

A pair of worn, dark red boxing gloves hanging from a rope against a dark background. The gloves are made of leather and show signs of use, with some scuffing and discoloration. The laces are visible on the top glove. The background is a gradient of dark colors, possibly a wall or a backdrop.

Greater
Victories

David Brandt Berg

GREATER VICTORIES

David Brandt Berg

A Mountain Streams book

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Keith Phillips would like to thank Michael Roy, Phillip Sherwood, and Reuben Rushevsky for their assistance in compiling and editing this book.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Bible quotations in this booklet are from the New King James Version, © 1982 Thomas Nelson, Inc. References marked “KJV” are from the King James Version of the Bible.

ISBN 3-03730-043-4

Edited by Keith Phillips

© 2002 Aurora Production AG, Switzerland

All Rights Reserved. Printed in Thailand.

Visit our Web site at www.auroraproduction.com

CONTENTS

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Introduction | v |
| Run the Race | 1 |
| Love Never Fails | 5 |
| Dumps | 11 |
| Fighters | 25 |
| Attack Your Fears | 37 |
| Staying Alive..... | 49 |
| Your Best Friend | 63 |
| Afterword | 70 |
| About the Author | 71 |

INTRODUCTION

“Victory isn’t simply walking across the goal line; it’s struggling through opposition to reach the goal.” That’s just as true of the Christian’s spiritual life as it is of sports, with this one important difference: In the spiritual struggle the victory goes to those who depend on the Lord’s strength and abilities, rather than their own.

To be a *winning* Christian, you can’t just sit there like a spectator; you need to get in shape and stay in shape spiritually. To be a champion, you need to train like a champion. Put in contemporary terms, the apostle Paul explained it like this: “In a race everyone runs, but only one person gets first prize. So run your race to win. To win the contest you must [lay aside anything] that would keep you from doing your best. An athlete goes to all this trouble just to win a blue ribbon or a silver cup, but we do it for a heavenly reward that never disappears. So I run straight to the goal with purpose in every step. I fight to win. I’m not just shadow-boxing or playing around” (1 Corinthians 9:24–26 TLB).

David Brandt Berg has inspired tens of thousands to become winning Christians. If you’re out to win, **Greater Victories** will help you do just that!

Run the Race

A Bible Study on Hebrews 12:1

“**W**herefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which [does] so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”¹

The original text of this epistle was not divided into chapters. The translators did that. So you've got to keep in mind the preceding chapter in order to understand what “great cloud of witnesses” Paul is talking about. It is Hebrews chapter 11, of course, which some people refer to as the “Faith Hall of Fame.” Paul is referring to all the saints who have already gone on to be with the Lord. And they're not only watching us, they're praying for us. They are like our cheering section in the heavenly stadium, cheering for their team—you and me and everyone

¹ Hebrews 12:1 KJV

else who is serving the Lord. Whenever one of us scores a goal, they really cheer! Whenever one of us wins a soul, all the angels in Heaven rejoice.¹

Think how wonderful it is that there are millions of witnesses up there in Heaven, all watching and praying for us. Sometimes the Lord even has them come down here to help us. *This* life is where the real action is, where the big tests and battles are taking place. Once you leave this life there are other things in store for you, but this life provides the primary tests. This is what the whole universe is watching, the big game, the World Cup! So since they are all watching us, what should we do? Paul explains:

“Let us lay aside every weight.” What are the weights?—The things that slow us down, that hinder us from getting the job done. The Lord allows us to wear those weights for a while, to strengthen us. Sometimes runners wear weights while training, in order to build up their muscles. Then, when they take the weights off, they feel like they can almost fly! So sometimes the Lord allows us to wear a few weights to test us and strengthen our spiritual muscles. But when they have served their purpose, then it’s time to lay them aside and run the race.

“And the sin which does so easily beset us.” What is sin?—Not doing the *most* important thing God wants us to do, the way He wants us to do it—not hitting the bull’s eye, the center of His will. So, “let

¹ Luke 15:10

us lay aside the weights and the sins”—anything that holds us back from doing our best to be what God wants us to be.

Then, after laying aside all these weights and distractions and sins, what are we supposed to do? “Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.” You have to *do* God’s will; you have to *do* God’s work! As long as you are doing the job He has for you, as long as you’re doing His will, you’re running the race.

You can only “run with patience” if you have faith and are trusting the Lord. If you didn’t have patience, you would lose heart and quit, wouldn’t you? You’d say, “I’m tired of doing all this hard work, especially when people never thank me and don’t appreciate me and don’t realize what a hard job this is!” If you didn’t have patience, you couldn’t do it. In another epistle Paul encourages us: “Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”¹

It’s a race in which some are going to win more than others. Some are going to receive greater rewards than others do. It may be because they performed their duties faithfully and well, even if they weren’t able to do a lot of public outreach and witnessing. I think that some of the little people who do the most unseen jobs in the Lord’s service are perhaps going to get rewarded the most one of these days. They are the ones who will step forward to receive their medals, rewards, and crowns from

¹ Galatians 6:9

Jesus. For the first time, they will get everything that they deserve, and the whole universe is going to hear about their faithfulness to Jesus!

