

Victorious Christian Living

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For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world:

and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

I John 5:4-5

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes,

and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof:

but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

I John 2:15-17

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them:

because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

I John 4:4

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Revelation 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21; 21:7

Related sermons and documents for further study of this important topic

a. Twelve Facts for Christians (2023) ... Twelve Facts for Christians (1). b. True Success (2000). c. Running Like Jesus (2004). d. Make Your Life Count (2010). e. Running Your Race (2015). f. Measure of a Man (2019). g. A Mighty Man's Life (2005). h. Incremental Compromise (2016) ... this video (Vimeo). i. War for Your Soul (2021) ... War for Your Soul #1. j. Psalm 101 – David's Heart (2015) ... Psalm 101. k. Thoughts Can Destroy You (2006) ... Your Thoughts Can Destroy You (3 Sermons). l. Happiness Is a Choice (2016). m. The Joy of the Lord (2012). n. The Life of Faith – II (2005) ... Life of Faith. o. Proverb Commentary (15:15) ... the Proverbs 15:15 commentary. p. Priorities for Good Choices (2021) ... Priorities for Good Choices (1). q. Losing Your Life to Find It (2022) ... Lose Your Life to Find It. r. Higher Ground (2015) ... Higher Ground (20 Sermons). s. Love Is the Greatest (2022) ... Love is the Greatest (2 Sermons), Love Is the Greatest (#2), Love Is the Greatest – 2017 (6 Sermons).	t. Proverb Commentary (16:32) ... the Proverbs 16:32 commentary. u. Proverb Commentary (24:10) ... the Proverbs 24:10 commentary. v. Proverb Commentary (25:28) ... the Proverbs 25:28 commentary. w. Living One Day at a Time (2003). x. The Worst Sin (2015). y. The Bible and Depression (1991) ... The Bible and Depression (8 sermons). z. Delusions of Deceived Christians (2008) ... Delusions of Deceived Christians (4 Sermons). aa. Why Bad Things Happen (2012) ... Why Bad Things Happen (1 Sermon). bb. Faith or Feelings (2000) ... Faith or Feelings. cc. Inputs (2014) ... Inputs – Slides. dd. Elihu Exalts God (2021) ... Elihu Exalts God (13 sermons). ee. God Distortions (2012) ... God Distortions. ff. Haggai's Lessons (2015) ... this video (Vimeo). gg. Reviving First Love (2005) ... Reviving First Love. hh. Character without Christ (2021) ... Character without Christ (1). ii. Child Training Table (2018) ... Child Training Goals and Priorities – Table. jj. What Is a Great Church (2014) ... What Is a Great Church?. kk. Zeal / Zealously Affected (2015) ... Zeal, Zeal for the Lord, Zealously Affected. ll. Three Basic Rules – I Cor 10:31-33 (2016) ... Three Basic Rules.
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Introduction:

- a. Who are you? Why are you here? If born again and converted, you are a child of God waiting for heaven. Why does God wait? Why leave us here with corrupt flesh in a risky war of sin and temptation? He took Enoch one way, Hezekiah and Josiah another way. Beyond Jesus waiting for elect to be saved (II Pet 3:9), what of elect already saved? Why leave them here?
- b. Why leave us here? **#1** ... To show your faith by trusting Him in a sin-cursed world that results in tribulations (Gen 39:2,21; John 16:33; Rom 5:1-5; Heb 11:6; II Tim 4:16-18; James 1:2-4).
- c. Why leave us here? **#2** ... To show your love for God and His Son by sacrificial living (Matt 10:34-39; John 14:15; 15:9-11; 21:15-19; II Cor 5:14-15; Titus 2:11-15; Rev 2:10; 12:11).
- d. Why leave us here? **#3** ... To condemn the world for their folly, including carnal Christians (Prov 28:4; Matt 5:13-16; Eph 5:8-17; Titus 2:10; I Peter 3:1-2,18-20; II Peter 2:5; Jude 1:3).
- e. Why leave us here? **#4** ... To prove His word and wisdom works (Deut 4:5-8; Psalm 19:7-11; Isaiah 8:20; Ephesians 3:10; Phil 3:17; II Timothy 3:16-17; 4:1-4; I Peter 1:12; II Peter 1:19).
- f. Why leave us here? **#5** ... To experience Him in a depraved world (Gen 15:1; Ps 27:4-5; 51:11; Isaiah 27:3; Jer 9:23-24; Jn 14:21-23; 17:1-3; I Jn 5:20; Heb 4:15-16; 11:5; 13:5-6; Rev 3:20).
- g. Why leave us here? **#6** ... To help and save other elect children (Psalm 37:37; Isaiah 38:19; Acts 2:41-47; Romans 15:1-3; I Corinthians 12:12-27; Gal 6:1-5; Phil 1:24; James 5:19-20).
- h. Why leave us here? **#7** ... To distinguish yourself for rewards (Matt 24:42-51; 25:14-30; Mark 13:33-37; Luke 19:11-27; John 21:15-19; Heb 11:2,4; 12:1-3; I Tim 5:24-25; 8 x overcomers)!
- i. Why live victoriously? For these reasons, as they are God's to leave us here, but ours for VCL.
- j. What could be more important? To maximize obedience to God and Jesus for Their approval!
- k. Here is our goal: we should, and want to, live victorious Christian lives by the power of Christ, delighting God as obedient children and showing others blameless and harmless sons of God.
- l. God saved you to have an abundant life of peace and pleasure, while serving Him in a sinful world, where

negative events are to perfect you or demonstrate His and your love and strength.

- m. You must believe by faith His desire for your victorious living, or you will be defeated before you even get started (II Peter 1:2-4; John 10:10; Eph 2:10; 3:16-21; 6:10-11; Phil 2:13; 4:13; I Cor 10:13; 15:10; 16:13; II Cor 12:7-10; Phil 1:9-11; Col 1:9-11,28; II Thess 1:11-12; II Tim 1:7; Heb 4:16; 13:20-21; James 1:5; I Peter 1:3-9; I John 1:3-4; II John 1:8; Rev 3:7-11).
- n. David and Paul applied God's grace to be great in their testaments (Psalm 18:29; I Cor 15:10), and both lives are recorded in detail in scripture and talked about among Christian even today.
- o. There is a prize and reward to gain, so Paul increased his pace (Phil 3:12-14; I Cor 9:24-27; Col 2:18; 3:24; II Tim 4:8; Heb 10:35; 11:26; James 1:12; II John 1:8; Rev 2:10; 3:11; 22:12).
- p. The Bible gives rules and examples to win the Christian race (Heb 12:1-3), which recalls those that did it before us, drops any weight or pet sin that hinders, requires patience for a long-distance race (endurance not emotion), looks at Christ's great example of winning His race against terrible opposition for its incredible reward, for we have no reason to tire or faint.
- q. For more about this wonderful text of the Christian race and our Lord's own life ... **Running Your Race, Running Like Jesus**.
- r. **Overcome = Victory**. Above are 11 uses from 27/35 that tell us how we can defeat the world.
- s. **Victory** = six T. uses = four are of Jesus (I Cor 15:54-55,57), one of eternity, one for today.
- t. **Victory** = six O.T. uses = three of David, two of God by David, and a prophecy (I Cor 15:54).
- u. We studied two of your enemies, Satan and world, but this is about you ... **The Only Right Worldview (16 sermons), War for Your Soul #1, Right Side Up (#1), Love Not the World – Pyramid**.
- v. Your greatest enemy is inside you, always with you, believed by you, can resist devil or world.
- w. You will never succeed to please God without despising your depravity and ruling your spirit.
- x. Victorious Christian living will give bold confidence at Judgment (I John 2:28; 3:19-21; 4:17).

What It Is Not

- A. Jesus won a great victory at Calvary and by resurrection; we rejoice, but that is not it.
 - 1. This is the legal phase of our salvation, when Jesus paid for all our sins to the Judge.
 - 2. We emphasize this legal phase often and thoroughly, and it is a great victory for us.
 - 3. We know many facets of this legal phase of salvation and countless scriptures for it.
 - 4. The greatness of our legal redemption is unsearchable riches and unspeakable gift.
 - 5. Glorious legal verses are not our goal (Romans 5:6-19; 8:28-39; Heb 2:14-17; 8:12).
- B. Jesus is mightily involved in our regeneration that is a great victory over our dead souls.
 - 1. This is the vital phase of our salvation, when we are each saved from spiritual death.
 - 2. Being born again and quickened from death in sins is a great victory over our nature.
 - 3. We emphasize this monergistic work of God to victoriously rescue us from the devil.
 - 4. We are quick to identify all the false ideas and declare the truth of how this happens.
 - 5. Glorious vital verses are not our goal (Ephesians 1:19-23; 2:1-3; John 3:8; Titus 3:5).

- C. Jesus is coming again to raise the dead and glorify His children's bodies in great victory.
 - 1. This is the final phase of salvation, when Jesus returns to glorify our physical bodies.
 - 2. The greatest victory is the coming destruction of sin, death, the devil, and hellfire.
 - 3. Glorification will drastically alter the entire universe and our bodies for all eternity.
 - 4. The universe will be on fire with elements melting and a new one made for His sons.
 - 5. Glorious final verses are not our goal (I Cor 15:54-57; Rom 8:23; I Thess 4:13-18).
- D. While rejoicing in these phases and operations of grace, we want a very different thing.
 - 1. We must take the results of Jesus Christ's victory and win our personal war for Him.
 - 2. We must see the goals, means, and rewards He has offered for us beating our foes.
 - 3. We need legal and vital phases to get to heaven, but God left us here to see us fight.
 - 4. It is hardly fair, He rewards for using means He gives by Christ's death and example.
 - 5. For much more about why He left us here, refer to the detailed "introduction" above.
- E. We appreciate baptism and communion, but they celebrate past victories by symbols; we will be different from those that received the ordinances and then live like the world
- F. We are in a real war, which martyrs fought and won, but we get to do with daily lives, which in some respects is far harder by being a continual struggle of great self-denial.
- G. It is not the goody-goody lives of so-called Christians that reject Bible spirit and truth.
 - 1. We are quite influenced by people we meet or biographies we read to make heroes.
 - 2. Since most such Christians would hate our doctrine if exposed to it, look to the Bible.
 - 3. If you think Baptists unique, there are Presbyterians, SDAs, Mormons just as noble.
 - 4. Measuring yourself by other than the Bible sets false goals and encourages defeat, for they do not worship in spirit and truth, and you do not know their many faults.
 - 5. We want the victorious lives of John, Jesus, Peter, and Paul as God described them.
- H. It is not frothy folly of Robert Schuller or PMA junkies to flatter yourself to happiness.
 - 1. Robert Schuller was the master of this heresy for fleshly corruption of Christianity.
 - 2. We are not looking for more self-help tools but Christ-help obedience to our king.
 - 3. We labor for His happiness about us rather than for our happiness about ourselves.
 - 4. We want our hearts to be lifted up, not in frothy self-love, but in God (II Chr 17:6).
- I. It is not an emotional flush from some melancholy experience that makes you euphoric.
 - 1. This fake news is gone in hours or days, leaving you a fool to everyone watching, for it is usually not real conviction but just an undisciplined soul seeking a rush.
 - 2. Worldly Christianity lives by the loudest music and other sensual effects for this rush, but we live the life of faith, which is believing and obeying in spite of feelings.
- J. It is not for the praise of man, but rather the praise of God, which is only in the Bible, for depending on the spirituality and/or agenda of others, they could praise you for sin.
- K. A comfortable life that you feel pretty good about, because you attend a good church most of the time,

and most that know you are deceived you are okay. This is not it

- L. It is not what you think is a great Christian, or what others think, but what God thinks.
 - 1. Many default to what others think or they think for comfort. His approval is the goal.
 - 2. This is important, especially with most Christians around us in great compromise.
 - 3. Every subject should be brought back to the Bible, but especially true Christians
- M. It is not wearing a WWJD bracelet, for that itself is a sin against Jesus (Matthew 23:5)
 - 1. Such public displays are the vanity of Pharisees, which we must avoid (Matt 6:1-8).
 - 2. For the true victorious Christian starts with a perfect heart and mind – his thoughts.
 - 3. Rather than WWJD we need WDJS, which is written down in the New Testament
- N. It is not Almanac Christianity, for that is in name only, which we must despise mightily.
 - 1. According to the Almanac, or Wikipedia and other sources, 1/3 of earth is Christian.
 - 2. True Christians are a very small remnant in the earth (Matt 7:14; Rev 12:17; Is 1:9).
 - 3. Half of that we believe and practice would evoke great anger from most Christians.
- O. A victorious Christian is very different from an average Christian, who is nothing at all.
 - 1. The average Christian is a joke compared to an exceptional Christian by the Bible.
 - 2. The words overcomer and victorious lose all meaning if average Christians get close.
 - 3. These are powerful and weighty words that describe large achievements in difficulty.
 - 4. If you do anything or most things average, then you are average and nowhere close.
 - 5. Each decision you make toward serving God should be done zealously for exploits.
 - 6. It is not surviving, which is neither overcoming nor victorious but just not quitting.
 - 7. You make many choices a day; when most of them are exceptional, you are a winner.
 - 8. When Christians are measured and ranked, are you in the top half, quartile, or decile?

What It Is

- A. I chose the three words intentionally for your life goal – *Victorious Christian Living*
 - 1. *Victorious* = you defeat enemies and obstacles to succeed and triumph at a high level.
 - 2. *Christian* = your goals are not the world's but God's plan for you to be like His Son.
 - 3. *Living* = you function in the world with its daily threats rather than try to escape it.
- B. What is a victorious Christian life? Let us define it very clearly, simply, and thoroughly.
 - 1. Godly, strong, and joyful ... *godly* beats lusts, *strong* beats adversity, *joyful* is choice.
 - 2. Living above sin, the world, and trouble, with none of them getting the upper hand.
 - 3. A constant servant for good in kingdom matters without disappearing for time d
 - 4. A mouth full of joyful praise, thanksgiving, and truth with Christ always preeminent.
 - 5. A life full of spiritual fruit with growth in grace to be more spiritual and like Christ.
 - 6. A trajectory directed upward with the present position in the top half of the church.

