

A Life of Victory

by J. Sidlow Baxter

The sermon emphasizes the deliverance from condemnation and the assurance of no separation from Christ, highlighting the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Duration: 47:53

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:1-2, Romans 8:9, Romans 8:11, Romans 8:35, Romans 8:38-39

Topics: "Victory"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by emphasizing the comforting truth that there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ and that nothing can separate them from God's love. However, he then raises the question of what happens in the in-between, the present life with its challenges and temptations. He shares a story about a father who reluctantly allows his daughter to go to a summer camp, but decides to secretly observe what goes on there. The preacher highlights the importance of freedom in the Christian life and points to Romans 8 as the key to understanding it, emphasizing the role of the Holy Spirit in guiding and empowering believers.

Transcript

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for that very kind word of welcome this morning. And my dear friends, what a wonderful hymn it was that we just sung, and what a climax of spiritual longing. Then shall all bondage cease, all fetters fall, and I shall find in thee my all in all.

I wonder how many of us here this morning are spiritually there. It's a wonderful thing when Christ is so all in all, that we do not have any will or desire apart from his dear will and his desire for us. To get there is like living on the doorstep of heaven.

It's then that you hear heavenly voices and hear heavenly visions, and have cloudless fellowship with the Father. Well, Mr. Chairman and friends, it is my pleasant intention this morning to travel with you through one of the best-known and best-loved passages from the pen of the Apostle Paul. That passage, and I'm sure you will all be pleased to know, is the eighth chapter of Romans.

Do you have enough light to see? Well, we'll have to do the best we can, and if the physical light is rather imperfect, let us pray that the spiritual light will be better than ever. I want to go right through that eighth chapter of Romans, and while in your semi-darkness you are finding the passage, let me quickly remind you that this tremendous disquisition of Paul, which we call the epistle to the Romans, this mighty treatise,

is in three obvious main parts. Part one consists of chapters one to eight, and part two, chapters nine, ten, and eleven, and part three, chapters twelve to sixteen, where the epistle ends.

Part one, the first eight chapters, is altogether doctrinal, and its subject is how the gospel saves the sinner. Part two, chapters nine, ten, and eleven, is dispensational, and its subject is how the gospel relates to Israel. Part three, chapters twelve to sixteen, is practical, and its subject is how the gospel bears on conduct.

Now, of course, that tells us at once that chapter eight is the finalizing chapter of part one, and what a magnificent climax it is. To begin with, we'll start where we naturally should, at verse one. Will you kindly glance at Romans eight, verse one? And oh, friends, what heavenly music there is in these words to born-again believers.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. And may I observe, first of all, that in this opening verse of chapter eight, our deliverance as Christian believers from the condemnation of sin is a plainly stated fact. Here it is, in black and white, for all to see.

There is no condemnation. Now, the men and women of this world's vanity fair often allege that we Christian believers talk with unwarranted presumption when we say that our sins are all forgiven, and that our guilt is washed away in the precious blood of Christ, and that our souls are saved, and that in our risen Savior we are justified before God. Oh, say our worldly friends, that's just religious imagination.

That's just gratuitous presumption. Nobody can know about those things here and now. You have to wait until you die and go through the gates of the grave into the beyond, if there is any beyond.

But nobody can know about those things here. It's just presuming. Well now, what do we Christian believers reply to that? We say, oh no, dear friends, no, we're not just presuming.

We have it in black and white. It's clearly stated in the Bible, and we refer them, probably, to a verse like Romans 8, verse 1. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. And then what do our worldly wise critics reply? Oh yes, they say, it's in that verse all right, but who wrote it? It was only a man who wrote it, the Apostle Paul.

Why should you take it from him? And then what do we Christians counter-reply? We say, yes indeed, the writer of these words is Paul. But who was Paul? Was he a fool? Was he a fraud? Was he a fanatic? He certainly wasn't a fool, because by general consensus of intelligent opinion, never were any more profound or wonderful things written than those which have come to us through the pen of this highly intellectual, well-educated Apostle Paul. And nor was Paul a fraud.

