

# Victory Over the Powers of Evil



## SABBATH—NOVEMBER 3

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** Ephesians 1:18–22; Romans 8:26–39; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:6–10; Luke 10:1–20; Acts 5:12–16.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “In all these things we will do even more than win! We owe it all to Christ, who has loved us” (Romans 8:37, NlrV).

**KEY (IMPORTANT) THOUGHT:** In Christ, we have victory over all evil powers that would attack us.

**IN SOME PARTS OF THE WORLD, RELIGION MAY BE NOTHING MORE THAN A WAY TO HELP ONE MEET THE CHALLENGES OF DAILY LIVING.** For example, the Christian understanding of salvation from sin is strange to many other long-standing religions. In such places, people see Christianity as a way of helping to solve problems of everyday life.

There are many useful advantages to living a Christian lifestyle. But we must always remember that Christianity always keeps heaven in mind. Christianity sees a better world above the world on earth. Both worlds are important. Both have forces (groups; armies) that oppose each other. How thankful we can be for the promises that we will have victory in both worlds!

Again, we need to remember the important story of the great controversy (war) between Christ and Satan. This story gives the background theme necessary for our understanding of the spiritual war here on earth and our place in this world as Christians. In the middle of this war, Christianity does not leave its believers to the cruel mercy and power of its enemies. Instead, in Christ we have the promise of victory over these enemies.

**SUNDAY—NOVEMBER 4****A STAGE SET FOR OUR VICTORY  
(Ephesians 1:18–22)**

The Christian would have no hope of victory over the powers of evil if the stage was not set (planned) for it. In last week's study we learned that Christ died on the cross and returned to life from the grave. Through this He gained victory over all kinds of evil. Christ's sacrifice on the cross also exposed (revealed) and limited the power of evil. The fact that the powers of evil have been brought under Christ's control sets the stage (opens the way) for the victory of the Christian.

**Study Ephesians 1:18–22. Paul prays for the Christians' eyes to be opened in Ephesus. According to Paul, what did Christ do for us? How do these words help us to better understand the theme of the great controversy? What is promised to us here? How do we make these promises real in our own experience?**

Paul is praying that Christians will have a better and deeper understanding of the great controversy. When they do, their lives will be filled with Christian hope. Christians will know their honors and rights as God's children. They will know by experience the power of God in their lives. It is a power that is as great as the power that raised Jesus from the dead.

**Notice Ephesians 1:20–22. What from these promises can we claim for ourselves and for our struggles with forces stronger than we are?**

As a result of Christ's crucifixion and return to life, all things, even evil powers, are under His control. The stage is truly set for more personal victories over all evil powers (temptations) that would spiritually attack us.

**Read the verses for today. What in these verses can help you with whatever struggles you are facing at the moment? Think about what is being said there and what is promised to us in Christ. How can this go from being something we study about religion to being something we experience for real in our lives?**



**The power of God in our lives is a power as great as the power that raised Jesus from the dead.**

**MONDAY—NOVEMBER 5****HOPE OF VICTORY  
(Romans 8:26–39)**

The stage is set for the Christian's victory over evil forces. But the Bible also gives us the hope of victory over them.

**Study Romans 8:26–39. What point is Paul trying to make here? Why does Paul think that the Christian should look to the future with hope? Look at all the wonderful promises and words of encouragement found in these verses. Again, how can we take them for more than just words? How can we live according to the clear teachings of the Word of God?**

In Romans 8:29, 30, Paul gives at least two strong reasons for the Christian to trust in the Lord. First, the Spirit helps us in our trials (troubles) and “groanings [complaints].” Second, according to God's eternal purpose, all things, including trials, work for the Christian's own good (although that might be hard for him or her to see and understand right now). Trusting God during troubles and hardships is a very important part of what it means to live by faith and not by what we see with our eyes.

Verses 29, 30 are Paul's reasons for the faith shown in verse 28. In these verses Paul shows how God's purpose for those who love Him is developed. This is a purpose that includes all parts necessary for

each Christian's growth to full salvation.

**How does Paul's argument for pushing the faith of the Christian reach a peak in verses 31–34? Look at verse 31. Keeping the great controversy in mind, what can we learn from this verse for ourselves?**

Romans 8:35–39 gives a list of things over which the Christian can be victorious. Notice that “principalities [rulers and demons] and powers [evil forces]” are included in the list. Paul's list points out that there is nothing in the universe that can take victory away from the Christian, thanks to Jesus.