7. A tree of life to others with real benefits by example, successes, testimony, counsel.
 8. Consistency, constancy, persevering, faithful ... can be depended on to help and win.
 9. Never taken down by ordinary events to reduced service, energy, joy, or spirituality.
- C. What is a victorious Christian life? Let us go on to define it clearly, simply, thoroughly.
1. A life that does not get distracted by foolish vanity like politics, health, business, etc.
 2. A life that is measured by what is most important first, like love and mercy over all.
 3. A life with other souls helped and served to be better, fruitful Christians themselves.
 4. A life with heaven as the focus far more than health or life extension here on earth.
 5. A life full of joy every day observable by others and contagious to encourage them.
- D. A victorious Christian is a steady demonstration and example of Jesus and spiritual life.
1. He/she is not distracted to foolish, vain pursuits of life, no matter how worldly noble.
 2. They hate the world and its pull, as John taught earlier in his epistle (I Jn 2:15-17)
 3. It is more than gladness at Christ's victory, for God's grace teaches (Titus 2:11-15).
 4. The three sections of Paul's prayer for Colossians must be your goal (Col 1:9-17).
- E. It is living fully because of Jesus's work, by Jesus' power, through Jesus' intercession, for Jesus' approval and reward, according to the wholesome words of Jesus' ministry, but never compromising the proper fulfillment of duties and relationships in the world.
- F. A victorious Christian is constantly growing and improving in favor with God and men.
1. Growth is what God intended, why He gave the Bible, and had apostles teach it (Eph 4:15; I Pet 2:1-3; II Pet 3:18). Both John and Jesus grew in spirit (Luke 1:80; 2:52).
 2. They are greater in knowledge, bearing more fruit, helping/winning more souls, etc.
 3. They gain in ambition but also ability and experience to help more souls on the way.
 4. They increase in initiative and follow-up in all spiritual projects and service to finish.
- G. Such Christians do not have sissy fits of reprobates and carnal Christians in the flesh.
1. Funk = losing, so such things are sinful, stupid, infantile, and wasteful. Grow up!
 2. Funk = not ruling your spirit, which is self-destruction by letting down your guard.
 3. Funk = lazy and selfish approach to life neglecting duties and stressing others near.
 4. Paul cannot excuse your funk (II Cor 4:8-9), for he was not distressed, not in despair, not alone or forsaken, and not destroyed, and his troubles were 1000 times yours.
 5. David cannot excuse your funk (I Sam 30:6; II Sam 12:20), for he encouraged himself in the Lord and worshipped, and his troubles were 1000 times your worst.
 6. Asaph cannot excuse your funk (Ps 73:1-3; 77:1-9), for he flew to church, took in the sermon, and repented for being an idiot with a fault (Ps 73:21-28; 77:10-13).
 7. Elijah cannot excuse your funk (Jas 5:17), for he stopped rain three years by praying, had spirit and power fitting for John the Baptist (Luke 1:17), and he was translated!
 8. Funks = moods = taking off from duties due to feelings you allow to control you, which is at once childish, cruel, lazy, Ahab-like, and weak. You have mental illness.

- H. It is living the life of faith, which constantly believes God is, God rewards, God is true.
 - 1. Enoch's gloriously victorious life was based on pleasing God by faith (Heb 11:5-6).
 - 2. The first three questions I often ask those struggling with anything: *Is God Jehovah the Creator in heaven? Did He write a book called the Bible? Is the Bible fully true?*
 - 3. With negative answers to these, the person is not worth the effort or time to continue.
 - 4. With positive answers to these, the person is now in a corner ... with victory offered!
 - 5. There is no victory of any lasting or true kind outside the Bible and its rules for life.
 - 6. The issue for Christians is not the devil or the world, but – *will you obey the Bible?*
- I. It is approval by God and His Son both now and later that you have done a great job.
 - 1. Jesus taught about personal ROI on His gifts, *Well done, good and faithful servant.*
 - 2. Paul said, about Judgment, *Wherefore we labor ... to be accepted of him* (II Cor 5:9).
 - 3. Think about this goal – God delighted in David and liked him (Ps 18:29; I Chr 28:4); this cannot be all by the power of God, otherwise David would not deserve the praise.
 - 4. Here is where all the overcoming verses of Revelation fit this subject's study again.
 - 5. So rather than just think of hearing His words in heaven, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant*, see if you can live with the goal of achieving them daily (II Cor 5:9).
 - 6. Think about Job! God boasted of Job to the devil. It is possible (Job 1:1-8; 2:1-3).
 - 7. Think about Timothy! Paul boasted of Timothy to all N.T. churches (Phil 1:19-22).
 - 8. Women! Think of Hannah's greatness and Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany; they are not singled out in the Bible for getting up and making it through a day.
- J. It is confident living, because of trust in God's faithfulness, power, wisdom, and victory.
 - 1. The rule is found in the Hall of Faith with examples of faith all around it (Heb 11:6).
 - 2. Anxiety or fear about anything is a lack of faith or perspective, opposite of triumph.
 - 3. The godly man fears nothing, for His mind is stayed on perfect Wisdom and Power.
 - 4. Fear has forgotten Who is with us and what He can easily do for us (Heb 13:5-6).
 - 5. Fear also indicates sin, that you are not walking with God as you should (Pr 28:1).
 - 6. With God, you should be able to suffer the loss of all things (Mark 10:28-30; etc.).
 - 7. With God, every day is a good day – opportunity to enjoy His goodness and be good.
- K. It is Bible priorities, which are not priorities of carnal Christians, no matter how zealous.
 - 1. God did not leave us in ignorance. He gave a life manual to help be truly victorious.
 - 2. Since it is God that rewards the overcomers and victors, they must follow His rules.
 - 3. Learn a little-used verse for pastors to make sure they follow the rules (II Tim 2:5).
 - 4. The kingdom of God must be first, for that was a rule of our Lord Christ (Matt 6:33).
 - 5. Every time you choose to put your life before kingdom service, you deny the Bible.
 - 6. Remember our Jealous God, and His first commandment for all our love all the time.
- L. It is kingdom building. A victorious Christian leverages life far beyond mere survival.

1. The average Christian has no victories. They do nothing for the King or His citizens, though a day lived without doing something for the King and His cause is wasted.
 2. Paul named a long list of victorious Christians as a reminder to us (Rom 16:1-15), which ignored a longer list of Christians that we want to distinguish ourselves from.
 3. He identified the household of Stephanas as being addicted to service (I Cor 16:15), and there are others as well in the N.T. singled out for exceptional lives for Christ.
 4. John wrote one of the N.T. epistles to Gaius for his kingdom building (III Jn 1:3-8).
 5. They live, *Only one life 'twill soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last.*
 6. The goal is clear, and the question good, *How many souls for Christ (John 4:35-38)?*
 7. The Bible cannot be compromised and yet be victorious (Pr 11:30; Acts 18:24-28).
 8. Remember our wise God; His second command is to love others like you love you.
- M. It is measured on the inside, by the heart and spirit and mind, not mere outward acts.
1. Of course, we do not deny or even neglect the many outward acts that Christ requires.
 2. It is our Lord's religion – spirit and truth – unlike Jews or Samaritans (Jn 4:20-24).
 3. Since Jesus is the Judge in the matter, He measures thoughts and intents (Heb 4:12).
 4. So we must remember Samuel's poor judgment of Eliab before God (I Sam 16:6-7).
 5. For example, a victorious Christian forgives fully from the heart (Matt 18:21-35).
 6. For example, a victorious Christian loves hospitality by a pure heart (I Pet 1:22; 4:9).
- N. It is intentional living – knowing why you go to bed and get up far beyond work/school.
1. Your cause is the glory of God, the furtherance of His kingdom, and to help saints.
 2. Recall why you are here and the goals, for there is not time to take off hours or days.
 3. Avoid as much as possible entering any activity without a pure goal to glorify God.
 4. Each 24-hour period, beginning the night before, is an intentional triumph for Christ.
 5. The world, circumstances, and your heart distract you daily, but refocus to the goals.
- O. It is walking in the Spirit by a new law of life in Christ to beat the flesh (Rom 8:1-39).
1. Consider the list of things Paul compiled that we more than conquer (Rom 8:35-39).
 2. Note that all things work together, even negative things, for our good (Rom 8:28).
 3. This power to more than conquer is by walking and minding the Spirit (Rom 8:1-6).
- P. It is confidence before dying to speak of it and of your life like Paul did (II Tim 4:6-8).
1. Paul was ready – are you ready to die? – macho madness is mere folly and vanity.
 2. Victorious Christian living does not fear death and prepares mightily to be ready.
 3. We cannot get ready like Paul later in life for his readiness to die was a good life.
 4. Paul lived VCL by fighting, finishing, and keeping the faith. This was his hope.
 5. He wrote entirely different from those today that rest on a decision at a youth rally.
 6. This can apply to you as well by loving our Lord's appearing, which more ignore.
- Q. It is strategic living. Then you can appeal to God to REMEMBER rather than REPENT.

1. Hezekiah, like Nehemiah, asked God to remember a VCL life (Is 38:1-3; Neh 5:19); you can only pray such a thing if you have consistently lived a kingdom life before.
 2. A good life is a string of good days, and those good days a collection of good hours.
 3. If you are in trouble and have sins in your life, then you must repent for forgiveness; if you have lived a carnal life being earthly minded, you have nothing to remember.
 4. Youth should flee youthful lusts to avoid asking God to remember not (Psalm 25:7).
 5. God sees and knows everything; His books will reveal everything, so live faithfully.
 6. **A righteous life carries great power.**
- R. It is earthly engagement. It rejects any degree or form of monasticism to slight life. Hezekiah did not pray, *Lord, thank you for this day. I love heaven. Take me home. Amen.*
1. He was 39 years old. He did not want to die early. He begged God to extend his life.
 2. He explained in plainest terms that death would end good things (Isaiah 38:18-19).
 3. Conservative Christians holding God's sovereignty would say, *God's will be done.*
 4. Most Christians do not have a clue to pray like this – the more conservative the less.
 5. They can hardly imagine negotiating like Abraham or refusing to yield like Jacob.
 6. They do not grasp or rarely use the importunity Jesus taught (Luke 11:5-8; 18:1-8).
 7. There is work to do here, which David and Paul both grasped as long as they could.
- S. It embraces personal righteousness. It does not pervert scripture for only Christ's robes.
1. Hezekiah did not mention Messiah's righteousness, imputation of righteousness; he did not pretend spirituality to talk about being clothed in Christ's righteousness; he did not go off on a tangent about his total depravity and beg for mercy on a wretch.
 2. Hezekiah did not corrupt scripture that his righteousnesses were filthy rags (Is 64:6), for he understood the text to only refer to ceremonial rituals in a history of rebellion.
 3. Christians must seek the crown of the road to avoid the fall to ditches on both sides, for fatalism is the result of over-emphasizing our legal standing in Christ over works.
 4. There is a false humility of degradation and denigration unknown in God's Bible, though popular among Catholic monks and nuns and SDA denial of bodily pleasure.
 5. God honored good of David (Ps 7:1-10; 15:1-5; 18:19-28; 26:1-11; 35:11-28; 101:1-8) and Nehemiah (Neh 5:14-19; 13:10-14,15-22,23-31) and Paul (I Cor 15:10; II Cor 11:5; 12:11; Eph 2:10; Phil 2:12-13; I Tim 6:17-19; Heb 6:10).
 6. Jesus taught the importance of good works even at Judgment Day (Matt 25:31-46).
 7. What is a righteous life, based on Hezekiah's three examples of works pleasing God; he walked before God in truth – consistently promoting true religion and obedience; he walked before God with a perfect heart – he kept his motives and reasons to God; he did those things that were right to God – real righteousness is defined by God.
 8. *Psalm 18 for David's Testimony (see 19-29) ...* </wp-content/uploads/2017/04/psalm-18.pdf>.
 9. *God Distortions (avoid two ditches) ...* </wp-content/uploads/2018/01/god-distortions.pdf>

How To Have It

- A. **Short answer.** Daily, and especially when slipping or weak, get on knees and beg help.
1. Intentionally focus your life, as explained above, like at baptism, so consider your ways, set priorities, hate compromise, get to work, separate for holiness, and mark calendars (Haggai's lessons; [Matt 6:33](#); [Mark 12:30](#); [II Cor 5:13-15](#); [Heb 10:28-29](#)).
 2. Never underestimate the power of humble repentance ([II Sam 12:13](#); [Job 33:27-28](#); [Ps 34:18](#); [51:17](#); [Isaiah 57:15](#); [66:2](#); [Matt 14:28-31](#); [Mark 9:24](#); [Acts 9:6](#); [James 4:8](#)).
 3. Never underestimate the victorious power He can give ([I Sam 30:1-10](#); [II Chron 20:12-18](#); [Hosea 14:1-7](#); [Joel 2:25-27](#); [Mark 9:25-27](#); [II Corinthians 4:16](#); [Rev 1:10](#)).
 4. Do not ever ask Him for help without praise and thanksgiving ([Philippians 4:6-9](#); [Psalm 50:15,23](#); [69:30-31](#); [Hosea 14:2](#)). Thanking is always better than thinking.
- B. **Who are the enemies?** Satan, sure. World, sure. You – absolutely by innate deception, envy, folly, hatred, laziness, lusts, malice, rebellion, self-righteousness, wickedness.
1. The goal of overcoming and victory must identify the right enemy for the triumph.
 2. If there is a victory to gain or something to overcome, then there must be adversaries.
 3. We are to resist the devil, and he will flee from us, and we have armor to repel him.
 4. For much more about the devil's warfare for your soul and how to win ... [War for Your Soul #1, Power of Darkness \(6 Sermons\)](#).
 5. We are not to conform to the world or befriend it or make any provision for our lusts.
 6. For much more about the world and avoiding attractions to sin ... [Forgotten Sins \(8 sermons\)](#), [Is Jesus Lord? \(2 sermons\)](#), [Love Not the World – Pyramid](#), [Reprove the World](#).
 7. Your greatest enemy is one you have with you every hour every day and night; your lying and vile heart nudges you constantly to compromise thoughts, words, or deeds.
 8. You must recognize your nature, your old man, is entirely corrupt ([Eph 4:22-24](#)).
 9. Embrace despising yourself like Paul and then praise God for Christ ([Rom 7:7-25](#))
- C. **Stop thinking bad thoughts.** They can make you or break you – and God judges them.
1. Thinking is overrated by you, the world, and Satan. Follow your heart? Your heart is the greatest liar you have met, and you believe its desperate wickedness ([Jer 17:9](#)).
 2. Thinking is dangerous. It does not prove truth or lead to it. It thinks sin ([Pr 24:9](#)), so fill your mind with His thoughts and rule all thinking by them ([Ps 119:15](#); [Pr 12:5](#)).
 3. Paul ruled thoughts to not lose in life ([II Cor 4:8-10](#)); they can also give you a continual feast ([Pr 15:13,15](#); [17:22](#); [18:14](#)); they create confusion ([Jas 3:14-16](#); [1:8](#)).
 4. A strong thought, or whirling thoughts for hours or days, is likely pride or vanity; it is not conviction from God most times – you need conviction against your thoughts; remember that paralysis by analysis is a real phenomenon of thinking too much.
 5. We can tell who thinks sinfully – they are critical, moody, negative, unhappy, etc.; stop thinking critical, negative thoughts as much as possible. Think God's goodness.
 6. [Think only good thoughts. How good? Paul listed acceptable thinking \(Phil 4:8-9\)](#); examine all

thoughts arising in moments of reflection to hold them to this godly list.

7. David knew in talking to himself that he could correct himself (Ps 42:5,11; 43:5); so when an evil thought arises about someone, pray for them; rebuke any sinful thought.
8. Examine your thoughts and ask God to examine them (Psalm 139:23-24; Is 55:6-7).
9. Use this 2006 sermon series and outline, *Your Thoughts Can Destroy You ... Your Thoughts Can Destroy You (3 Sermons)*.