He was prepared to undergo the most fearful sufferings, and then to put his head on the executioner's block, and become martyred for the sake of his testimony. And do I need to tell you, friends, frauds, however hotly they will argue their case, they're seldom if ever prepared to die for it. No, Paul wasn't a fraud.

And if he wasn't a fool, and he wasn't a fraud, he certainly wasn't a fanatic. Here are his epistles for anybody to read. Nothing saner, steadier, wiser was ever written than what have in these dynamic letters of Paul.

Very well, if Paul was not a fool, and not a fraud, and not a fanatic, what was he? He was a thoroughly normal, but exceptionally intellectual human being. He was a thoroughly well-educated man. And he was obviously a thoroughly sincere man.

And this is the man who claims again and again that what he taught was not merely the product of human reasoning, but was by direct divine communication. For instance, when he writes to the Corinthians, he says, which things we say unto you, not in words that man's wisdom teacheth, but in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth. So we are all driven into a corner.

We've got to make up our mind about Paul. Either he was a clever fraud, or else he was a deeply sincere, spirit-inspired man. Now all the evidences are against the former, and are in favor of the latter.

There's everything to underscore that Paul was a spirit-filled man. And we believe he was, don't we? And so we have it here. And what Paul writes is what the Holy Spirit writes.

This is a God-given guarantee. Are there some young believers here this morning? You haven't been converted very long? O young disciple of Jesus, listen to it. Your deliverance from the condemnation of sin is a plainly stated fact.

Well thank God for that. But now secondly, still looking at verse one, our deliverance from the condemnation of sin is not only a plainly stated fact, it is a logical conclusion. For it says, There is therefore no condemnation.

And Mr. Chairman and friends, let me frankly say it, I'm very fond of Paul's logical style, his forensic style of reasoning, and I like that syllogistic therefore here. You see, Paul is now stating a conclusion built on the premises in the preceding seven chapters. We are all familiar with them.

And if you read through those seven chapters of Romans, there's not one place where you can put your finger on a fallacy. Everything is as valid as it is lucid. And if the premises in chapters one to seven are true, then this conclusion in chapter eight is true.

And it is true. And our deliverance from the condemnation of sin is not only a stated fact, it is a logical conclusion coming from indisputably true realities. Excuse me friends, hallelujah.

But now look at the verse again. Not only is our deliverance from the condemnation of sin a plainly stated fact and a logical conclusion, it is a present possession. For the verse says, There is therefore now no condemnation.

And now are those dear folks who say, you can't know anything about that here and now, it's all make-believe. Oh no! It's very clear. There is therefore now.

You know, I think it's time for another hallelujah there. But look at the verse again. Not only is our deliverance a plainly stated fact and a logical conclusion and a present possession, it is something unmistakably specific.

For it says, There is therefore now no condemnation. It doesn't say there's no persecution. It doesn't say there's no accusation.

Satan will see to it that there's plenty of that. And sometimes other Christians will see to it that there's accusation. And sometimes our own consciences may accuse us.

But when you've said the last and the worst about us, for we are still sinners even though we are forgiven, it still remains specifically true. There is therefore now no condemnation. But take another look at the verse.

Forgive my repetitiveness. Not only is our deliverance from the condemnation of sin a plainly stated fact and a logical conclusion and a present possession and a specific deliverance, it is an absolute clearance. For it says, There is therefore now no condemnation.

What says somebody? No condemnation. Oh, think of the immensity and the enormity of your sin. Think of the countlessness of your sins.

Their hideousness, their inexcusableness, their seeming endlessness. And you mean to say after all that there's no condemnation? That's just what the verse says. Because my sinless sin bearer, my adorable substitute and savior, because he bore all and exhausted the penalty of them all, because he bore all, I am set free from all.