**Trusting God during hardships is a very important part of living by faith and not by what we see with our eyes.**

**TUESDAY—NOVEMBER 6****CHRISTIANS AGAINST THE DEVIL  
(James 4:7)**

**Read James 4:7. What clear promise is given to the one who**

**stands against the devil? How does a person stand against an evil force so much more powerful than he or she is? Read also Deuteronomy 4:4.**

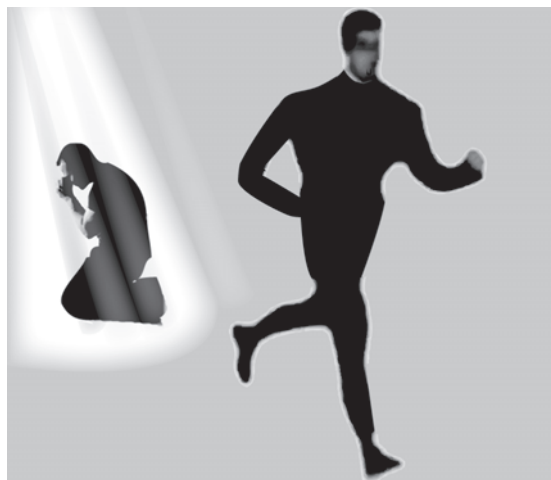
The Christian is not a helpless victim at the mercy of the devil. (Can you see here, too, why it is so important to understand how real Satan and the fallen angels are?) But it is more important for the Christian to take a stand against the devil than to be opposed to him. The word translated as “resist” is the Greek *anthistemi*, which means “taking a stand against something.” It is this attitude (thought or feeling) that the Christian takes that causes the devil to flee. This attitude means complete surrender to Jesus, who alone has the power to cause the devil to flee from us.

**Study 1 Peter 5:6–10. What promise is given to the Christian in the face of an enemy who is a “roaring lion,” looking for someone to destroy? How do these verses help us to understand what James wrote above? Read also Ephesians 4:27 and Ephesians 6:11.**

Peter writes these words to warn Christians who are under attack. Clearly, Peter knows that Satan is hiding behind the people who are attacking these Christians. Peter is encouraging his readers to resist the devil. Here Peter uses the word *anthistemi*. James does the same, but he adds the word *stereo* (hard or firm). So, Peter suggests that Satan may flee from those

who stand like a strong, rocklike front against his attacks. A cowardly attitude will not do. Still, Peter knows that we may make a strong stand, but we may still suffer for a while. God Himself will “perfect [mend], establish, strengthen, and settle [grow firm]” the Christian (1 Peter 5:10, NKJV).

**Even with all the promises given here, we are not promised freedom from suffering. What Christian does not know how real suffering is? As humans, we seem to be made to suffer in this world. What important difference should our faith make for us when we experience sorrows and pain?**



Jesus alone has the power to make Satan flee from us.

## WEDNESDAY—NOVEMBER 7

### EXAMPLES OF VICTORY (Matthew 10:1–8)

So far the Bible has shown us the hope and promises of victory that the Christian may have. But here in

the Bible we have real examples of Christian victories over evil forces recorded. We begin with the example of the ministry (work done for God) of the early disciples whom Jesus sent out.

**Read Matthew 10:1–8; Mark 6:7, 12, 13; Luke 9:1, 2; and Luke 10:1–20. Look at what these people were commanded to do. How are these verses to be understood in comparison with the great controversy? Also, what do these verses say today to us who are called to preach to the world about Jesus?**

It is quite interesting that Jesus sent the Twelve out to preach the gospel of the coming of God's kingdom. But as He did it, He felt it was important to give the disciples power over demons and unclean spirits. This is no surprise because proper preaching of the gospel unmasks (reveals) such powers. The evil work of the "powers" was expected to be experienced *as the gospel was preached*. So, it would be necessary to give the Twelve power over them. Surely, the evil powers showed themselves as the Twelve went around preaching. And, just as surely, many demons and evil forces were cast (thrown) out.

The Bible shows that Jesus did not command the Seventy to cast out demons. Read Luke 10:9. But this is the part of the mission that seems to have excited the seventy disciples the most (Luke 10:17). With joy the seventy disciples reported that as they went around preaching the gospel of

the kingdom, demons were brought under their control. Of course, the disciples understood that it was the power of Jesus working through them that made this possible.