D. **Rule feelings.** Your feelings are very deceptive, depraved, and debilitating unless ruled.

1. Where do feelings come from? What are they? How do they move you? And why? And toward what? Are they God the Holy Spirit? Peer pressure? Satan? Flesh lusts?
2. Lusts are very powerful feelings, near overpowering at times, as Amnon and Ahab's lives tell us, and Paul referred to sexual lusts as burning, so resent such feelings that seem powerful but direct you toward sin. Think about the feeling to be moody. You can stop it, and you must stop it, and you should mock it and go do some good.
3. You feel you deserve pity. You feel others are hypocrites. You feel tired and overwhelmed. You feel defeated and cannot match others. You feel you are better than someone. You feel you are not treated like you deserve. You feel you know better than others. You feel you should punish your spouse. Where will you stop?
4. Do not call these things convictions unless they match the Bible in action and results, or then you become self-righteousness and scornful at a level no one can correct; they are only convictions if they result in fruit the Bible defines e.g. love, joy, peace.
5. Choose to live by faith and let the Holy Spirit provide feelings after your obedience, then it will be feelings that please God, rightly direct your life, and encourage others; godly feelings can cause you tears of reflective joy/passion or exuberant, loud praise.
6. Emotions are a horrible way to live; they will not sustain you; they do not help truth; you must constantly rule them to not allow them to move you away from VCL. Have an accountability partner like a spouse or parent to keep you from letting them win.
7. Faith is the way to live, believing God is, God rewards, and His promises are true; this solid foundation of trust in the sovereign power of God and His love for His adopted children will see you through every trouble in life right up to your death.
8. If you are an up and down Christian, and I speak of spiritual duties and zeal far more than church attendance for most; it is likely that you have allowed too many feelings and followed them rather than ruling them and making them follow faith for fruit.
9. For more about this comparison and order of faith and feelings for success ... *Faith or Feelings*.

E. **Believe forgiveness.** Guilt, shame, or Satan can take you down to a losing pity party.

1. When you question forgiveness, you wallow in your sins in an ungodly, foolish way; such wallowing is not self-examination but rather self-destruction by its evil results.
2. Your own foolish heart or Satan will use it to defeat you as a loser that cannot win; this is one of his fiery darts – *you have sinned too much or too many times* – he likes to give you this thought because it will destroy you and he will be never be forgiven.

3. Your own foolish heart or Satan will use it to keep you from a vision of greater service to God and His Son – *you are stuck forever as barely a Christian* – when in fact you are as much a king and priest unto God as the next person you think virtuous.
4. If you doubt forgiveness, you question God's faithfulness or Christ's sufficiency, and there is no way around that horrible conclusion. Believe God. Rejoice in Jesus! If you doubt this greatest of His promises with much proof, you cut off His power.
5. Confess, repent, reform, and jump up! Thank God for forgiving you and get busy. Confession is not what Catholics forced into Christianity (monks, nuns, confessional, penance, etc.). It is easy, fast, complete, final. Jump up to serve again.
6. All men sin, but it is what they do with sin and after sin that counts. Overcome it. Think about men like David with their great sins, but they repented and reformed and worshipped and went on to their biggest projects and successes in their lives.
7. God forgives penitents (Job 33:27-28; Ps 32:5; Pr 28:13; Ezek 18:21-32; I John 1:9), and you should have one or more of these or other verses in your memory to use, which you can answer to Satan and your flesh just like Jesus did in the wilderness.
8. God's ways of pardon are far above ours, which you must believe and use each time it is needed; never waste an hour doubting (Isaiah 55:6-9; Jer 3:1; 33:8-9; II Sam 12:13; Ps 103:8-12; Hos 14:1-9; Micah 7:18-19; II Kgs 21:27-29; II Chr 33:11-13).

F. **Look to Christ.** Who won His battle and war, and is the reason you can win your own.

1. Remember that you were told to look at Him (Heb 12:1-3). While there are many others with good report cards from God that you can read about in Hebrews 11, Jesus endured more and gained more to encourage you to be victorious in life for Him.
2. Paul wrote that he could do all things through the strength of Jesus Christ (Phil 4:13); the issue at stake was his contentment in spite of deprivation and abundance, which forced him to work day and night at times in his ministry to get by (Phil 4:11-12).
3. Jesus Christ is in His faithful children by the Holy Spirit to strengthen them; the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Christ, and He will provide help day by day to do what you should, regardless of circumstances (II Cor 4:16). Get up and prove Him.
4. We embrace the opportunity to suffer with Him and take on any task, for He took on the worst of tasks for your salvation (Phil 3:10). Embrace suffering by this verse, for you will never suffer anything like He did, which Paul made very clear (Heb 12:4).
5. But you must get up and go – we are not Fatalists – so do not wait to be pushed up, for the strength of Christ waits for you to stop grieving and quenching the Spirit. The Spirit will not usually initiate with overwhelming grace, but will bless your initiative.
6. David and Paul did not wait for grace ... they did it by grace (Ps 18:29; I Cor 15:10), and did they ever do it. Who among us is like them in intentional, zealous obedience?
7. He is the greatest Leader and Commander ever. You do most anything for earthly bosses that are pitiful in some or all ways. He is easy (read Him). He is encouraging. He did everything He asks you to do. He is moved by your difficulties. He forgives.

8. Remember to look at eternity and heaven, for in this life our religion can seem to be pretty miserable (I Cor 15:29), but not with heaven's rewards in sight (Ps 73:21-28).

G. **Look to the reward.** Our Lord Jesus did so; He saw the joy set before Him (Heb 12:2).

1. It is not wrong to consider promised blessings for obedience – it is not a cheap form of Christian living – for Jesus did it! – compare to honoring your parents (Ep 6:2-3).
2. Moses also did by seeing a reward greater than pleasures in Egypt (Heb 11:24-26).
3. Paul encouraged Corinth to follow this pattern based on resurrection (I Cor 15:58).
4. Paul encouraged Philippi to follow this pattern to hate belly worship (Phil 3:18-21).
5. John encouraged his readers to victorious living for boldness (I John 3:18-21; 4:17).
6. You work hard for raises at work or the praise of man in other ways, but Revelation's eight promises for overcoming are infinitely superior to anything this world offers.
7. Some of you work your bodies hard for even less reward than raises at work, but God wants you to work hard for Him to get an incorruptible crown (I Cor 9:24-27).
8. But there can be sweet peace and approval in your heart before eternity (II Cor 5:9; Gal 6:4-5; Prov 14:14; I Cor 4:3-4), which is shed abroad by the Spirit (Rom 5:5).
9. So rather than just think of hearing His words in heaven, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant*, see if you can live with the goal of achieving them daily (II Cor 5:9).

H. **Embrace difficulties.** Rather than view them as punishment, see o-p-p-o-r-t-u-n-i-t-y.

1. Job responded perfectly until bad friends helped him be self-righteous and to despair, as he worshipped and rebuked his wife for profane thinking (Job 1:20-22; 2:9-10).
2. Paul is a great example of bodily suffering God would not remove, which turned to an advantage for him to leverage a glorious victory for Christ (II Cor 12:7-10; 4:7).
3. Without difficulties, you cannot do anything to impress God (I Peter 2:18-23), for the measure of any performance depends on the degree of difficulty – think diving.
4. Without difficulties, you cannot grow to be perfect for God, for the greatest measure of perfect is patience – cheerfully enduring negative events (Rom 5:3-5; Jas 1:2-4).
5. Our glorious God and loving Father always knows how much you truly serve Him and at what cost, so you hold on to any part of life to your own loss (Matt 16:25).
6. If you faint in the day of adversity, you are weak, so embrace and beat it (Pr 24:10).
7. The more you can do this, which is a great action of faith, God will see it and reward.
8. Jesus is touched with the feelings of our infirmities and was tempted in all points like us (Heb 4:15-16), so He knows strength or weakness. Choose to beat difficulties

I. **Get competitive.** There is nothing carnal or cheap about serving Christ to be the best.

1. There is every reason to want to be the best for Christ. Why not? Why not today?
2. Paul said that all run in a race, but only one wins the prize ... so run (I Cor 9:24-27).
3. No wonder he outworked the other apostles and could write this truth (I Cor 15:10).
4. Jesus confronted Peter if he loved Him more than the others did (John 21:15-17).

5. Emulation – or competitiveness – can be a sin (Gal 5:20) or a virtue (Rom 11:14).
6. We have the heroes of Hebrews 11 and the Lord of Hebrews 12:1-4 to compare to.
7. God compared all kings to David, then to Hezekiah, and then to Josiah. It is His way.
8. Our God loves to take the one pound from a sluggard to give it to the man with ten, which means the final score is 11-0, with the one honored and the other punished.

J. **Stay in the Vine.** Christ Jesus is necessary to sustain conviction and energy for fruit.

1. A victorious life is a fruitful life of spiritual good things (Gal 5:22-23; Eph 5:8-11).
2. Jesus taught to stay closely connected to Him by faith and obedience (John 15:4-11).
3. It is loving and obeying more and more for greater, greater fellowship (Jn 14:21-23).
4. Many Christians hardly know what it means to abide in Christ as the Vine for fruit.
5. If you want to study this vine passage in John 15 more, see John 15 sermons ... [John 15 \(6 Sermons\)](#).

K. **Guard inputs very diligently.** They are the food and fuel for either good or evil in you.

1. You cannot feed the old man fleshly inputs and expect the new man to be strong.
2. If you feed the new man his inputs, and starve the old man, you will be victorious.
3. We exhort youth to remember five: daily Bible reading; daily prayer; only spiritual friends; avoid worldly entertainment; avoid worldly music. Simple. Powerful.
4. By years of experience and analyzing many persons of all ages, any compromise in this crucial matter of inputs to your soul will make or break you for kingdom glory.
5. A steady diet of Tucker Carlson or any worldly input will destroy spiritual vitality.
6. Evil communication that ruined good manners was resurrection error (I Cor 15:33).
7. Why would anyone choose to be around carnal family or friends (Ps 101:1-8; 1:1)?
8. Solomon warned clearly that associates determine life success or not (Pr 9:6; 13:20).
9. Lot's terrible life, very far from victorious living, was his fault (Genesis 13:10-13).

L. **Be the most thankful person.** Praise God at all times for all things with verbal worship.

1. A cure for a negative day leaving you defeated is to count blessings and see the truth, and just as the song declares, you will be surprised by all the good things God does.
2. God hates complaining, murmuring, and no amount of other good can cover the sin, for He will send leanness into your soul, which is the opposite of VCL (Ps 106:15), and He will judge and destroy those that are not thankful (Deut 28:47-48; Rom 1:21).
3. A big measure of victorious living is joy (Pr 15:15; Rom 15:13), and it is a close companion of thanksgiving, especially with us being the most blessed people we are.
4. A big measure of victorious living is thinking only good thoughts, so that we like to say, *Stop thinking and start thanking*, for that is God's cure for man's foolish heart.
5. If you are not constantly giving thanks, what happens to your thoughts? – they turn into a downward spiral of criticism, grudges, negative thinking, and evil surmising.

M. **Pray for a victorious life.** Pray for conviction and strength for it by power of the Spirit.

1. Paul prayed for Spirit ministries elsewhere in these notes (Ep 1:15-19; 3:14-19; etc.).

2. Jesus taught disciples to pray against temptation and evil – both kinds (Matt 6:13).
3. David prayed for a victorious life with God based on his 15 promises (Psalm 101).
4. Jabez prayed his life would not grieve him but would be blessed (I Chron 4:9-10).
5. If church members prayed for each other, more strength would result, which is what Paul included to the Ephesians and what we intend by a prayer calendar (Eph 6:18).
6. But prayers for jobs, health, spouses, or similar things will not bring spiritual power.

N. **Look to the effect.** Are you a good or bad influence on others, who observe your life.

1. Remember, one reason God left you on earth is to help His children live victoriously, which should motivate you daily to be the best example and teacher to pull others.
2. Examples of how to live are part of the N.T., which Paul used for himself and others of the same character and conduct (I Cor 4:16; 11:1; Phil 3:17; 4:9; II Thess 3:9).
3. If you are victorious, others see it, and it encourages and motivates us to follow you, and you adorn the gospel and kingdom of our Lord as the glorious things they are.
4. If you flop periodically into funks and lose Christian joy and need our help, you become an influencer for the devil to destroy faith or discourage weak believers.
5. If you flop periodically into funks and lose Christian joy, you burden us all and we eventually wear out or leave you alone to suffer through your funks without us.
6. Why did Philistines, and the best of them, gravitate to David and his God? Because there was no else that delighted in God like he did and lived it out in all parts of life, which creates the obvious question, how many souls have you won to Christ's cause?
7. We know the importance of Christian liberty to avoid being an offence or stumbling block, but a beaten, defeated, or up-and-down life is far worse than abusing liberty.
8. It is painful reality that those who fear losing children (wrong thinking to start) will lose their children, for they live an unhappy life that makes Christianity not worth it.
9. The real goal of your effect on others is not just to have a friendly reputation or friends, but rather to make those around you better spiritually in consistent zeal.

O. **Count the cost.** Identify the most crucial things in your life and be willing to lose them.

1. Jesus taught this rule for those thinking they wanted to be disciples (Luke 14:25-33).
2. He summarized the rule often – if you try to save your life here, you will lose your life – if you will lose your life for my sake and the gospel, you will find your life (Matt 10:39; 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; 17:33; John 12:25). This is pure gold.
3. Every person at baptism should make the decision – Jesus is Lord and first in my life no matter what or when – so they will never be confused, compromised, or quit.
4. Nothing in life, including family, health, job, or friends can be compared to the Lord Christ and the fellowship, power, and wisdom He gives far beyond anything else.
5. It is an intentional choice that nothing means more to you than God and His Son, which you need to make before you get persons/things and then after you get them.
6. If you do not make this choice, (a) you tempt God to take the evil competitor from you, (b) you invite

Satan to take it from you like Job, (c) you will be a traitor for it.

7. For the wise, and they are rare, following Jesus Christ is win-win over the loss of worthless persons/things in this life, which He mocked beautifully (Mark 10:28-30).

P. **Be filled with the Spirit.** This is done by prayer, walking in Him, hating sin, listening.

1. You must tap the power of the Holy Ghost working inside believing, obedient saints; there is ready power – the Holy Spirit – that can exceed your hopes (Eph 3:20-21), for no amount of your might or power can do what God can through you (Zech 4:6).
2. You should pray for the Spirit, as Jesus taught and which Paul showed (Luke 11:13); for he showed to Ephesus many Holy Spirit ministries to make you victorious ... **The Holy Spirit (in Ephesians)**.
3. You must then be filled with the Spirit by submitting to God and avoid grieving or quenching Him to lose His mighty strength in you (Eph 5:18; 4:30; I Thess 5:19).
4. Choosing a life of faith – *believing* – the Spirit fills up joy, peace, hope (Rom 15:13).
5. Walking in the Spirit is choosing His fruit over the works of the flesh, for those born of the Spirit with life from above ought to also walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16-25).
6. Jesus Christ is in you by the Spirit unless you are a reprobate (II Cor 13:5; Rom 8:9).
7. You can do anything by this power, so claim it daily against defeatism (Phil 4:13).
8. Learn to slow down, be sensitive, and humbly and warmly react to Spirit prompting.