Yes, it's something to shout hallelujah about. Are you getting annoyed by my keep repeating? Well, don't because there's more to come. Our deliverance from the condemnation of sin is a plainly stated fact and a logical conclusion and a present possession and an absolute cancellation and a specific deliverance.

And one thing more, it is something of which we have inward experiential corroboration. For it says, Who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. Yes, we are not only judicially set free when you and I took Jesus as our precious savior and became born into a new spiritual life.

It was not only that there came a new spiritual life to us, the life giver himself came to occupy the mind. And the Holy Spirit is the inward testifier to what this verse says. Well, don't you think this is a wonderful declaration, friends? This first verse of Romans 8. Get it newly into your mind.

No condemnation. And now for your comfort, let me ask you to turn to the very last paragraph of the chapter, beginning at verse 35. And when I read it, I will emphasize a certain word.

Are you ready? Verse 35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. So, beloved fellow believers, if the chapter begins with no condemnation, thank God it climaxes with no separation.

Christian pilgrim to the heavenly Zion, get a firm grip on this. If you are truly Christ's, washed from your damning guilt in his wonderful blood, born into new spiritual life by the regenerating Spirit, reconciled to God through the death of his Son, if you are truly Christ's and Christ is yours, you are his forever. He will never let you down, he will never give you up, and he will never, never, never let you go.

If words could give any of us an irrefragible guarantee of eternal safety in his encircling arms, this last passage in Romans does it. Don't you think so? And observe how Paul enumerates and disposes of all those powers and prospects which might seem able to separate us from the love of God in Christ. First of

all, the Apostle takes the two alternatives of death and life.

He says, I am persuaded that neither death nor life. He mentions death first, because by the time this letter was written, sporadic persecutions had broken out against the followers of the Nazarene and martyrs were becoming many, and many others were passing through the shadowy gates of the grave into the beyond, and inevitably the question was provoked, will death separate us from the Savior? So Paul puts death first, and he says, death will never separate us from him. But how does Paul know? Well, of course, the answer is in the context.

Look at verse 34. Who is he that condemns? It is Christ who died. Our Lord himself has gone through the gates of the grave.

He has been through the experience which we call death. He has gone down into Hades, and he has taken the sting out of death, and he has robbed Hades of its power, and the keys of death and Hades hang at the risen Savior's girdle. Therefore death can never separate us from him.

Then he says, life, neither death nor life. I am speaking with utter genuineness when I say that so far as I am concerned, I'm far more afraid of life than I am of death. Death has been transformed into a friend, but you never know what life is going to bring upon you.

It's always surprising us with some new Goliath with a spear like a weaver's beam. Well, Paul says life will never separate us from Christ, and I don't know whether you've noticed he mentions just seven of these terrifying Goliaths. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall one, tribulation? Two, distress? Three, persecution? Four, famine? Five, nakedness? Six, peril? Seven, sword? They're rather frightening, aren't they? But Paul says none of those Goliaths can separate us from Christ.

But how does Paul know? Once again the answer is in the context. It is Christ who died, yea, rather, who is risen again. He is our risen, conquering David, and not one of those evil-looking Goliaths can stand against our risen master.

So Paul says neither death nor life can ever separate us from him. And then Paul breaks through the sense barrier into the spirit realm, and he says, nor angels, that's the common name for those bodiless intelligences of the spirit realm, nor angels, nor principalities, that is one tier higher, nor authorities, that's still higher, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, none of the intelligences in the spirit world will ever be able to separate us from Christ. But how does Paul know? Once again the answer is in the context.

It is Christ who died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, far above all angels and principalities and authorities, and every name that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come, and all things are under his feet, he's on the very throne of the universe. Not all the powers of the invisible realm can ever separate us from his embrace. Isn't it time for another hallelujah there? Yes.

And then, having spoken of the two alternatives of death and life, and then angels and principalities and powers, the apostle takes the two alternatives of, nor things present, nor things to come. And the present looked pretty frightening, and for those early Christians, the future seemed to forebode much suffering. But Paul says, neither things present, nor things to come.