Picture this: At the sound of a drum roll, a woman steps forward to receive her reward. “Who is that? I never heard of her!”

“Don’t you know? That is one of the volunteer office workers who helped make a wonderful outreach ministry possible!”

Dum-ta-dum-ta-dum! Out step some others. “Who are they?”

“Those are some print shop workers. If they hadn’t been diligent in their work, a lot of Gospel literature would never have been printed.”

Dum-ta-dum-ta-dum! “And who are all those people?”

“They operated and maintained the computer systems that furthered the Gospel, repaired the Christian volunteers’ cars, organized relief work, taught children about Jesus, sponsored missionaries, and did countless other jobs.”

So we’re to “run with patience the race that is set before us,” which is serving the Lord however and wherever He has called us. And the only way we can have the patience we need to run and win this race is by doing what? “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.”¹ So keep your eyes on Jesus!

¹ Hebrews 12:2

Love Never Fails

All the introspection, analyzing, and agonizing over your weaknesses, failures, and faults are merely works of the flesh that will have to be repeated next week. Battles never cease! “*Many* are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.”¹

Only God can do it! Our salvation is only by grace, never by our own works or battling in the flesh with our sins. If *God* can't deliver us, nobody can!

If you're trying to attain a state of sinless perfection, you're doomed to disappointment. You'll *never* make it! Not even the apostle Paul counted himself to have attained.² He kept making mistakes for the rest of his life and committed a classic blunder by trying to please the conservative religious leaders of his day. That permanently cost him his freedom, and ultimately his head.³ Nevertheless, he was

¹ Psalm 34:19

³ Acts chapter 21

² Philippians 3:12

a good apostle and faithful evangelist who did a tremendous job in spite of all his shortcomings, failures, sins, and mistakes.

If you think the time's coming when you'll no longer have to fight sin and the "old self,"¹ you're mistaken. *I'm* still at it. How about you? That's why we have so many victories: We have so many battles, and so much to fight against—mostly our own stinking selves! God knows we should be growing, passing a few tests, surviving a few trials, and having a few triumphs and testimonies, but if you think you're ever going to become some sort of "sinless saint," I'm afraid you're going to be disappointed!

Remember, love never fails. I have a hard time correcting other people for the same mistakes that I'm guilty of myself, and of which most of us are guilty—and sometimes even worse. So about all I can do is bawl them out momentarily, confess what a horrible mess I have made along the same line, cry a little, pray a little and sympathize a little; then we hug each other, forgive each other, and try again.

"But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."²—And, let's face it, you've got plenty of them! I think you are going to find out sooner or later that the "thorn in the flesh"³ that God is going to use to keep you humble is some besetting sin which will take a lot of the grace of God for you to keep overcom-

¹ Ephesians 4:22

³ 2 Corinthians 12:7

² Matthew 6:15

ing, and you'll probably keep battling it for the rest of your days. This is what helps keep us in shape spiritually. As I've often said, "There's no triumph without a trial, no testimony without a test, no victory without a battle—so keep fighting!"

You're bound to win sometimes, and when you lose, it will keep you humble and help others to know you're only human—and it will help you to give *God* all the glory! I do not believe in the doctrines of eradication of sin or mere suppression of sin and temptation that some people teach, but rather in the good old Bible doctrine of habitation: "Christ *in* you, the hope of glory."¹ Jesus declared, "Without Me you can do nothing."² He even said, "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do."³ And Paul later wrote of Him, "Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered."⁴ The "holiness" doctrine of eradication is all too often a vain show of self-righteous, sanctimonious, holier-than-thou hypocrisy!

You might as well face it: You can't get the victory! It's *impossible* for you to get the victory! Only Christ can. Let go and let God! You can't do it yourself. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."⁵ Only God can give salvation. You can't earn it, work for it, work

¹ Colossians 1:27³ John 5:19⁵ Ephesians 2:8–9² John 15:5⁴ Hebrews 5:8

it up, pray it down, pray it through, or become so wholly sanctified that you're some kind of sinless saint!

You haven't got anybody's righteousness except Christ's, and He's the only One who can give it to you. Your own righteousness stinks! It's "filthy rags."¹ So quit trying so hard in your own strength! Let God do it. Let the light in, and the darkness will flee of itself.

Get so full of the Spirit and the Word that you don't have time to worry about your own stinking self or how bad you are. Of course you're bad! So are all the rest of us! Only Jesus is good! I gave up on myself a long time ago, like Paul did when he said, "O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!"² Hallelujah! He's the only One who can do it!