Q. **Build or renew faith.** How? By hearing, embracing, and retaining true Bible preaching.

1. What is faith? It is the basis for victory – God is, God rewards diligence, God is true; it is God consciousness producing fear and love, obedience, praise, zeal in service.
2. It is the confidence God can, God will, and with God you can overcome any enemy.
3. It is the excitement to take on any godly project knowing with Him you can crush it.
4. It is the golden parachute of knowing God will forgive any failures for repentance.
5. The life of faith, which you love reading about in Hebrews 11, is possible for you.
6. What is overcoming faith? Belief in Jesus the Son of God (I Jn 5:4-5); see God's proof connected (I Jn 5:6-15). You have not emphasized Him too much. Go higher.
7. Faith could be defined as a pyramid with Christ-preeminent at the top, which takes faith in God much farther than most ever do. How will you emphasize Jesus more?
8. Love preaching. Prepare for it. Be early and ready. Listen attentively. Review it.
9. Take in more than just Sundays. You know what can happen Monday to Saturday; we have more means to take in God's word than any before us. Do you use them?

R. **Delight in God.** Seek Him beyond ordinary faith, for the greater passion will go higher.

1. It is good to trust in God and do good (Ps 37:3), but also delight in Him (Psalm 37:4).
2. Duty, though having its place, is inferior to delight for passionate zeal to Christ; as Paul taught, the Lord loves cheerful givers (II Cor 9:7; Mal 1:6-10, 13-14; Matt 22:5).
3. David sitting in his house after all foes defeated. *What do I have to do now?*
4. David went far outside scripture and anyone before him to think liberally.

5. God loves passionate service, thus we have found a role for feelings, so the Bible speaks of *bowels*, *bountiful*, *liberal* (Col 3:12; Pr 22:9; Isaiah 32:5-8; II Sam 6:14).
6. Are church services, Bible reading, or His worship have-to-do or get-to-do events?
7. Paul knew competitive sports were a good example for zeal for God (I Cor 9:24-27), but they are not based on duty but rather great delight and exceptional ambition.
8. The world glories in vain pursuits, and the Bible summarizes their three largest categories, but God wants you to glory in Him and His attributes (Jer 9:23-24).
9. For more about delighting and glorying in God, see these sermons ... [Delighting in God](#), [Delighting in the LORD \(2 sermons\)](#), [Delight in the Lord](#).

S. **Overcome evil.** Rather than be overcome by evil, which will come, how will you react?

1. A key to a victorious life is not avoiding all trouble, but how you respond to trouble, for trouble will most surely come, which allows you the opportunity to overcome it!
2. People will do bad things to you, but you must return good to them (Rom 12:17-21), which is the ultimate in superiority for taking the high road as they take the bottom.
3. People will do bad things to you, but it means a great reward comes (Matt 5:10-12), for that is what they did to the best in the Bible e.g. Moses, David, John, Jesus, Paul.
4. Remember the only way to shine on the job is to have a bad master (I Pet 2:18-23).
5. Think of all the evil in Joseph's life, but it never got the better of him; he crushed it; he did not merely survive by not committing suicide; he had the best spirit in Egypt.
6. David did not let Saul's evil bother him. He ran when needed. He protected the man.
7. Daniel from first to last in Babylon earned the favor of God and man in spite of evil.
8. Paul did not let Corinth's disrespect bother him. He rose far above them by kindness.
9. Never fret about the prosperity of the wicked, for their end is terrible (Ps 37:1-3,7).

T. **Slow down.** Haste makes waste and is sin. Be slow to certain things to live victoriously.

1. If you allow spirit or words to be hasty, you can easily sin (Prov 14:29; 19:2; 29:20).
2. Consider the Preacher's advice to defer anger and overlook offences (Prov 19:11).
3. James told you to be slow to wrath, slow to speak, but swift to hear (James 1:19-20), because the wrath of man is not victorious Christian living regardless of your ideas.
4. When emotions are hot, do nothing. Sit on the matter. Reread your email tomorrow; it is better to be mocked for being slow than to mock God's religion by being angry.
5. The faster you think, speak, or act, the less deliberate and intentional are choices; the Bible mocks headiness, which we also do when we are back in our right minds.
6. Do not get too busy. Chaotic or hectic living is not wise. Simplify life. Slow down. Pressure and speed do not enhance wise decision making and sober reactions to life.
7. Take time to be still to seek God and meditate on Him (Psalm 4:4; 46:10; 143:4-6).
8. For much more about the soul benefits from meditating on God ... [Fat and Happy](#), [Messianic Psalms](#), [Biblical Meditation](#), [Isaiah – Chapter 55](#).

U. **Keep going.** Consistency and continuing is what counts in God's religion for victory.

1. The Christian race is a long distance race (Heb 12:1), not a sprint that is more a gift than effort; training and effort only marginally help sprinters, not so for distances.
2. Patience is used in its two primary senses regarding the Christian life – cheerfully enduring negative events and persevering over time (Rom 5:2-5; Heb 10:36; Jas 5:7).
3. He could not have done more for His vineyard, so there should be annual fruit, since a vineyard is not an annual but a perennial, so be fruitful into old age (Psalm 92:14).
4. Fainting is not winning; fainting is not pleasing to God (Pr 24:10). If you faint, get back up, knowing He will forgive you for sincere repentance, and then run to action.
5. Think of the church in the wilderness and never-ending murmurings and rebellions for getting tired of challenges and difficulties, though saved from a terrible situation.
6. We believe in preservation of the saints over persevering of the saints (Calvinists), but we know that God expects us to persevere practically (Luke 8:15; Heb 3:6,14).
7. A long-distance race is a race of endurance; who can and will keep going after energy depletion? So endurance is necessary for reward (James 1:12; 5:11; I Peter 2:19).
8. There will always be those thinking about it or actually returning to Egypt, and you have such a quitting spirit inside you, but it is wisdom to mock all such and prevail!

V. **Lose weights.** Winning rejects weights and easily-besetting sin – do not overlook either.

1. Running a race requires the bare minimum of weight in clothing and shoes and the elimination of distractions that could hinder the focused, intentional effort to win.
2. Paul's lesson for running the Christian race involves losing two things (Heb 12:1), either of which can cause you to lose the Christian race and thus not be an overcomer.
3. Easily-besetting sin, those you are most vulnerable to, require extra effort to avoid provision for them and likely helpers against them (Rom 13:14); sure, sin in general besets all men, but the race is run individually, and vulnerabilities can be personal.
4. Weights need not be sins, but freedoms and liberties you love, yet they can easily steal your energy, heart, mind, money, time, etc. without you seeing their danger.
5. For example, marriage and children must be managed to minimize care (I Cor 7:32); are you able to grasp that John, Jesus, and Paul even rejected marriage to run well? We are not recommending that here, but Paul's warning is true and has its true place. Paul questioned the need of marriage, leaving children even more discretionary.
6. For example, bodily exercise has little value but godliness has great (I Tim 4:6-8); godliness lasts while the body degenerates to dust; compare your use of scarce time; compare marathon training (10 hours a week) to HIIT (1-2 hours a week and better).
7. For example, Martha was too detailed for her own good, not Mary (Luke 10:38-42); some complicate things when they could simplify them for freedom to run faster.
8. For much more detail about this angle or tool to win, see *Running Your Race ... [Running Your Race](#)*.

W. **Moderation is not mediocrity.** It is the disciplined and intentional balance for success.

1. **Moderation** = limiting or restricting; avoiding extremes; self-control, temperance.

2. Moderation is in the Bible once (Phil 4:5), but its synonym temperance is many times; moderation is not so much abstinence as it is self-control and self-discipline.
3. An inspired term for operations research, management science, linear programming, or industrial engineering, for optimization of decision making, is moderation, which is the limiting rule of all choices to maximize Christian living with limited resources.
4. Energy and time are very scarce resources; every decision you make should carefully consider what it will cost you, for both are needed to seek Christ and serve His cause.
5. David gave his son Solomon a great rule for success in large projects (Ps 127:1-2); the rule is applied by doing only your reasonable best and trust God to do the rest, for overdoing in any direction is vain and presumes to be superior to God's blessing.
6. For example, when pressed by school or work projects, only go so far and then bed, which never justifies going to bed destroyed but rather when diligence has been used.
7. The rule allows there are seasons, especially in an agrarian society like Israel, that require painful sacrifice, but such demanding seasons are rarer than often thought.
8. If you let any part of life get too extreme, it will cost you some other part of life, so it is your wisdom to keep everything in its proper place and ruled by Bible warnings.
9. For applied moderation, *Managing Your Life* and *Managing Your Wife ... Managing Your Life, Managing Your Wife*.

X. **Get zealous.** The intensity and passion of zeal will help mock mediocrity and go higher.

1. If you think moderation listed above leads to mediocrity, then embrace zeal, though you are wrong that the two oppose each other; the zealot with moderation will win.
2. God has zeal, for He promised to keep His covenant with David by zeal (Is 9:6-7); Paul taught that being zealously affected always in a good thing is good (Gal 4:18).
3. Who is your favorite example? Jonathan? David? Jehu? Hezekiah? Paul? Or Jesus?
4. David's zeal took him far beyond duty, running to Goliath and building a temple; Jesus' zeal preached with authority, cleansed the temple (Ps 69:9), and gave His life.
5. Prayers for saints should include a vision of God and His cause for passionate zeal, for look at the difference visions of God made for Moses, Joshua, Isaiah, Peter, John.
6. Paul's passion for Christ for mercy past and glory future drove him beyond others.
7. Jesus and Paul were thought mad by their exceptional zeal (Mark 3:21; II Cor 5:13).
8. Zeal is doing more, faster and better, with greater fervency, than others or your past.
9. For much more about zeal, review sermons preached about it ... *Jehu, Zeal, Zeal for the Lord, Zealously Affected*.

Y. **Habits can help.** Some things, though done routinely through duty, can keep you ahead

1. Though duty is inferior to delight in God, passionate love, or zeal, duty has its place.
2. Daniel prayed three times daily, and he would not miss no matter what (Dan 6:10).
3. David prayed three times daily, and he was a man after God's own heart (Ps 55:17).
4. Some church members never miss an assembly, while others miss quite routinely.

5. Bible reading without a specific time for it is likely to fail due to life circumstances.
 6. Memorizing verses can give you ready material for thoughts during the day or night.
 7. Earlier to bed and earlier to rise, with intentional plans for both, will trump default, for default for most is staying up as late as you can and getting up as late as you can.
- Z. **REPENT**, if you have not been living a victorious Christian life; repudiate all faults.
1. Not only do perpetual sluggards need this to get started, but great men periodically.
 2. David, whom God loved, had to repent often (Ps 51:1-19; 25:7,18; 32:1-6; 38:18).
 3. Jesus gave three simple but profound steps – *remember, repent, reform* (Rev 2:4-5); if you have not gone through this process, you are less than you could or should be.
 4. There is no weakness in confession, repenting, and reforming ... but truly a victory; every hero of the faith and every person described as perfect confessed sins often.
 5. God and His Son, who know our frame, faults, and folly perfectly, will hear us when we confess and forgive us our sins and cleanse our unrighteousness (I John 1:7,9).
 6. Those that do not repent are content with mediocrity and will never be overcomers; men with passion enough to do great things for God will know offences to repent of; you can start over today with overcoming, and again tomorrow if needed, but fight!
 7. God has not made it complicated to renew the fullest life with Him (James 4:6-10).
 8. For opportunity to start over with God, review helpful sermons ... [The R Factor](#), [Fellowship with Christ](#), [Filled with God](#), [Drawing Nigh to God](#).

How To Lose It

- A. **Forget Jesus and Paul**. Living an easier life is not the Christian race (II Cor 4:8-10).
1. We must fulfill why He died – to make us like Him (Rom 8:29-30; II Cor 3:17-18).
 2. We must fulfill our new position in the universe – sons of God (I John 3:1-3; Matt 5:9,45-48; John 13:35; II Cor 6:14-18; 7:1; Eph 5:1; Lev 20:26; Titus 2:11-14; etc.).
 3. If you were wildly promoted to a higher earthly position, you would wildly engage!
 4. You claim to be a Christian, which requires you to run (Heb 12:1-2; I Cor 9:24-27).
 5. You claim to be a Christian, which means you must fight (I Tim 6:12; II Tim 4:7).
 6. If you think you are saved and not going to hell, but you can quit your race, you lie.
 7. If you think giving up and fretting before God is easier, you do not know His remedy.
 8. Instead of being an example and encouragement, you are a burden and a black hole.
 9. If you think you will ever have Christ's life power, then you need to die with Him.
- B. **Lose focus or emphasis**. You will forfeit God's approval and fruit and hardly know it.
1. Instead of living intentionally to please God with your life, you let your life rule you.
 2. Instead of living in light of eternity, you are an earthly-minding belly worshipper.
 3. Instead of walking in the Spirit with power and purpose, you halt to walk in the flesh.
 4. Instead of the Spirit convicting you to bear fruit, He is grieved and quenched by sin.

5. Instead of growing in favor with God and men on a right course, you veer downward.
6. Instead of ruling your spirit, you succumb to fainting, fretting, funks, and failures.
7. Instead of rising above circumstances by faith, you are destroyed by mere setbacks.
8. Instead of joyfully walking with God and delighting in Him, you struggle in sadness.
9. Instead of copying Enoch, Abram, David, Mary, Paul, you are like Lot, Saul, Demas.

C. **Be a loner.** Withdraw from others and live your own life – you will never be a winner.

1. God chose churches (Eph 4:16), and any other way offends Him and is soul suicide.
2. Embrace David and Paul's zeal toward congregational worship (Psalm 26:8; 27:4; 42:1-5; 63:1-2; 65:4; 84:1-2; 84:10; 122:1; 122:6; 122:8-9; 137:5-6; I Tim 3:14-16).
3. Two are better than one four ways, and a church is far better than two (Eccl 4:9-12); there are two reasons to promote it – your benefit by others, and their benefit by you.
4. Agur taught that the desert locust is exceeding wise (Pr 30:24,27). How is it wise? Its combination of numbers create synergistic strength to overcome most resistance.
5. Churches assemble for more than a sermon (Heb 3:12-13; 10:23-25; I Thess 5:14); the *one another* duties throughout the New Testament are brother to brother help.
6. Iron sharpens iron by interaction of true friends (Prov 27:6,9,17; 13:20; Ps 141:5), but such interaction takes humility, intentional effort, investment, time, money, etc.
7. Jonathan filled a role for David that Job's three friends did not for him (I Sam 23:16); by the time Elihu spoke up the damage had been done by Job's self-righteous friends.
8. Spiritual winners or losers are visible: LIFO or FILO attendance, fellowship outside services, serving the church whenever possible, strong team spirit, participation, etc.
9. For much of the incredible value of a local church, *What Is a Church? ... What Is a Church?, Church Membership*.