But how does he know? Well, once again, the answer is in the context. It is Christ who died, that's the first thing, yea, rather, that is risen again, that's the second thing, who is even at the right hand of God, that's

the third thing. And here comes the fourth.

Who also maketh intercession for us, and amid all the exigencies of this present mortal life that we live on earth in the body, amid all that, our risen and glorified intercessor is pleading with the Father, and the Father never says no to him. He's with us in it all, pleading for grace and power and strength and wisdom. And so Paul says, neither things present, nor things to come, will ever separate us from that lovely intercessor who stands there on our behalf.

And next, Paul takes the two alternatives of dimension. In a way, he ransacks the universe. He says, nor height, nor depth.

Go as high as you will to the throne of God, Christ is there. Go as deep as you will to Hades, Christ has been there, and he has the keys of the bottomless dungeon of Hades. Our Lord is bigger than space itself.

Neither height nor depth can ever separate us from those mighty arms. And finally, Paul says, nor any other creation shall ever separate us from him. Now in the last two chapters of the Bible, we read about a new heaven and a new earth.

There's going to be a new creation, a new solar system. And through the ages to come, there will probably be myriads of new creations. But Paul says, no creation that will ever be will ever separate us from the love of God in Christ.

Oh, brothers and sisters, doesn't this set a song of gratitude singing in your heart? I'll tell you what I find myself singing just now. I found a friend. Oh, such a friend.

All power to him is given to guard me on my onward way and bring me safe to heaven. From him who loves me now so well, what power my soul shall sever? Shall life or death or earth or hell? No, I am his forever. Please turn the cassette over now.

Do not fast wind it in either direction. Who loves me now so well? What power my soul shall sever? Shall life or death or earth or hell? No, I am his forever. Yes, indeed.

Well, beloved friends, it is a profound consolation to know that there's no condemnation. And it puts a lovely shining crown on it to know that there will never be any separation. But that leaves one big question in our minds, namely, what about the in-between? What about this in-between, this present life in the body, this day-by-day life that I'm living now, with its temptations and its burdens and its problems and its questions? What about the intervening now? Well, the happy answer to that is, that's just what all the intervening verses are about.

And they tell us that the answer is the ministry of the Holy Spirit in us in the present life we live in the body. Think carefully, friends. You and I are Christian believers.

What is the first big longing in our hearts? Isn't it that we may know victory over sin? Whatever else we may long for, that's the thing that comes first. We want victory over sin. And the first group of verses in Romans 8 tells us how we get victory over sin.

As a matter of fact, all the verses in Romans 8 go in groups. Had you noticed that? We'll point it out before we are through. Look at verses 2, 3, and 4. The way of victory over sin.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, friends, there are three things the law can't do. One, it cannot forgive the past.

Two, it cannot cleanse away guilt. And three, it cannot give us the power to keep its own commands. What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.

What does that mean? I think it means this. Our Lord could not have come in the likeness of unfallen man. You see, in that wonderful paradise of long ago, that paradise, that garden in Eden, before the fall, Adam and Eve did not need to be clothed.

Indeed, they were clothed. Their bodies reflected the Shekinah glory of God. Their bodies were enswathed with a kind of supernal glory light, a beautiful sheen which clothed them.

Hundreds of years later, when Moses had been forty days and forty nights in direct consultation with God on Mount Sinai, when he came down from the mount, his face shone with some of the contracted glory that he had been looking upon. And if the face of Moses shone after those forty days and forty nights of communion with God on Sinai, what must have been the radiance, the shining from the bodies of Adam and Eve, who were living in cloudless, continual communion with God. But as soon as they disobeyed God, and as soon as man became no longer theocentric, God-centered, but egocentric, self-centered, that pristine glory light left them.

