**BETTER TOGETHER** in 2022

**Easter Sunday**, April 17, 2022

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**Greater Love**

**Love’s Victory**



Let’s play a game of “would you rather.”

Would you rather **have a** **victory** or **go down in defeat**?

Would you rather **win** or **lose**?

Would you rather **live** or **die**?

**What is love’s victory?**

**Love’s victory is what God did for us.**

*But* ***he was pierced for our transgressions****; he was* ***crushed for our iniquities****; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and* ***with his wounds we are healed****.* Isaiah 53:5

***For God so loved the world****, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.* John 3:16–17

*In him was life, and* ***the life was the light of men****. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.* John 1:4–5

God has **destroyed** the enemy and declared **victory**.

*Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that* ***through death******he might destroy******the one who has the power of death****, that is,* ***the devil,*** *and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.* Hebrews 2:14–15

Death is **conquered**; man is free for Christ has won the **victory**.

The Jews did not want the bodies to be hanging there on the Sabbath so they asked the Romans if they would break their legs …

*So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that* ***he was already dead****, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a* *spear, and at once there came out blood and water.* John 19:32–34

*… these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken.” And again another Scripture says, “They will look on him whom they have pierced.”* John 19:36–37

We were lost, defeated and dead searching in the darkness, fearing death, lifelong slaves to sin. The Bible says it this way …

*And* ***you were dead*** *in the trespasses and sins* Ephesians 2:1

You might be thinking … dead … I am perfectly fine and doing quite well thank you.

**How do you know you are physically alive?**

When you go to the doctor, they take your **vital signs** to see if you are alive and well. **Vital signs** … they listen for breath, take your pulse, blood pressure, talk to you and see if you respond.

* Breath in your lungs.
* Blood in your veins.
* You can see, hear, touch, think, smell, feel.
* Your body temperature is 98.6 or something close.

When they took Jesus off the cross and laid him in a grave He did not have breath in His lungs, a heart that was beating or any ability to see, hear, touch, think, smell, feel … **He was dead!**

**How do you know you are spiritually alive?**

* A love for God
* A love for others
* A love for God’s word

*And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience - among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. …*

***But God****, being rich in mercy, because of* ***the great love with which he loved us****, even when we were dead in our trespasses,* ***made us alive together with Christ****—by grace you have been saved - and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,* Ephesians 2:1–6

*The roaring thunder of the law and the fear of the terror of judgment are both used to bring us to Christ, but* ***the final victory*** *culminating in our salvation is won through God's loving-kindness.* Charles Spurgeon

Because of Love’s Victory, we can live a life of **victory**.

*But thanks be to God,* ***who gives us the victory*** *through our Lord Jesus Christ.* 1 Corinthians 15:57

The Victorious Life is simply a **life fully surrendered to God** with Christ dwelling within and in complete control – a life in which the only desire is to bring glory to Jesus Christ.

The truth is that Love’s Victory is a victory over … drudgery, despair, doubt and death …

Victory over **drudgery**.

**Drudgery** - hard menial or dull work.

*By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.* ***And his commandments are not burdensome.***1 John 5:2–3

The key to victory over drudgery is **accepting** His invitation.

***Come to me****, all who labor and are heavy laden, and* ***I will give you rest****. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and* ***my burden is light****.”* Matthew 11:28–30

***looking to Jesus****, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.* Hebrews 12:2–3

Victory over **despair**.

**Despair** - the complete loss or absence of hope

You already know the score … you have already won.

The problem is we tend to walk in harmony with our circumstances … rather than **rise above them.**

*for the Lord your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies,* ***to give you the victory****.’* Deuteronomy 20:4

The key to victory over despair is **hope**.

Putting your hope in things that cannot deliver will always lead to despair when they fail and they will fail.

*Now faith is* ***the assurance of things hoped for****, the conviction of things not seen.* Hebrews 11:1

*I have said these things to you, that* ***in me you may have peace****. In the world you will have tribulation. But* ***take heart****;* ***I have overcome the world.****”* John 16:33

*If I put things between me and Christ, it is idolatry. If I put Christ between me and things,* ***it is victory****!* Adrian Rogers

Victory over **doubt**.

*And this is the testimony, that* ***God gave us eternal life****, and* ***this life is in his Son****.* ***Whoever has the Son has life****; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God,* ***that you may know*** *that you have eternal life.* 1 John 5:11–13

The key to victory over doubt is **promise**.

*And* ***this is the confidence*** *that we have toward him, that if we ask anything* ***according to his will*** *he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.* 1 John 5:14–15

Victory over **death** and the grave.

*When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?”*

1 Corinthians 15:54-55

The key to victory over death and the grave is **faith**.

*For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And* ***this is the victory that has overcome the world****—****our faith****.* 1 John 5:4

*Jesus said to her, “****I am the resurrection and the life****. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.* ***Do you believe this?”***John 11:25-26