D. **Rest on laurels.** From ancient Greek games, it is to be satisfied with past achievements.

1. Rather than gold medals like our Olympics, winners received laurels for their heads, and this idiom describes letting past successes reduce ambition and future efforts; the phrase is not a compliment but rather a criticism of laziness due to past victories.
2. Here is another tool of your flesh, Satan, or the world to get you to relax and coast and not achieve what you could or should for Jesus Christ and His kingdom on earth.
3. Past significant choices, costs, efforts for Christ should not slow you but speed you; never think about what you have given up for Christ; Paul calls such dung and loss.
4. Paul's things he forgot from his past were his successes, not his sins (Phil 3:12-14); he is the perfect example of godly discontentment with life achievements that far; he knew that a race is won in the last lap, especially if the first laps were run well.
5. David let nothing stop him; his greatest project – the temple – was at the end of life; his most ambitious undertaking done with exceptional zeal was when he was old.
6. Psalms says lovers of God's house/worship can be fruitful in old age (Ps 92:13-14).
7. The aging process that depletes ambition and energy can lead to taking life too easy, when these

examples of Paul and others, including Jehoiada, were mighty in old age.

8. Do you need another example? Then learn about Caleb at age 85 (Joshua 14:6-16).
9. The worst, heretical use of this error is value a decision, baptism, membership, etc.

E. **Choke on circumstances.** Life events are by God's providence for your right response.

1. Adversity and trials will come; they are part of life in a sin-cursed world; they are also for your education as a child of God; He knows what He is doing. Embrace it!
2. God's providence is perfect, so put your big pants on and act like an adult (Pr 24:10), for your Father in heaven is better than any earthly father and better than you can be.
3. Rather than fear circumstances or feel defeated by hard ones, remember trials are opportunities; you cannot show love of God or truly grow ... in peace and prosperity.
4. The hand God dealt you is perfect, whether you were wise or foolish. Play it! He chose the cards in your hand; it is not too much to bear; He will help you overcome.
5. Perfection in patience, experience, and hope requires trials (Rom 5:2-5; Jas 1:2-4).
6. Joseph, Naomi, Ruth, David, Daniel, Esther handled their difficulties triumphantly.
7. God rewards. Think honoring parents. But better yet, think Job enduring (Jas 5:16).
8. Chastening is a wonderful thing. Love it. Give thanks ([Job 5:17-27](#); Heb 12:5-13).
9. Be honest. Your circumstances are better than most all in the vast history of God's children. You have greater blessings of all kinds and fewer real trials. Think martyrs.

F. **Love alcohol.** It is a depressant altering body, spirit, and self-discipline. Rule it strictly.

1. We teach moderate use of alcohol, because the Bible teaches it; God commended wine and strong drink; Jesus drank wine (Deut 14:26; Luke 7:33-35); God made it for its relaxing properties (Psalm 104:14-15; Judges 9:13; Prov 31:6-7; Eccl 10:19).
2. But we must also warn about it like the Bible warns, and because examples in the Bible are blots on the characters of good men like Noah and bad men like Nabal.
3. Since intentional victorious Christian living requires our wits, our strength, our reputations, then a substance that relaxes the central nervous system must be limited.
4. We have blasted melancholy-type funks and feelings, so we must guard drinks that can lead to those faults, others to ridiculous speech, others to anger and fighting, etc.
5. We want to be the kings and priests we are; we cannot let our hair down foolishly at home by drinking more than God's intended purpose – like Jesus would have drank; never forget that God who measures each part of your life sees your home drinking.
6. Men have had lives and/or reputations hurt or ruined by booze; men have regained an overcoming and victorious life by limiting or abstaining. Triumph by temperance!
7. Fear it. Only fools presume on liberty. Trust others' opinions about its effect on you.
8. For our Bible position on the moderate use of wine and strong drink ... [The Bible and Wine, 75 Bible References on Drinking, Did Jesus Make and Drink Alcoholic Wine?](#).
9. For Proverb commentaries warning about alcohol's dangers ... [the Proverbs 20:1 commentary](#), [the Proverbs 23:33 commentary](#), [the Proverbs 31:4 commentary](#), [the Proverbs 31:5 commentary](#).

G. **Forfeit by failure.** Quitting due to past failure guarantees future failure by feeble effort.

1. *My commitment to be great for Jesus failed in the past and will again now; my family knows I have not kept my commitments, and God knows. I am a loser ... forever.*
2. Every honest man and woman has had failures, when they were not overcomers or victorious, when they did not follow through to apply conviction or finish project
3. *From admitting failure is bad ... I have only halfhearted effort left, for I will fail again;* that feeble and flawed view will be a self-fulfilling prophecy – you will fail; this is not repentance that gains the victory. Confess your failure and run at Goliath.
4. No righteous man has lived victoriously without sins, but they repent and jump up, so when we read about them in the Bible, we read they were blameless and perfect.
5. David's sins for Bathsheba were terrible, but he got back in the game (Ps 51:12-13); his failure was catastrophic, but where sin abounded, God's grace abounded more.
6. Love God's wisdom for past failures, and get up and get going in devotion to Him and by the strength He will give you (Pr 24:16; 28:13; Ps 37:23-24; Job 33:27-28).
7. What of Peter? Should he have quit after denying Jesus? or Paul's public rebuke? The way to cover shame for faults or failures is to get right back up and do better.
8. Did Paul allow his earlier life to hobble him, or to motivate him? You got it. Do it!
9. Why wallow in the past? Be a trophy of grace! Change today to be better tomorrow!

H. **Choose bad friends.** From regular acquaintances to a spouse – are they Christ zealots?

1. If we need believers to consider us, exhort us, and warn us, and we do (Heb 3:12-13; 10:23-25; I Thess 5:14), foolish Christians that avoid the Lord's people for carnal Christians or worldlings, even if family or friends, will never be great (Eccl 4:9-12)?
2. When you pick a spouse, or approve one for children or friends, you must demand an independent fear of God, love of Christ, dedication to the Bible, and very spiritual goals, or you sacrifice your future or theirs for what is meaningless in comparison.
3. If you allow any other trait to compete with Christ-like zeal, you will lose maritally, for there is no combination of looks, kindness, or wealth to make up for carnality; this is the incredible warning king Lemuel's mother gave him for a wife (Pr 31:30).
4. It is shocking after all that has been learned and taught to see any other criteria used, for there is nothing else that matters, including and maybe especially DNA, for they are the greater threat of influence, and they are the ones Jesus specifically identified.
5. You are the company you keep, so reject all carnal Christians, for they have nothing to offer you but the deceit of your own soul by their friendship (Pr 13:20; Acts 2:42); friends are one of the five chief inputs; they will make or break you (I Cor 15:33); even in the church there are enormous differences in spiritual zeal (Phil 3:15-19).
6. David was adamant about godly family and friends (Psalm 101:4-7; 119:63,79,115); Lot and Samson are extreme examples, or are they? Whom do you gravitate toward? Toward whom do you pitch your tent? Does family by sentiment get an exemption?
7. Let us make our church very spiritually minded, by pulpit and conversation content, with our goal to

drive carnal Christians to revival or move them to a carnal church, for we consciously want them uncomfortable here if they will not put Christ first.

8. An athlete cannot be great associating with or training with mediocre athletes; he or she needs the best to draw out his or her best; Lot gave up the best for the worst, for it is hard to stay in some presumed neutral territory; you are growing or backsliding!
9. For much more about choosing good friends and good spouses ... [Evil Communications](#), [Friends, Who Can Find a Virtuous Woman?](#), [Looking for One Good Man](#).

I. **Relationship Dependence.** Different than choosing friends, this is obsession for them.

1. The warning has just been made about choosing less than spiritually-minded friends or choosing to value and pursue family or friends no matter how carnal or worldly; David did not choose his brothers, God did, but David never mentioned them again, for from all the evidence they were not worthy of their little brother. So be it. Amen!
2. This warning, while related, is putting too much pleasure or fulfillment in family or friends, which God will rip away from you by His providence or by death. You must not depend on any person's affection or friendship or you will compromise truth and wisdom to keep them, which is the respect of persons that you hate in civil judges.
3. If you love anyone in this world even close to your relationship to God and His Son, you make yourself vulnerable to backsliding or compromise in order to keep them. Solomon warned against fearing men for the snare it brings on souls (Prov 29:25).
4. This is what Jesus condemned when He told those wanting to be His disciples to hate all other relationships in comparison to their devotion to Him (Luke 14:25-33). God, and rightfully so, wants us to throw ourselves wholly on Him. Is the glorious God Jehovah your shield and great reward like to Abram (Gen 15:1; Ps 73:25-26)?
5. What Solomon proved between harlot mothers, Jesus demands to prove your heart, for the real mother was willing to let a wicked prostitute have her child to save its life. Jesus, like Solomon, tests your love of God by denying cake and eating it also.
6. No one can even come close to comparing to God and His Son; the very thought is near blasphemy; you need a spiritual revival if you think they are in any way close; Jesus demanded that we hate our own lives also to be His true, committed disciples.
7. A spouse must have his/her own commitment to Christ far above the marriage, or a backsliding spouse will affect them far more than it should; great Bible examples are Abigail, David (Michal), Eunice, Lois; bad examples are Solomon, Ahab, others.
8. Never say, *I don't think I could live without him or her*. Are you kidding? What blasphemy! You state clearly that you love him or her more than God and His Son. Make a decision right now that your children are the Lord's, and you would be fine without them, as long as you had the Lord God with you (Ps 73:25-26; Heb 13:5).
9. For ending relationship dependence, [When Your Husband's a Fool ... When Your Husband's a Fool, When Your Husband's a Fool, Abigail – Dealing with Men](#).

J. **Music Liberty.** If the language of the soul is music, worldly or melancholy, look out!

1. Now HQ music can be pumped into your ears any time of day or night at any volume with video! The difference is enormous, like Marx saying he could take the world with 26 lead soldiers; while the world embraces the sounds and lyrics of hell, we can on the other hand fill our homes and ears with sounds and lyrics of heaven or David.
2. A warning was made earlier about the danger of alcohol, which rightly used is a gift from God, but which used carelessly can contribute to ungodly thinking or conduct; music is one of the five inputs we have always feared or loved by its spiritual fruits.
3. Be wise about music; it is a powerful force for good or evil, just ask the once-famous king Saul, who hired David's harp to save him from devils (I Sam 16:14-23; [David the Musician](#)); it is nearly scorn to ask how it works, since you already know music that helps or hurts. Music can be scaled from promoting violent rebellion to godly conviction and zeal.
4. Music is very enjoyable – to the flesh or the spirit – but you will reap what you sow, for music is also incredibly powerful for marching into war or crying at a funeral. There are consequences to what you allow. If you want VCL, then be strict. John's first epistle taught we must hate the world and its things (I John 2:15-17). Music?
5. You do not need a seminar on music – the Internet has many. Use the same judgment as with preachers, Bible versions, etc. – *fruit, source, intent* (Matt 7:15-20; Col 1:6; I Thess 2:13)? What is the character and conduct of performers, buyers, hearers, churches, etc. Worldly Christian contemporary music will surely reduce godly zeal. The more intense the music and the less deep the lyrics, you are on a slippery slope.
6. The issue is not the kind of music, though there is plenty of material on this angle of the subject as well. Is there a difference between blue grass and classical – what is it? Let the only measure be whether it makes you a rock-solid apostolic Christian or a carnal Christian Epicurean. What does Enya or Yanni do to your thoughts, flesh?
7. Victorious Christian living is perfecting holiness in your flesh and spirit (II Cor 7:1), which requires you to choose music acceptable to God the Holy Spirit dwelling in you, which will be music not popular with the world for pleasing their spirit of hell. The higher standard you set for VCL, the stricter you will have to be with music; never forget that loud, worldly music is a key part of the perilous times compromise.
8. Why is it strange to limit music to Christian music (I Pet 4:4)? Because today's Christians scream the promise of liberty (II Pet 2:19). How much did David listen to brothel music from Philistia? Holiness is extreme – guard music! If your body is the temple of God, what will you let in through the ear holes to Him (I Cor 6:12-20)?
9. For more about the danger of inputs, including worldly music ... [Inputs – Slides](#), [Techno Sins](#), [Love Not the World – Pyramid](#), [Reprove the World](#); and the N.T. forbids musical instruments in worship, for it is carnal ... [Musical Instruments In The Church](#), [Importance of Singing \(1 Sermon\)](#), [sing](#).

K. **Distracting Ambitions**. If you let even noble ambitions compromise Christ, you lose.

1. Compare running and weight (Heb 12:1); see *Lose Weight* in How To section above; you cannot run the Christian race victoriously weighed down by worldly ambitions, and the earthly desires and goals can be all kinds that steal energy, focus, time, etc., so though we may stress job and business

distractions here, there are many more; the issue is quite simple – every day you make choices for energy, money, time, etc.

2. Paul was clear to Corinth about calculating the compromise you must make to avoid any ordinary activity or relationship in life stealing your heart from the Lord; you must grasp how he avoided marriage and told us to limit ours (I Cor 7:25-35), so if even marriage must be viewed cautiously before and after, so all other noble things. The American Dream, to be paid, pleased, pampered, is foolish sin (I Tim 6:6-10), in spite of the fact that a great work ethic, frugal financial management, etc. is godly.
3. No one appreciates your professional progress and success more than your pastor, but far more than that he desires, prays, and labors for your spiritual victory in Christ; treasures in heaven are not by job progress; Judgment Day will not include your pay or title. We identify this diversion for men as the Successful Christian Businessman; our goal is a Successful Christian that is a businessman, rather than a Successful Businessman that is a Christian. The Christian part of the title must be clearly first.
4. Diligence to rise professionally is good, but it minds earthly things if a top goal; limit marriage, mothering, children, friends, finances, homeschooling, domestics, politics, gardening, health, strength, body, looks, retirement, house, hobby, learning, etc. Do you know how much you will have of these things in heaven? None. Therefore, a wise man prepares for eternity by emphasizing its things rather than earth's things, and for those wise enough to hear, spiritual things are far more fulfilling than earthly.
5. Your ambition cannot be comfort, ease, pleasure no matter your age, for there is a cause worth working for and those that do not pursue it are belly worshippers; they will regret they took life easy when they give account to the Judge of all, who took from the one man his only talent to give to the man with ten and then threw him out.
6. Investing in earthly things in contrast to heaven has bad concerns and consequences (Matt 6:19-21). But Jesus and heaven's bank never fails, so you can allocate as much of yourself there as you can, which is not the life of a monk or nun, but rather VCL. Remember it, *Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last.*
7. Too much focus on other parts of life will divert, dull, dilute, defeat, or destroy VCL, for no athlete ever won any valuable contest without temperance to limit distractions; you cannot be like average Christians in your choices, and certainly not worldlings; as noted earlier, your moderation must allocate scarce resources for maximum VCL.
8. Simplify life. Time is limited. Energy is limited. Focus is limited. Excellence in any part of life demands all three. Therefore, when you add anything to your life, you compromise another part of it. If your life is $2 + 2 = 4$, a change of $4 + 1 \text{ may} = 3$. VCL is not Christ plus cake. VCL is Christ is the cake, and all else a distant second. How about doing fewer things better rather than more things done poorly? How about the disciplined pursuit of less – getting only the right things done in less time?
9. Focus on one thing. Keep a single eye. Guard any extremism of too much emphasis. In investments, it is putting too many eggs in one basket, not enough diversification, which can lead to financial

failure by not managing risk to survive market vagaries; when that one highly leveraged part of life disappoints or fails, you likely fail also; this can happen with marriage, when happiness or victory is a romantic relationship; this can happen with children, when too much affection causes compromise or grief; this can happen with a job or finances, even though the changes do not affect heaven. For more about managing scarce resources both men and women ... [Managing Your Life](#), [Managing Your Wife](#), [A Mighty Man's Life](#).