And we read, they knew that they were naked, and God very kindly provided clothes. Now, our Lord could not have come to do his redeeming work with a body like that of unfallen Adam, with that glory light shining around it and from it. Only once did he let the imprisoned glory burst out, and that was on the Mount of Transfiguration, when suddenly that inward glory shone out.

God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as an offering for sin, passed judgment on sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law, now that God has judged our sin, passed judgment on it, and Christ has borne the sentence, the big black barrier is removed between God and us, so that now the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. You see, it speaks of it as the law of the Spirit. Now, a law is a sequence of cause and effect which operates with unwavering certainty.

That's the great thing about a law. It's continuous uniformity. And Paul means that if you and I are living in yieldedness to the Holy Spirit, this law of liberation is going on all the time.

So long as we are struggling to fight sin in our own strength, we are interrupting that law, but when we are really unobstructedly given to the Spirit, loving him, walking in the Spirit, then this deliverance operates like a law. His emancipating power goes on all the time. It isn't an experience that lifts me sky high for some giddy hour of victory, and then lets me come right down and flounder in some squalid defeat.

No, no. If you and I are prepared to be completely controlled by the Holy Spirit, this liberating law goes on. And instead of fight, fight, fight to get victory, we find that with delightful spontaneity, the Holy Spirit refines the thought springs of our minds, and we find that we are thinking holy thoughts, and choosing the holy, and loving the holy, and we don't have to fight to love somebody who doesn't love us.

The Holy Spirit makes it delightfully spontaneous. That's the secret of victory over sin, living in the Spirit and letting him transform us all the time, communicating his purifying energy. What's the next thing that we Christians long for? Isn't it to have victory over those animal and selfish propensities within us which Paul calls collectively the flesh? We want victory over the flesh, and what a problem it can be.

Well, the next group of verses are all about victory over the flesh. I wish you had better light and could see these verses, but look at verses 5 to 9. Let me point out that these verses go in three contrastive couplets. I'll point them out, see, starting at verse 5. A and B. Here's the first couplet.

A. They that are living according to the flesh do mind the things of the flesh. B, in contrast, but those who are living according to the Spirit mind the things of the Spirit. Now couplet number 2 in verse 6. A and B. A. For the mind of the flesh, that is the mind that is set on earthly things, is death.

B, by contrast, but the mind of the Spirit, that is the mind set on spiritual things, is life and peace. Now couplet number 3 in verses 7 to 9. A. The mind of the flesh is enmity towards God, and they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Now B, the contrast.

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you, as indeed he does, that is implied. The main truth, dear friends, which emerges from those three couplets is that the mind which lives for the things of the Spirit not only has life, it has peace. I say, younger men and women here this morning, how important it is to know the secret of a mind at rest, a mind that is pervaded by heavenly peace, because we are living in a frightfully restless age, as you all know.

The spiritual mind, the mind set on the things of the Spirit, is not only life, but peace. Ponder that statement. Look at it in the way you would focus your attention on some famous diamond.

This is worth looking at intensely. The spiritual mind is peace because it lives victoriously above those selfish mental and physical lusts which can never give us peace because they are enmity to God. Dear Christian, learn it well.

That is the true way of victory over the flesh, those lower instincts and propensities in us by our hereditary inheritance from our predecessors. The way of victory is not fighting it down there on its own level, but reigning above it in the life and power of the indwelling Spirit. What I'm saying with these words before me is that when you and I are really given up to the full occupation of the Holy Spirit, he lifts the mind onto a higher level, and we learn the victory of living there.

I remember once when I was holding meetings in Eugene, Oregon, in the USA, on a lovely sunny balmy day, I went and sat down on a grassy bank by the river. And just as I sat down there, I saw a little frog come up from the water, and it came hopping towards me, and I said, Howdy. And it said, Howdy.

And when it had respectfully winked at me, it passed by, and it went to the foot of a great stone archaic bridge over the river. And when it got to that big stone wall of the bridge, I saw it look up, so I said, Half a minute, Mr. Frog. You'll never do it.