Much can be discussed and debated about these verses and the way in which they should be understood today. But the important point is that we as Christians have been called to preach the gospel to the world. And through Christ, we have the power to do it.

**Read Luke 10:20. What important point should we learn from Jesus' words in this verse? How does Jesus' answer show us what should be important in our lives? How can we make sure that we remember this important point and keep it in mind?**

#### THURSDAY—NOVEMBER 8

##### EXAMPLES OF VICTORY (BOOK OF ACTS) (Acts 5:12–16)

The examples of victories over demons and evil powers that we studied in yesterday's daily study happened when Jesus was on the earth. But the victories were not limited to that time. In the book of Acts we find the continuing victories of Jesus' followers over demons.

Of course, this should come as no surprise because of the promises that Jesus gave to His followers about the Holy Spirit, who worked with them after Jesus left. (Read, for example, John 14:16.)

At the same time, we, too, know that the outcome of the great controversy between Christ and Satan was settled at the cross. But the battle is still ongoing until the end of time. So, Christ's followers were to be involved in the war, even as they carried on the gospel work.

**Read Acts 5:12–16; Acts 3:1–11; and Acts 16:16–18. These verses tell us about victories over evil forces. What lesson can we learn from them for ourselves in our present work of outreach and witnessing?**

Acts 16:14–18 gives an unusual case. The slave girl shouts, “The Most High God.” Her words show a great truth. But Paul does not accept it. Paul knows what really is going on. The powers that she has shown are evil. They are making money for the girl's masters and are not of the Lord. Paul knows also that when the girl cries out about these men being “servants of the Most High God” (NKJV), she is not talking about the true God. Instead, she probably is talking about a Canaanite god who is also called Elyon (Most High). Notice how easily certain words can get twisted and greatly dishonor the truth.

**Look again at Acts 5:12–16. Review the amazing part about the people hoping that “at least the shadow of Peter” (verse 15, NKJV) might touch them. What warnings should that have for any Christian who is working for the Lord? This**

**is especially true when his or her work seems “successful.”**



**People in Peter's time believed that if even just his shadow touched them, they would be healed.**

### FRIDAY—NOVEMBER 9

**ADDITIONAL STUDY:** Read Ellen G. White, “‘Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled,’” pages 662–680, in *The Desire of Ages*; “Appropriating [Making Use of] the Righteousness [Holy Life] of Christ,” page 93, in *Faith and Works*; and “Science and Revelation,” page 310, in *Selected Messages*, book 3.

“Jesus gained the victory through surrender to and faith in God. By the apostle [teacher], Jesus says to us, ‘Obey God. Stand up to the devil. He will run away from you. Come near to God, and he will come near to you’ (James 4:7, 8, NIV). We cannot save ourselves from Satan's power. Satan

has defeated humans, and when we try to stand in our own strength, we shall fall into his trap. But ‘the name of the Lord is like a strong tower. Godly people run to it and are safe’ (Proverbs 18:10, NIV). Satan shakes with fear and flees before the weakest soul who finds safety in that mighty name.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pages 130, 131.

“The great power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every repenting [sorrowing for sin] soul. Christ will not permit any faithful believer to fall under the enemy’s power. The Savior is always by the side of His faithful ones. With Jesus there can be no failure, loss, or defeat. We can do all things through Him who gives us strength. When temptations and trials [troubles] come, do not wait to fix the situation yourself but turn to Jesus, your helper.

“There are Christians who think and speak altogether too much about the power of Satan. They think of their enemy. They pray about Satan. They talk about Satan. And Satan seems to be greater and greater in their imagination. It is true that Satan

is powerful but, thank God, we have a more powerful Savior. He threw Satan out of heaven. Satan is pleased when we talk too much of his power. Why not talk of Jesus? Why not honor Jesus’ power and His love?” —Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pages 490, 493.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① Review some of the examples from this week that show the victories in the Bible. In what ways are almost the same things happening today? What can we do, if anything, to realize more of them?
- ② What does it mean to “come near to God,” as Ellen G. White has quoted from James in Friday’s study? How do we do that? Discuss in class what it means, how it is done, and what happens when we do it.
- ③ Imagine that you are Peter. Suppose that people just want to be touched by your shadow. Think about what that could do to you spiritually. What is your only safety when you find yourself in that kind of situation?