L. **Love vacations.** Do not think spiritual retirement or taking it easy is possible or wise.

1. You do not get a day off in the war with your flesh, the world, and the devil. Never. They do not take a day off. The Bible does not tell us about any temptation-free days. The I-need-to-relax mentality may apply to a hard job, not to living right for Christ; instead you need to hold a I-will-show-the-Lord-my-zeal-today attitude about life.
2. The Christian life is warfare – sleep in your foxhole, and you get bayoneted to death; it does not mean you intensely exert or emotionally drain every minute; it means that you cannot relax and let come what may, for what will come is some compromise; you must be vigilant, not relaxed (I Pet 5:8; Matt 24:42-44; Heb 10:25; I Cor 16:13); let God's word guide your approach to life, not family tradition, American welfare system, or what your flesh wants so bad, to do nothing of importance, but have fun.
3. This defeated, losing attitude will resist or resent a pastor pressing all spiritual duties; it is deceit how hypocrites hate social welfare but want to live on spiritual welfare. How many world class athletes (the ones that count) take off days, weeks, months? If they take off a few days or weeks after a season, it is only to recharge for intensity, or to heal an injury, or to alter some other part of their health, anatomy, skillset, etc.
4. A challenge or finished project deserves a letdown? Be careful, Satan will use such thinking to convince you to let down your guard, which should never be let down; there can be a physical letdown, so deny your spirit copying Elijah (I Kings 19:1-4). Jesus Christ expects too much of you? You must read His warning (Luke 19:20-27).
5. Hear the truth – the greatest peace, pleasure, and relaxation is by living victoriously! It is not going on a spiritual break or vacation and staying on such as most Christians do perpetually. Heart and mind contentment, confidence in welldoing, fulfillment of high goals, and knowing you are approved by God are by far the best vacation ever.
6. Examine yourself. Are you a taker or giver? If you sit while others serve in different ways, you are a taker. Victorious Christians are givers. They never think of what they get from others – they always think of what they can give. They want to serve, not be served. They want to love, not be loved. They want to forgive, not be forgiven.
7. Our assemblies are one place we work, so those that arrive early show their commitment to Christ and His cause, and those that arrive late show the opposite; we have more than required assemblies, and you need most or all of them to triumph, which is why there are constant reminders that bare attendance is nothing at all.
8. Vacationers treat our Baptist assemblies like attending a Mass – they enter, sit, watch, doze, daydream, rise, exit. Instead, we must meet God, examine ourselves, repent of faults, renew

commitments, exhort and strengthen others, leave different.

9. You have a default to the flesh – each person does – and it is powerful and smart to grab openings you give it, so you must criticize it, mock it, and exert yourself in ways that are uncomfortable (spiritually good things are very seldom comfortable).

M. **Aim at nothing.** You will hit nothing. Identify the enemies and goals; focus for victory.

1. Here it is again – we pray for this each week – *intentional*/victorious Christian living; *intentional*/here is as crucial as *independent* when defining fear of God for marriage; you will not be a victorious Christian by accident, by circumstances, by nature, etc.
2. Why did you get up this morning? Why will you get up tomorrow? Why go to bed? What is your purpose in life? It better be the good one, the right one, the only one.
3. Your life is a gift from God, and you better invest it and use it for Him. Knowing God is another gift. Salvation is a third. The Bible is a fourth. This sermon is a fifth.
4. World class athletes show how to have high goals and hit them (I Cor 9:24-27), in order to be like them, as Paul was, you need high goals and the rules to achieve them.
5. Your long-term goal is to meet God and His Son boldly and confidently for rewards; your short-term goals must be daily plans and strategies to achieve the long-term.
6. You must identify enemies as we have in this study – especially those within you – to eliminate anything that makes a provision for your flesh to beat you (Rom 13:14).
7. You must consciously, vigilantly prepare and fight each day to gain specific mastery in areas of your life where you are the least godly, spiritual, exemplary, or victorious.
8. What Bible examples motivate you? Enoch walking with God? Abraham the friend of God? David the man after God's own heart? Exploits of the Maccabees? Reputations of Joseph and Daniel? Labor and productivity of Paul? Love like John?
9. What is preaching for? To show you from the Bible where you do not measure up and how you can. Humble and prayerful listening will show you weaknesses you can defeat and strengthen and thus perfect your life before Him. Aim at these things!

N. **Mismanage Time.** You only have now for sure, so redeem time for better use (Ep 5:18).

1. What does it mean to redeem time? It means to buy it back from foolish, vain, or wasteful uses to better manage it for the glory of God and bear spiritual fruit. How? Reduce or stop even marginal activities that keep you from being the best Christian.
2. Time is a rare commodity and scarce resource in general, but since you cannot boast of tomorrow, time is a resource you can run out of entirely at any time, so grab it! After that life consideration, you know your day runs out before your goals are done.
3. There are 1,440 minutes in every day. It is incredibly easy to waste 100, 300, 500.
4. One minute spent thinking about the past is wasted – your past is under the blood; one minute spent thinking about the future is wasted – it is in the hand of God; buy back these minutes by thinking what you should and could do right now this minute; it shocks me how much can be wasted in either direction while wasting the present.
5. Activity is not redeeming the time; it is the opposite, for it wastes time and exhausts other resources

for what could have been done if you took a nap and saved resources; we have more time-saving devices than any before us, but they create opportunity to go, go, go, and get little to nothing done of value for the kingdom due to running around, and they cause us to compare ourselves to the past to flatter our productivity.

6. Schedules are good, for they assign good uses to time. How much of your day is scheduled? A monastic or convent approach to life is not Christian at all. Those fools waste time growing their own food, praying all morning, meditative trances, etc. Surprised about prayer? I continue to be surprised by it. Follow Jesus and Paul – their prayers are concise, dense, short, spontaneous, passionate, spiritual, and short!
7. Most everything in life can be accelerated ... education, cutting the grass, doing the laundry, fixing a meal, hearing a sermon, reaching out to a brother, reading/hearing the Bible, making more for less, buying/shopping, travel speed is unprecedented, tools to leverage effort abound, high quality can be bought for little, etc.
8. Remember some valuable slide sermons about managing your life and your wife, both of which were to prioritize the right goals for each, understand the time and other resources for each goal, and eliminate or minimize those goals less desired. I have often confessed in recent years keeping my wife too busy to be great with God.
9. Focus on today; do not worry about tomorrow (Matthew 6:34). Strategic plans have some value, but only same (Jas 4:13-15). If our evil days do not move you, then you should read more about the threat of perilous times you live in (II Tim 3:1 – 4:4).

O. **Procrastinate Conviction**. There is not a better time to repent and run than right now.

1. Every real Christian is convicted from time to time, some more than others by their inputs and prayers and pursuit of God and godliness, but any silencing, neglecting, or forgetting conviction is profane disregard of God the Holy Spirit, and it is spiritual folly and abuse, though very common and the reason for dysfunctional Christians.
2. Conviction is God's gift, loving pursuit of you, and divine means to help you obey your new man. He draws us. He moves us. He arranges reminders for us. He himself considers it one of His great works (Hos 11:3-4; Hag 1:14; Luke 8:18; Jas 1:25).
3. Never forget the foolish choices Felix made when convicted and trembling by Paul's private teaching and Agrippa was moved by public teaching (Acts 24:25; 26:28).
4. Never forget speedy choices others made when convicted by God's word to repent or recompense all they could (II Sam 12:13; Luke 19:8; Acts 2:37; 9:6; 17:34; etc.).
5. Never forget the great blessings of conviction, correction, reproof, and warning bring consequences, if you do not act on them (Pr 1:20-31; 29:1; Is 29:9-14; Rev 2:21-23).
6. Run with conviction and nothing less, for every wise-hearted man and woman knows how easily and how quickly conviction for the greatest things in life can disappear.
7. Not only must we never procrastinate when convicted, but we must crave conviction and seek it with all our hearts, for it leads to the victorious living we are studying. If God were to leave you alone, you would implode in foolishness beyond Hezekiah.

8. We pray for conviction and not using it is disgusting and disgraceful, for it is a gift far greater than a better job, better health, or better nation. Understand, repent, pray!
9. If we will be faithful to God's promptings, He will convict us more and lead us higher, for we will have shown the rare character and conduct that He gladly honors.

P. **Lose First Love.** The passion and zeal necessary for VCL can easily be compromised.

1. Jesus made it clear to the church at Ephesus that the good things about their character and conduct were not nearly enough to make up for losing first love (Rev 2:1-7), which the combination of your flesh, the world, and Satan conspire to compromise.
2. Ephesus had works, labor, patience, hated belly worshippers, carnal Christians, and sinners, tested spirits to expose false apostles, endured persecution patiently, for Jesus' sake served the cause without fainting, and hated the Nicolaitans, but it was not enough for victorious Christian living, for they were about to lose the Spirit.
3. When did you last pray for first love resuscitation (revive from dead), restoration (return to previous), or innovation (surpass previous experience to new level)? It is prayed for every week, but have you personally sought God about this crucial topic?
4. What can you do to restore first love of God and His Son or increase your love of both? You first remember, then repent, and then do some of the first works of love.
5. You then need inputs provoking passion for God and His Son – select sermons, select music, select friends, select meditation, select memorization, select praise/worship; if you stay too busy or occupied, you will go to sleep and die in worldly pleasures.
6. Not only did Ephesus get criticized and warned, but so did the church at Laodicea for thinking they were very successful though Jesus thought opposite (Rev 3:14-22).
7. Their solution was to view three options and rank them (hot, cold, lukewarm), admit false measures of success, get zealous and repent of outward pretensions without inward passion, and pursue the easy option for better fellowship that Jesus offers.
8. Our God and His Son are rightly Jealous, they rightly demand and expect all your love at all times, so you must constantly modify affection for anything or anyone else to give them the personal passion and intimate devotion that only a few will do.
9. Victorious Christian living is not normal, not usual, not common, not easy in the sense of just going through the motions. It is fiery love and zeal from the heart that does everything for God and His kingdom personally, passionately, devotedly, etc.

Q. **Live emotionally.** Sentimental thinking or living is not Christ's life of faith or victory.

1. Emotion that follows faith is good and pleasant, but it can never lead in key choices; emotion that follows sympathy of a godly sort is energizing and helpful; your greatest emotion must follow faith and be directed to God and Christ, not man; your feelings should be most energized for God, for truth, against error, against sinners.
2. But any emotion that clouds or distracts from believing and obeying God by faith is the folly of spoiled children, no matter your age, that destroys victorious living, for it weakens His standard of godliness, compromises His cause, disturbs your soul, honors persons over the Most High, and

sacrifices truth and wisdom for infant folly. Be like Job about his own life – *though he slay me, yet will I trust in him* (Job 13:15).

3. If you love family or friends or your own life above hatred when compared to the only One worth loving, your character and conduct are too low to be a disciple of the Lord Christ (Luke 14:25-33). Grow up and be a real lover – loving God, His Son, the Bible, His kingdom, His people far above your people, whoever they be; it is this person that is also the greatest lover of spouse or friends by doing it God's way.
4. Here is the problem. God is jealous and rightly demands all your love. Period. He knows that earthly obsession with family and friends is the best test, so He brings a sword into those relationships to find out if you are worthy of Him (Matt 10:34-39); what else can a trial or tribulation be but an event that makes you feel bad, so you need to immediately reflect on feeling hurt, scared, or sad and embrace opportunity.
5. Emotion is making decisions by feeling, when they should be made by faith – God is, God rewards diligent seekers, and all God's presence and promises are true and better than anything here that does not enhance wisdom or even exist in heaven. God said it, that settles it. It does not matter if I feel good, bad, or not at all. I will obey. Some persons and families are drama queens, turning small ordinary events into emotional trauma. Even death is ordinary. Why do some families have constant drama and other families none? Train your children far above the death of a pet, etc.
6. One of a pastor's greatest fears are those weak souls that react emotionally to an event; it is not godly femininity or empathy, for God's great women could stone children, give away children to temple service, or drive tent stakes through a friend. It is not tenderness that weeps over a sinner; it is emotional compromise. True love hates sin in friends and rebukes it (Lev 19:17). VCL has feelings for God, not man!
7. Paul rebuked Corinth for being puffed up about the fornicator in wanting to protect him, when they should have mourned the offence and gotten rid of the sinner as quickly as possible (I Cor 5:2). Think like Phinehas rather than a prayer meeting (Num 25:1-8). Stop feeling sorry for a sinner; feel sorry for God the sinner offended!
8. We will always exalt mercy where possible, but we will not sacrifice righteousness or truth for the sake of mercy. David eating shewbread and picking up sticks on the Sabbath were very different, and you should learn it (Matt 12:1-4; Num 15:30-41).
9. If you fail in things God expects because you do not feel like it (*I just don't feel the need or urge*), you are a wicked idolater for worshipping your devilish feelings over God and His feelings; your feelings are never from the Holy Ghost or your new man unless they are fervently zealous for what God said ignoring personal preferences.

R. **Entertainment Liberty.** If music is half as perilous as above, what of Hollywood lies?

1. Never before could a glamorous presentation of worldly lusts be brought into your home in living color, high definition, on a big screen, with a brothel soundtrack; great care must be used to guard and protect inputs in order to keep faith, godliness, truth, and wisdom in Christ and His spiritual kingdom first in life. The television and computer are the devil's pulpit right in your home, but it is more exciting and stimulating than preaching, for it has bright and enhanced images with moving

music to embellish the activity and promote the emotion of any movie/video you watch.