You'll never get over that bridge. So he said, I guess not. And he came hopping back, and then he was just going to go plonk into the water again, when we heard a gently swishing sound above us.

And when Mr. Frog and I looked up, there was a beautiful seagull. And the seagull looked down and just winked at both of us. And then it went right over the bridge.

And I said to Mr. Frog, Don't you see, my brother, what's a great big problem to you is no problem up there. Are you getting it? Friends, that is the Christian, the biblical, the New Testament secret of victory over sin. Paul says we are not fighting flesh and blood.

We are in the heavenlies with Christ, and the way of victory isn't struggle, struggle, struggle, resist, resist, repress, repress, repress. No. It's so living in the Spirit that he lifts us to a level where those things lose their grip from their power.

What's the next thing that we want as Christian believers? Isn't it victory over the body? Well, now the next group of verses, 10 to 14, are all about victory over the body. If the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Jesus from the dead shall quicken. But there the apostle changes the word.

It isn't just the word for raising the dead. It's the word for infusing life. He shall infuse life into your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Well, the apostle's primary thought certainly is that the same Holy Spirit who raised up Jesus from the dead will raise you and me up in the coming resurrection. But there is also the implied meaning that the Holy Spirit is our present quickener of the body. I do not say that the Holy Spirit will renew our physical health if we are carelessly violating the common sense laws of physical well-being, proper diet and ample exercise and regular rest and hygienic habits.

But if you and I are truly walking in the Spirit and are treating the mortal body as being now a temple of God, then, so I believe, we may know the Holy Spirit as our health renewer and as our health restorer in the event of natural sickness. I would like to dwell, of course, on all these points, but the watch never stops, so let us hurry on. The next group of verses, 15 to 17, tell us how we have victory over fear.

Verse 15. For we have not received a spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father, the Spirit Himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. In other words, the wretched fear of slaves has been turned into the singing joy of sonship in the family of God.

That is our true victory over fear, the Holy Spirit continually making real within us the loving fatherhood of God. And next, in verses 18 to 25, we learn how the Holy Spirit gives us victory over suffering. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us, Lord, for we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, and not only so, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit.

Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, that is, the coming public manifestation of the redeemed in Christ as the sons of God, at which time the creation itself, says Paul, shall be delivered from the present bondage of corruption. So here we find that Christians are the firstfruits of the Spirit. Have you ever asked yourself what that expression means, the firstfruits of the Spirit? Well, of course, Paul's reference is to the Old Testament, to the Hebrew feast of the firstfruits.

And in that feast there were two loaves made of fine flour presented to Jehovah, and those firstfruits were the prophecy of the soon coming full harvest. And therefore, when Paul says here that we Christians have the firstfruits of the Spirit, he means that we are an advance issue of the coming full harvest in the millennium, when the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh. In our spiritual experience, each of us

Christians is meant to be an anticipated experience of that coming age.

In a real sense, we are meant to have the millennium already in our hearts. And what are the three outstanding features of that coming millennium? They are these 1. Worldwide rest in warless peace, and 2. Worldwide bounty for all in which the meek shall inherit the earth, and 3. Worldwide triumph for Christ and his people, with all enemies subjugated. That is what you and I should be living in.

We are the firstfruits, the anticipation of that. And we should be experiencing, day after day, 1. Inward rest and peace, 2. Spiritual fullness, and 3. Reigning with Christ over sin and circumstance. I wonder how many of us here this morning are experientially firstfruits of the coming millennium.

And lastly, Paul tells us in verses 26-28 how we have victory over infirmity. We are told how the indwelling Spirit gives us victory over infirmity. Such is our present defectiveness of knowledge amid the poignant enigmas of the present travail, and amid the troubling experiences which are permitted to befall us, that at times we do not know even how to pray about them.

