very foundation of our faith. **"And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain"** (I Corinthians 15:14). But is it possible for us to miss the significance of that victory, and to fail to secure its results?

In 1918 the Allies won a great victory over their enemies. That victory brought us great joy and relief. We staged tremendous celebrations. We made Armistice Day almost a world-wide holiday. November 11, the day of that victory, became almost sacred to our nation. But because we did not know the sinister, evil forces which had been fighting us; because we did not know how completely we had them in our power; because we did not appreciate the blood our boys had shed; and because we did not know the steps necessary for securing the peace that had been won -- because of our failure to take these four factors into account, we "kept not faith with those who fell in Flanders Field," and today we are not able to enjoy the fruits of their victory.

We let the peace that the boys of my generation won on the battle fields of France be snatched from our fingers, and we brought upon our own heads the cataclysm of another world war, because we failed to appreciate our victory.

The CAPTAIN of our salvation won a mighty triumph 1900 years ago, and with a mighty shout on the day of that triumph, resurrection day has become one of the most sacred days for all Christians. Every week, on the Lord's Day, we pay tribute to Him whose resurrection was the greatest day of history.

But are we enjoying the fruits of that victory as we should? Will it not be said of the church as it was said of the Allies, "They did not appreciate the victory that was theirs"? Do we know the cruel sinister forces of evil our Lord faced in the battle preceding His resurrection? Do we know how completely He crushed those dread enemies of ours? Do we appreciate the price He paid for victory, the toll of blood and toil, of tears and agony, of suffering and death which was required? Do we know what steps should be taken to secure the fruits of His triumph? And, most important question of all, are we taking the steps necessary to appropriate and secure the fruits of His victory, the peace and joy and riches of grace which He has won for us? Until we can answer "yes" to these questions, we cannot reap the benefits of the resurrection.

Our churches are filled with Christians who are willing to live defeated lives because they do not know what enemies the Captain of our salvation defeated, nor how crushing was the defeat He administered. They do not appreciate the price He paid for victory; they are ignorant of the steps to be taken to secure the fruits of His triumph, and they are not stirred to actually possess the riches won, to take and enjoy the peace and power and fullness of GOD.

Can we be content to let a crushed and defeated foe rise and rob us of what CHRIST won for us at Calvary? Shall we listen to the father of lies and his propaganda machine and allow him to deceive us into believing that CHRIST's victory was not complete? GOD give us a clearer vision of the completeness of the victory of the Resurrection!

Now to take up the first of these four questions: What enemies did CHRIST engage in battle? Primarily, He came to fight sin. "**Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins**" (Matthew 1:21). The Son of GOD "**was manifested to take away our sins**" (I John 3:5). "**The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin**" (I John 1:7) "**Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world**" (John 1:29). These scriptures and countless others testify that the enemy above all enemies against whom CHRIST joined battle was man's sin. The objective of the CAPTAIN of our salvation was the total destruction of sin in us, to blot it out, not to leave it name or remembrance, to bury it in the deepest depths, to remove it as far as the east is from the west, until no place be found for it, even in memory.

Sin is of such a nature that it can never be understood except by Him who is infinitely holy. The sinner can never understand sin. A thief cannot understand what stealing is. An adulterer cannot understand the nature of impurity. A deceitful person cannot see the nature of lying. A person who worries cannot know the deadliness of the poison of worry. An unloving man cannot perceive the character of selfishness. A critical spirit is oblivious to the nature of unkindness.

On the other hand, it is the holy nature that can understand unholiness. It is the upright and honest man who knows what dishonesty and crookedness are. The pure in heart understand infinitely more about impurity than the unclean. The soul that is full of faith can tell us the nature of worry. The loving spirit appraises the true nature of criticism and selfishness and unkindness. To those who are true and holy, sin is the ultimate horror. Death, persecution, poverty and torture of the most diabolical forms are to be preferred to sin by men and women whose hearts are holy and upright.

Therefore it is essential for us to behold the holy and spotless LAMB of GOD girding on His armor to meet our sin in battle to the death. Come, my soul, gaze upon thy Saviour battling thy sin. Follow Him to Gethsemane and watch Him in the struggle. And as thou gazest upon Him who endured the cross in His striving against sin, thou shalt know that thou, too, must join the battle against this archenemy of GOD and man.

The name of JESUS stands for One who came to save His people from their sins: and it is no more possible for me to claim to be a follower of JESUS without throwing myself into the battle against a sin, than it would be for me to claim to have been a soldier of MacArthur's without having thrown myself into the battle against Japan. He who does otherwise only deludes himself.

One of the tactics of the enemy is to get his opponent confused; to get him to fight some side issue; to divert his attacks. How often he has succeeded in getting the church of JESUS CHRIST to let up on her attacks upon sin? But he did not succeed in diverting our Saviour from the main issue. Straight against the sin of man He drove His attack, and in doing so He revealed to us, His people, the archenemy of our souls. Have we resisted unto blood, striving against sin? We need to consider Him who did, lest we become weary and faint in the battle.

**"For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin"** (Hebrews 12:3,4).

~ end of chapter 10 ~

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