2. Like music, you do not need a seminar about television and movies and other videos now so easily and freely available; you do not need a church handbook or list of approved programs or movies or a list of condemned ones; we do not need an annual visit by church elders to prove you do not have a television; you need conviction by the Holy Spirit and the word of God to hate the world and its lust-filled lifestyle and anything contrary to the faith of Jesus and the apostolic love of holiness by victors.
3. Most focus too much on language, violence, or sex, such as warnings to parents attached to movies; with just a little help they might join the Utah school district that recently banned the Bible for these very things; let me redirect you to broader and better criteria of faith, godliness, hope, love, peace, spirituality, and the future, for these things will condemn many wholesome movies along with recognized trash.
4. Only Christian movies have any faith in God, and that is often quite weak; godliness is the opposite of everything Hollywood has ever thought or done; the world has no hope, so its best dramas end hopeless; our true love to them is folly, for it is selfless service, while their love is only lust; they are fearful of a million things, and God has denied them any peace, so they never promote it; the world only knows the spirituality of devils, for it never feeds the spiritual new man; and they ignore their future ruin, which is a main rule of our only right worldview, first revealed to Enoch.
5. Vegging is a common term, but victors rarely if ever veg, though they may choose a variety of recreation, rest, and distracting activities with underlying physical enhancement, character traits, or earthly information for value, though they would never sacrifice gains previously achieved, which you should not either. You can veg at night while asleep, but even then you can talk with God. Take up vegging at death.
6. If MSM is bad, then what of Hollywood, which is the most corrupt of the corrupt, for they reject most every single character trait of a Christian, especially at this time. If the bad exceeds the good, and this measure becomes stricter with lower ages and less spiritual maturity, then what are you watching it for. What is the immediate fruit as measured by carnality, faithless approach to life, mental flush, time wasted, etc.?
7. What if a soul rejects dedicated Bible reading, prayer, and memorizing, but has the inclination and time for Hollywood without strict discipline, they cannot and will not succeed, and their compromise of inputs will be very obvious to good men. Hear our Leader and Commander (Psalm 101:3; Romans 1:32; Phil 4:8; I John 2:15-17).
8. Most Christian movies are weak by the faith measure. The Kendrick brothers are the best, for they set the spiritual bar high, and your flesh will not be nearly as interested in a Kendrick production as one by anyone else. The old man is always depraved. We have PowerPoint sermons that can be entertaining and filled with faith and truth
9. What about spectator sports? Convicted soldiers of the cross recognize the Greek-like carnality of body worship, the mental flush of spiritual thinking by the blast, and the great waste of time. But before the Pharisees sound off, other choices are just as dangerous and for similar reasons: museums, recreation facilities or places of all kinds, gyms, worldly concerts or demonstrations,

sporting activities from bowling to roller skating or playing games, etc. that promote body consciousness over spirit.

S. **Undervalue Christ.** Neglect intimate, passionate fellowship with Jesus by noble things.

1. Concern here is not earthly-minded belly worshippers, but rather substituting good, noble, even godly things for a personal, life-altering relationship with Jesus. While earthly-minded belly worshippers are the enemies of Christ according to Paul (Phil 3:18-19), the Lord of glory was also unhappy with even good things replacing Him.
2. We think of Ephesus and Laodicea again. While the former had many good works listed by our Lord, the latter had a high opinion of themselves, but it was drastically different from Jesus Christ's opinion of them. Both churches were strictly warned. Both churches crucially needed much more love and close fellowship with Jesus.
3. What if we train children to get good grades in school with excellent character and citizenship, to work their jobs diligently and honestly, to frugally save and liberally give, and to avoid debt and live care-free lives ... but whose religion is cold formality without obsessive desire and intimate delight by knowing and honoring Jesus Christ?
4. A great family is one dedicated to Jesus Christ, not to school, not to house, family, job, financial independence, happiness, fun, athletics, or any other worldly measure. We do not care if they are good mothers in comparison, for skunks are great mothers. We do not care if they are good husbands in comparison, for so are the Mormons.
5. VCL = a Christ-centered, Christ-exalting, Christ-preeminent, Christ-dominated life like Paul had, so that he counted all things in his past dung and loss, and he was only concerned about pressing on to win the prize of God's high calling in Jesus Christ. For the strength you need to overcome the old man is only found in Jesus (Phil 4:13).
6. Bible reading is good, but Bible reading without meeting and loving God and His Son misses the far greater goal of Bible reading over mental knowledge of doctrine. Bible quizzing has its value, but it is far short of knowing the Person pointed to in the Bible for the glory of God, the humbling of angels, and the profit of our souls.
7. Solomon's Proverbs are wonderful for wisdom to live successfully in this world, and we delight in how much prudence and understanding are found in its 915 verses, but they have little in them about God's Son and His saving grace in our lives and how being filled with all the fulness of God requires much, much more (Eph 3:14-19).
8. So we must set the goal of our intentional focus to Jesus Christ and serve Him like John, Mary, and Paul did over anything else, no matter how godly or noble, or we can lose victorious Christian living and deceive ourselves by our noble substitutes. Know that the whole Godhead is committed to Christ (Jn 5:39; 15:26; 1 John 5:6-8).
9. Therefore, you must keep personal and spiritual priorities very clean, clear, and straight. Jesus Himself must be the greatest pursuit by Messianic Psalms, songs about Him, the unsearchable riches of Christ, how He is altogether lovely, etc., etc.

T. **Forget cheer.** Doing is not enough. How you do it is important to God. Be happy, now!

1. Giving is a commandment, and victorious Christians are very generous and liberal givers, but giving

without cheer (gladness and joy) ruins it for VCL (II Cor 9:7).

2. We learn by Nehemiah's fear before Artaxerxes that a doleful approach to service is unacceptable (Neh 2:1-2), but our King is incredibly greater than Persia (Mal 1:14).
3. Never forget Malachi's blast against regathered Jews in Jerusalem for their snuffing approach to the worship of God (Mal 1:6-14). God deserves and expects perfection (Lev 22:8,19-23), though our point here for VCL is the attitude/spirit of our service.
4. Gladness of heart is something God expects and deserves (Deut 28:47-48), which we want to give Him, for He has done more for us than O.T. Israel could imagine.
5. If a merry heart makes a continual feast, our lives should be continual feasts, for He has done infinitely more than needed for our hearts to be merry (Pr 15:13,15; 17:22).
6. If we cannot bear a wounded spirit, and rightfully so most of the time (Pr 18:14), why should the great God put up with you dragging through life without great joy?
7. Joy is a command (Phil 3:1; 4:4; Rom 12:12; Jas 1:2; Matt 5:11-12; I Thess 5:16;). Joy is a description (Acts 2:46; 8:8; 13:52; I Thess 1:6). Joy is a duty (Rom 14:17-18). Joy is fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22). Joy is empowered by the Spirit (Rom 15:13).
8. If you are not happy right now, you should repent and get happy right now, and if you do not it is either profane rebellion or ignorant confusion about happiness being a choice. We do not wait to get happy; we choose to be happy knowing our God.

U. **Neglect Nutrition.** You need Bible reading, prayer, preaching, godly friends and music.

1. You have a life in Christ, but you want more than to have life, you want to put that life into successful and victorious action with much fruit following you (Gal 5:25).
2. Jesus Himself is not content with you being a branch in the Vine, for He can and will still purge you and throw you into the fire of chastening destruction, if you do not use that gloriously gracious connection to Him to bear much fruit (John 15:1-8). Think of just one test of your spiritual vitality – brotherly love as defined by the Bible – which requires constant nutrition and exercise to maintain (John 13:34-35).
3. Bearing fruit is comparable to growing, and in order to grow you need nutrients, which in the Bible starts with the sincere milk of the word (I Peter 2:1-3). Note that you must first flush losing faults that ruin VCL growth, then you must desire the word for its potential, and it should be based on God's incredible gift of saving you.
4. The utter simplicity of these inputs, their frequent repetition, and your knowledge of them cannot and must not dilute their importance, or you will be a powerless, weak Christian far from the Hall of Faith for victorious overcomers that we should desire.
5. Your inputs will feed either the old man or the new man – there are few inputs that feed both, if any, so do not deceive yourself too much about neutrality. If you feed the old man the inputs of the flesh, the world, and Satan, you will be a carnally minded belly worshipper without fail. If you feed the new the inputs of the Spirit and word, you will be a spiritually minded warrior of the cross without fail.
6. Do not let a bad day of excessive activity or trouble turn into two days lacking right nutrition, for you will quickly start atrophy of spiritual strength and turn into the effeminate loser and belly

worshipper you want to avoid. Repent. Restore nutrients.

7. Now for you champions of Christ that want to advance, you are exhorted by the greatest of our band of brothers to get past the milk of first principles and dive into the meat of God's word and learn like Special Forces through exercise (Heb 5:12-14). You should know the godly and spiritual answers to all life questions, for we have a perfect soldier's handbook and manual. Show Christ your souls saved to victorious living, and show me the depth and height of your love of Christ in detail.
8. After nutrition, if you sit safely in your convent or monastery (this means your comfort zone and your foolish measures of Christianity), you will have no more than a devil's faith (they believe and tremble), so you must exercise by choosing vigorous Christian activity much like gulping a protein shake and adding stress (I Tim 4:7-8).
9. Never underestimate the power of godly music, or you mock the greatest O.T. warrior of our band of brothers – David the musician. What is one significant difference between Saul and David? Their music! What is favorite anthem, hymn, Psalm, or spiritual song about our Lord Jesus Christ that invigorates you into glory?

V. **Allow Funks.** Choose to be carnal, defeated, discouraged, pout, withdraw, sleep, curse.

1. Our clear and simple goal is victory, overcoming, winning, defeating, conquering; there is no place in such a virtuous life to be overcome, defeated, or conquered. Rise up to despise and hate your spirit that plunges into the abyss due to your lack of discipline and ends up destroyed to lose productivity and earn a shameful reputation.
2. Ruling your spirit is one of the most important needs of life (Pr 25:28; 16:32; 14:29), and this point was made earlier in this outline and these sermons, but you cannot allow yourself the freedom, the vacation, or the folly of letting your spirit crash. Meltdowns are what infants have; youth and especially adults should despise them.
3. Do not be naively stupid to mock fast-twitch spirits when you hold a funk for time, for the soul that gets angry and then convicted in minutes or hours is usually less destructive than the one disappearing for hours, or days, or a week in a childish funk.
4. We cannot sustain mountain top emotional euphoria, but neither need we go to bed with foolish, infantile feelings of discouragement or worthlessness, for Christians always have hope and easy recovery if they gird up their loins to run to God for help.
5. Moses, Elijah, David, and Asaph had moments or minutes of discouragement, but they got back on track quickly and overwhelmed their faults with power living, so that we consider them some of the great men of the Bible. You should do the same. You cannot and must not pout, which is to let others know you are unhappy, hurt, or weighed down by your funk. This choice is incredibly cruel, selfish, and wicked.
6. Vagaries of human emotion and varying circumstances give us opportunity to fight and win a battle that God and Jesus fully know (Ps 103:13-14; Heb 4:15-16), so that we can prove our love of Christ and our growth in grace by defeating our tendencies.
7. This should be one of the most important things you teach children from infancy – to rule their desires, lusts, needs, and moods to do what is acceptable and right; it can be trained with a child in a highchair before walking by denying a thing close at hand; an infant can be trained that it will not

get immediate fussing for fussing; you must not allow your children to withdraw, forfeit, or be AWOL from assigned duties.

8. With enough funks allowed, you will allow more and more to be seen by more, and then you disgrace the Jesus and Lord you claim to love, for you love yourself more. You do not have liberty for moods. They are not Christian liberty; they are choosing to let the devil win, when you can resist him, and he will flee. We deny your request.
9. Do not be a whimp. Do not let adversity or difficulties send you to bed or your favorite place to mope. It was Ahab that went to bed because things did not turn out perfectly the way he had hoped. Adversity is opportunity (Pr 24:10). How will you impress the most High? Without a froward someone or something (I Peter 2:18-21).

W. **Hold bitterness.** This diabolical and insidious sin will eat the soul and destroy a person.

1. You have no excuse about this devilish precursor to murder, for we have taught and reviewed often this enemy of righteousness that corrupts heart and mind and defiles the life (Heb 12:15; Jas 5:9). Any bitterness, grudge, or hatred is lose-lose-lose, for you lose fellowship with God, lose peace and even sleep, and exalt your enemy.
2. You have been forgiven 10,000 talents and others cannot trouble you more than 100 pence, if you have a powerful life of fellowship with God basking in His forgiveness, and the greatest therapy is to forgive them, pray for them, and show some kindness.
3. Hear me! Triumphant and victorious living knows that you should forgive others as God forgave you, and you should forgive others as you want God to forgive you, and this two-sided coin is the basis for incredible joy and peace in life over malice.
4. If you do not forgive, flush, and forget all wrongs against you, then you give place to the devil and give him an advantage against you, and you forfeit the power you have through Jesus Christ of victory by forgiving and loving (Eph 4:27; II Cor 2:11).
5. How in the world did martyrs rejoice and sing in torture and death? They were victorious overcomers and knew God had ordered their deaths and would reward them. The reprobates torturing and killing them were quite irrelevant, so they could like the Lord and Stephen actually pray for their violence against them to be ignored.
6. Bitterness in your heart about anyone or anything makes them and whatever they did far too important. Get over both! What if you burn my house down? I'll get a better one, and I have a mansion in heaven. What if you call me a name? I will rejoice and be exceeding glad, for that is our religion (Matt 5:10-12). You need evil to overcome.
7. This whole concept of living the victorious Christian life meets you head on right here with this one issue. The person that harbors anger, bitterness, grudges has no evidence of eternal life and is the very opposite of the Christian he or she should be.

X. **Talk folly to yourself.** Do not say things to yourself that may become self-fulfilling.

1. It is okay to talk to yourself; most or all Christians do it, but it must be for victory; David by inspiration told that he talked to himself, for his good (Ps 42:5,11; 43:5); it is okay to talk to yourself as a flesh-mocking, spirit-praising, winning Christian.

2. Do you ever say to yourself, *I will never get all this done?* Or, *Does anyone know what I am going through or care?* Or, *No one has it as rough as I do in my life.* Or, *I wish pastor would preach more exciting sermons.* Or, *Nothing ever works out right.*
3. Trade ... *I can't do it all ...* for, *I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me;* trade ... *I am all alone in this ...* for, *For the Lord GOD will help me* (Is 50:7,9).
4. Cut the baloney. Grow up. Everyone has a harder life than you and does better at it. How about instead – *Lord, I am going to do this for you. Watch, and see my love!*
5. A large part of life is attitude, which is a choice to see things as positively as you can and do as much as you should, regardless of feelings or presuppositions for it.
6. Carnal losers in a spiritual funk find fault with most sermons, no matter the preacher; spiritual winners find good in any sermon, part of the Bible, or Proverb commentary.
7. You have no right or wisdom to relax your mind and let thoughts come into your heart or spirit that do not deserve to exist, that will discourage you, that will defeat.
8. We are to gird up the loins of our minds as the Bible teaches (I Pet 1:13), and this point can hardly be emphasized too much, because it is often the #1 reason of failure.
9. Paul admitted the great difficulty of living with his flesh (old man), and he could cry out in grief about its depravity and power, but he could also praise (Rom 7:24-25).