And we wonder how on earth some of the things which happen can be for our good. But the indwelling Holy Spirit, who is as sympathetic as he is omniscient, moves within us, praying both through us and for us, and convincing us that all things are working together for ultimate good to them that love God and who are called according to his purpose. I won't bother to read the verses.

Did I say that was the last thing? No, this is the last thing, and I'm glad I didn't miss it out. We find here the Holy Spirit giving us victory over death. He takes away from us all the dread of death and the beyond.

Millions the world over lived their adult years in dread of death and what lies on the other side of the grave. But listen to Paul's exultation in verses 29 and 30. For whom God did foreknow from the eternal past, he also did predestinate into the eternal future, to be made like unto the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called. And whom he called, them he also justified. And whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Observe, it doesn't say that he will glorify them. No, it speaks of it as already done. Them he also glorified.

To our infinite Father God, who knows neither past nor future, but lives in one eternal present, it is just as good as accomplished in his will. Our glorification, I say, is just as good as accomplished as our predestination and our justification. And not all the powers of evil can wrench us from his hand or alter his decree for our glorification.

And what is the loveliest ingredient of that ultimate glorification? It is this. We are to be conformed or made like unto the image of his Son. I touched on this last Sunday morning, when at last you and I are presented before the ineffable majesty on high.

We are to be the lovely replicas of Jesus. We'll be so like him that when you look at us, you'll see a perfect mirror of him. His name shall be written on their forehead.

Well, friends, we've just about managed it. There it is. In these verses of Romans 8 we see how the spirit of life sets us free, namely by giving us victory over sin, victory over the flesh, victory over the body, victory over fear, victory over suffering, victory over infirmity, and victory over all dread of the unending future.

Yes, yes, beloved friends, the Holy Spirit has set us free if we are really keeping obedient company with him. And, of course, that prompts the question, dear Christian, are you and I experiencing this victory life of the Holy Spirit? Some time ago, Mr. Chairman and friends, my precious wife and I were sitting before our television and a program was beginning that we didn't care to see. But we had to listen to the first item.

It was so enchanting. Let me tell you what it was and then I'll finish. There came on screen a big, fine, handsome Negro with a smile like a Mediterranean sunrise and a lovely, mellifluous voice like musical thunder.

And this is what he said. You know, my friends, I have a dear little daughter, and she's four years old. And I just loves her to bits.

And she thinks I'm the most wonderful good daddy that God ever made. But he said, you know, she's been bothering the life out of me to go to one of these summer camps. And I've been saying, no, no, my dear, your daddy loves you too much to let you go to some of these camps.

I'm not sure who the people are that go. I'm not sure whether they can be trusted. And I'm not sure whether I like some of the places.

However, he said, she pleaded so poignantly, and with tears at last I gave way. And I said, all right, you shall go. But mind you, I'm going to take you, and I'm going to see what it's like where I leave my little darling.

So, he continued, I took her, and it seemed a very nice place and very nice folk. But he said, I noticed over the back window of the hall where they were to have their first meeting, there were some heavy red curtains. And I decided I would hide and see what went on.

So I hid. And he said, all the boys and girls were gathered. And then there breezed in a young woman, and she said, hi boys and girls, everybody welcome.

We're going to have a great old time. Lots of fun and games and things to do and places to go. But as this is the first gathering, we're going to pray to God.

And we're going to thank God for all glory. That's the stars and stripes. And he said, there was the stars and stripes at the front of the room.

And he said, she said, we're all going to pray and we're going to thank God that everybody in America is happy and free. And he said, what do you think? My little girl got up and said, please miss, I'm not free. Oh, you're not free? No, she said, I'm four.

Well, there's nobody here four. Maybe nobody here fourteen. There's somebody here twenty-four, thirty-four, forty-four, fifty-four.

I'll stop there. But I want to ask you, dear Christian, are you free? Are you free? And the secret of it is in this lovely, lovely chapter, Romans 8, no condemnation, no separation, and in between, the never failing ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/j-sidlow-baxter/a-life-of-victory/>

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