Y. **Allow anxiety.** Fear or worry indicates a person with little faith or ignorant of reality.

1. God did not save us to fear or worry but rather to be confident and comfortable; you fail to use His means to rise above these debilitating feelings of the weak or wicked.
2. He told us through Paul to not be careful for anything by way of prayer (Phil 4:6-7), and He told through Peter to cast all such cares on Him as our caring God (I Pet 5:7).
3. Anxiety, or fear and worry, are evidence that your faith is weak and/or you have missed the facts of life in some sense or way. Neither fear or worry should happen for a person hearing these sermons and making any application of them to life. Embrace the present and trust God for the future. He will protect all overcomers, but overcoming is the opposite of succumbing to God-denying or God-mistrusting fear.
4. Anxiety is the opposite of faith, of peace, of courage, of overcoming victory, so it should be identified, mocked, and replaced by those intending to live victoriously. Instead choose confidence and trust in God and turn all over to Him without worry.
5. Jesus already won every victory that matters, so fearing anything will slight Him, for it is faith in Him that overcomes the world as this study teaches (I John 5:4-5); embrace Him as the Lord of glory, your Leader and Commander, and loving Friend.
6. Do not be defeated by God's providential choices in life like family, ability, conviction, gifts, etc. God has never made a mistake, and anything in His word applies to you as much as anyone else. You can be a David or Mary in spirit easily.
7. If you have less personal or social advantage of any kind when compared to others, then you can give a gift like no other. Embrace the opportunity. Play the hand God dealt you, for no one else can play it. Who will play their hand the best? He sees all.

8. What can you do? Increase Bible reading and sermons (build faith and knowledge), turn all over to God in prayer (build peace), and get around confident, faith-filled brothers or sisters to encourage your confidence (bold intentional living and dying).
9. The purpose of the church by all means allowed is to build faith and courage by helping each other hold fast to their profession of faith and provoke to love and good works so they will stand (not slip, slide, fall) perfect and complete in all God's will.

Z. **Accept religious routine.** Dutiful, perfunctory performance for our God is not enough.

1. Some measure success or victory by consistency in duties, much like a mannequin, which always stands upright and holds what has been hung on it, but is totally dead, so Paul and Jesus mocked such Christians (Gal 4:18; Eph 5:14; Rev 2:4; 3:14-20).
2. Perfect attendance at school or on the job is of such little value as to be mocked in comparison to personal passion, participation, productivity, and powerful changes; we never want to be content going through the motions of religion for God; instead we should ask God for much more (He can answer the request) and then choose it.
3. Engaged and passionate Christians are easy to spot in a congregation of those that think church attendance and sitting upright are actions notable and pleasing to God.
4. Any Christian and any church, if filled with the Spirit accompanying their religion of spirit and truth, are filled with joy, passion, and zeal as Jerusalem after Pentecost, for the Person of Pentecost is the zealous Son of God (John 2:17), and the power of Pentecost was left permanently with us for joy (Rom 15:13) and abounding fruit.
5. God could not have written more directly against a mechanical, ritualistic religion, for His religion is aggressive, expressive, fervent, intimate, personal, passionate; He wants all His beside themselves with joy, enthusiasm, and zeal for Him and His Son.
6. Compare yourself to David (dancing/building), Jesus (scourging/glorifying), and Paul (laboring/suffering). The zeal for God ate them up. Get fired up triumphantly. Boldly embrace every spiritual activity for that will save you from a dead routine.

Winners Win (Who Will Overcome?)

A. **Winners have a goal.** They do not let life direct them. They use life for the great cause.

1. Why are you alive? Do you know? How much does it control/drive you? Are you most known for business acumen, physical fitness, education, or Christ's kingdom?
2. David was alive for the glory of God and showed it while a teenager against Goliath; it was instinctive; it was definable; it was passionate; it was risky; it was glorious.
3. The Bible gives us our goals rather clearly (Eccl 12:13-14; Prov 16:4; Matt 5:16,48; 22:36-40; I Cor 6:19-20; 16:22; II Cor 5:9; I Tim 6:1; Tit 2:9-10; I Pet 1:15-16; etc.).
4. They know they were created by God for God, so they ask, *What wilt thou have me to do*, no matter the vulnerability or cost it implies, so they crave learning the Bible.
5. Winners crave success; they crave the crown; they have desire above others ... **Desire.**

B. **Winners have a vision.** It is not the same as the goal. It is the motivation for the goal.

1. What winner in the Bible do you want to be like? There are many examples: Joseph, Hannah, David, Daniel, Nehemiah, Paul, Timothy, Mary/Mary/Mary, Priscilla, etc.
2. Men that saw God were changed men. Think about Moses on the backside of the desert meeting Jehovah. Think about Isaiah seeing the glory of God before his work. Think about Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. They were violently changed.
3. What vision do you have of God? What fires your heart and mind about our God? What are your favorite attributes of His? Do His works and words demand passion?
4. Winners do not live or walk by sight, but rather by faith, for they know the great things of the universe are invisible and eternal, not visible and temporary on earth.
5. Walking with God to them is not a nebulous phrase, but a personal and powerful way of living, thinking, and acting for the greatest One and the greatest purposes.

C. **Winners see the prize.** They know and believe the rewards God promised for victory.

1. God expects us to value the rewards He promises (Eph 6:2-3), the greatest of which are promised by the glorified Christ in Revelation; seeking such prizes is not carnal as a distorted view of God and godliness leads some to presume. God offers the gifts.
2. Jesus endured the cross and despised its shame for the prize God offered; He saw the prize, for it was a great honor, and He is our example (Heb 12:2; Ps 16:8-11).
3. Paul pursued the prize and the crown God offered Him (Phil 3:14; II Tim 4:7-8), and they drove him to be exceptional in devoted service to Jesus Christ and His people.
4. Rewards should motivate your zeal and endurance (I Cor 15:58; Gal 6:9; I Peter 5:4).
5. *Well done, thou good and faithful servant ...* are words that Christians should crave.

D. **Winners are single-minded.** They do not try to serve God and mammon or other folly.

1. You cannot have your cake and eat it too in the Christian faith taught by the apostles; real Christians have only one love and purpose (Matt 6:22-24; Eph 6:5; James 1:8); they emphasize the investments that accumulate treasure in heaven (Matt 6:19-21).
2. Winners are intentional. They know why they live. They sacrifice much for the goal. They are focused, so that they do not lose sight of the one and only goal for them. They appear extreme to most others, who love compromise to avoid extreme effort; they know that most Christians are compromising losers, but they want to be S.F.
3. Winners make everything fit the cause, just like athletes are temperate in all things; winners do everything, including eating and drinking, for G/O/S (I Cor 10:31-33).
4. David was very intentional, as the fifteen promises of character and conduct in Psalm 101 show very clearly; there are more statements like it (Psalm 18:1; 75:2; 145:1-6).
5. Your Baptist baptism was a declaration of faith and intentional living, for which some gave their lives. What happened to you? What have you lost sight of in life?

E. **Winners are intense.** They live passionate lives filled with increasing zeal for the goal.

1. Passion for God does not allow mediocrity, perfunctory performance, vacations, etc., for even employers and rulers would not waste a second on such sorry, lazy losers.

2. They know Jesus was the most passionate Man for God (John 2:17; 4:34; 8:29; 9:4); even as a 12-year-old lad, he thought above video games of His peers (Luke 2:49).
3. They also know the apostle Paul had great zeal and taught it (I Cor 15:10; Gal 4:18), and moreover, he was never content with his great efforts and fruit (Phil 3:12-14).
4. The kingdom of heaven deserves our greatest commitment and cost (Matt 13:44-46), and those who cannot or will not pay are not worthy of Christian (Luke 14:25-33).
5. Winners are never content. They know God and His Son deserve more and better, so they examine themselves for faults or weaknesses to correct and be perfect; they crave to grow from glory to glory by the Spirit of God to be like Jesus (II Cor 3:18).

F. **Winners grind on.** While this sounds boring and hard to losers. Winners do it happily.

1. They use the apostle Paul's epitaph about victory (II Timothy 4:7-8; I Cor 15:10), for they know by him that effort and output are crucial to high-production Christians.
2. They never give up. They trump the popular, foolish, losing speech of mere athletes; they know there will be adversity, challenges, even some defeats/losses ... so what!
3. They love the grind – the training, the discipline, the focus, the pursuit of excellence, but this is not bodily exercise, professional trajectory, or educational degrees at all.
4. They know the Christian life is a long distance race, not a sprint, so they keep going, even when they want to quit, they do not; they know adversity is God's loving test.
5. They may get cast down, but they are not destroyed by any setbacks (II Cor 4:7-10); they live devotedly by a few kingdom facts – God, Christ, Bible, faith, church, love.

G. **Winners embrace conflict.** They know they are at war with enemies inside and out.

1. David embraced a fight for God's glory (I Sam 17:29). You must do the same though much different and more difficult than using a proven, superior weapon on Goliath, or do you have a superior weapon – the power of Christ in you to do all things?!
2. Winners know not a single good thing is in them by nature, meaning they will always be going against their feelings, their nature, their proclivities, their preferences, etc.
3. They know God revealed the greatest threat and most important prophecy for them is the perilous times of the last days of Christian compromise (II Tim 3:1-17; 4:1-4).
4. They know in every church there will be belly-worshippers, harsh haters, weak compromisers, learning-disabled fools, stubborn self-righteous scorners, etc., etc.
5. Rather than get discouraged by such losers, they overcome their own beams before resenting others' motes, and they show true spiritual religion for others to follow.

H. **Winners win by love.** It is the greatest grace; and if not by love, you lose out totally.

1. If there is one thing to emphasize concluding this study, it is the importance of love, for victorious living begins and ends with what you did to others for God's glory.
2. Please see the clear superiority of brotherly love over any abilities (I Cor 12:28-31), for the more excellent way of brotherly love exceeds the greatest gifts ever given.
3. Please apply the crucial need for brotherly love to your good works (I Cor 13:1-3), for anything you

learn or do is empty and worthless without self-denying charity.

4. Build the pyramid of good works God's way (Gal 5:6; II Pet 1:5-8; I Thess 1:2-4), which emphasizes brotherly love above all other fruit and traits of Christians.
5. If Jesus taught loving service was the greatest, then it is crucial to His view of VCL; He wants all men to recognize us as His disciples by our brotherly love (Jn 13:35).

I. **Winners Improve.** They do not stay the same or regress. They advance, grow, conquer.

1. If you do not grow, you foolishly waste God's great grace, and you will suffer for it; the Bible warns about this foolish treatment of God's grace (Heb 12:14; II Cor 6:1).
2. They are weakness focused – a sprinter needing a better start does not stress speed continuance. All men default to what is easiest for them, not what is best for God; what do others know about that comes short of the Bible standard? Change that!
3. Parable of the Sower warns to choose to be good ground (Luke 8:15; 8:18), so you will have much fruit of the Spirit, of wisdom, of love, of souls, etc.; three kinds of ground do not bring forth fruit; good ground yields 30-fold, or 60-fold, or 100-fold.
4. You will be held accountable by our just God for privileges (Luke 12:47-48), which are very great and very many to us, unlike most all Christians before us or beside us.
5. How has God's mirror changed you (James 1:21-17)? What have you done with the monetary pounds of His grace He has invested in you (Luke 19:11-27)? TB12 purposed to improve a little in every practice, for far less of a reward than you see.

J. **Winners are about now.** Not the past, it is gone/ forgiven; not the future, it is unknown.

1. Now is the best time to make changes to make you better for God (Ps 119:60). From several perspectives, now is the only time (Prov 27:1; Jas 4:17). TB12 purposed to improve a little in every practice, for far less of a reward than God has offered you.
2. Do not think of a convenient time; do not be almost persuaded (Acts 24:25; 26:28), for conviction can run away faster than most anything you know. Act on it right now.
3. God's providence chose the topic, this moment in your life, and any conviction; do not squander any of three precious gifts you do not deserve but given anyway; you will soon give account of what you by these sermons (II Cor 5:9-11; Rom 14:7-12).
4. Make commitments in your heart now ... promise the Lord ... go home and do them; Judgment Day is one day closer and unless you change you are not readier for it.
5. Meet Jesus as a victorious Christian; alter the world by your influence; provoke us.

Related sermons and documents for further study of this important topic.

a. Twelve Facts for Christians (2023) ... Twelve Facts for Christians (1). b. True Success (2000). c. Running Like Jesus (2004). d. Make Your Life Count (2010). e. Running Your Race (2015). f. Measure of a Man (2019). g. A Mighty Man's Life (2005). h. Incremental Compromise (2016) ... this video (Vimeo). i. War for Your Soul (2021) ... War for Your Soul #1. j. Psalms 101 – David's Heart (2015) ... Psalms 101. k. Thoughts Can Destroy You (2006) ... Your Thoughts Can Destroy You (3 Sermons). l. Happiness Is a Choice (2016). m. The Joy of the Lord (2012). n. The Life of Faith – II (2005) ... Life of Faith. o. Proverb Commentary (15:15) ... the Proverbs 15:15 commentary. p. Priorities for Good Choices (2021) ... Priorities for Good Choices (1). q. Losing Your Life to Find It (2022) ... Lose Your Life to Find It. r. Higher Ground (2015) ... Higher Ground (20 Sermons). s. Love Is the Greatest (2022) ... Love is the Greatest (2 Sermons), Love Is the Greatest (#2), Love Is the Greatest – 2017 (6 Sermons).	t. Proverb Commentary (16:32) ... the Proverbs 16:32 commentary. u. Proverb Commentary (24:10) ... the Proverbs 24:10 commentary. v. Proverb Commentary (25:28) ... the Proverbs 25:28 commentary. w. Living One Day at a Time (2003). x. The Worst Sin (2015). y. The Bible and Depression (1991) ... The Bible and Depression (8 sermons). z. Delusions of Deceived Christians (2008) ... Delusions of Deceived Christians (4 Sermons). aa. Why Bad Things Happen (2012) ... Why Bad Things Happen (1 Sermon). bb. Faith or Feelings (2000) ... Faith or Feelings. cc. Inputs (2014) ... Inputs – Slides. dd. Elihu Exalts God (2021) ... Elihu Exalts God (13 sermons). ee. God Distortions (2012) ... God Distortions. ff. Haggai's Lessons (2015) ... this video (Vimeo). gg. Reviving First Love (2005) ... Reviving First Love. hh. Character without Christ (2021) ... Character without Christ (1). ii. Child Training Table (2018) ... Child Training Goals and Priorities – Table. jj. What Is a Great Church (2014) ... What Is a Great Church?. kk. Zeal / Zealously Affected (2015) ... Zeal, Zeal for the Lord, Zealously Affected. ll. Three Basic Rules – I Cor 10:31-33 (2016) ... Three Basic Rules.
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