You're glorifying Satan when you talk about your sins. You're glorifying self when you talk about your faults, because you're talking about yourself instead of Jesus.

You just can't possibly tell people how bad you are, so quit trying. Let's talk about Jesus! And let's avoid being harsh on others for poor little blunders of the mind rather than sins of the heart. Let's forgive one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us.³

¹ Isaiah 64:6

³ Ephesians 4:32

² Romans 7:17–25

We all need to apply to ourselves what Jesus said to the self-righteous hypocrites: “But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’”¹ So for God’s sake, let’s remember that only Jesus can do it. Let’s quit trying to legislate righteousness. It’s a gift of God! Let God do it! Love never fails! Jesus never fails! What everybody needs is *love*. If they’re not going to find it with Jesus and amongst His followers, you and me, where are they going to find it?

¹ Matthew 9:13

Dumps

This morning I was discouraged and frustrated about something. My wife sensed it, so she cheerfully began to sing this chorus:

Cheer up, you saints of God, there's nothing to
worry about,
Nothing to make you feel afraid, nothing to
make you doubt!
Our God has never failed, so why not trust Him
and shout?
You'll be glad you trusted Him tomorrow!

The problem is that when we're downcast, if we start talking about the situation, we usually end up voicing our complaints and doubts and speaking defeat. That's what I did when I replied half-jokingly: "Fold up, ye saints of God, there's nothing to be happy about!" I was just singing it lightheartedly, but it was really the way I was feeling—and it was kind of nice for a while. "Poor me!"

When you have the “poor me’s,” you’re usually just trying to get attention and sympathy. When the children of Israel complained in the wilderness, they were trying to make Moses and the Lord feel sorry for them.¹ Your pride is wounded, your ego has been a little deflated, your self-confidence has been a little shaken, and you begin to wonder then if everything is a mistake. Maybe you are never right about *anything!* In come Mr. and Mrs. Doubt and all the little Doubtlets, and Mr. and Mrs. Devil and all the little Devils, and you pull up a chair and invite them to talk it over—and pretty soon you start agreeing with them. “Yes, that’s right! I never was very much of a Christian after all! How could God use *me?* I don’t really have a very victorious, overcoming life, and I’m not perfect. I’m just a big mess. I might as well quit!”

It’s because you get your eyes on yourself instead of the Lord—introspection instead of Heaven-spec-tion. You think so much about yourself and your own faults, frailties, mistakes, and sins that your “self” really gets you down. The Devil can tell you a lot of truth about yourself that’s horrible, not to speak of the lies he tells you, so if you start listening to the Devil, there’s no end to it. If you listen to him, he can make you sound even worse than you really are, and that’s pretty bad!

Then you start listening to your critics, or perhaps some friend or member of your family makes

¹ Exodus 16:2–3

some casual remark that they don't really mean or that you misinterpret, and the Devil exaggerates the situation until you get disheartened and feel like giving up.

It reminds me of King David when he said, "Now I shall perish someday by the hand of Saul."¹ How could David have made a song out of that? It would have sounded terrible! "Someday I shall surely die! Someday I will be defeated. Someday the Devil will get me. Someday my enemies will kill me. Maybe it's not worth it after all! God has failed me. I'm a failure. I might as well quit!"—Which was exactly what the Devil wanted to persuade David to do by that barrage of doubt and self-pity.

How could David have made a song out of that? What kind of doleful dirge, sung in a mournful minor key, would that have been? I guess that's why you never find that in one of David's psalms. David evidently said it, because he's quoted in the Bible as saying it—one of those brief little outbursts prompted by the Devil that manages to get through before we catch ourselves and realize how bad it really sounds. But David had enough sense not to make a song out of it and keep singing that tune. Instead, in the Book of Psalms he takes a positive approach, defying his enemies and praising God in spite of his troubles, because he knew that God would work everything out, because He always had and because He promised to.

¹ | Samuel 27:1

When you're discouraged, the Devil makes you mad at the truth because he's about to be defeated by it. He makes you angry when people try to cheer you up, and makes you upset at the very people who are trying to help you, because you can't enjoy your misery as much if they're trying to make you happy. You're ashamed because your defeatism looks so bad alongside their victorious attitude, so you attempt to cover up in a fit of fury against them, or you try to find fault with them and others and *everything*—even God—to excuse your own stinking self for being such a grouch.

So this morning I was tempted to get mad at my wife when she tried to cheer me up with that song, and I responded, “Oh, yeah?” and jokingly began to sing the reverse: “Fold up, you saints of God, there's *nothing* to be happy about; everything to make you feel afraid, everything to make you doubt.” That far was a little funny because it was so obviously defiant and my sin was so apparent, but when I got to the next line and saw what the reverse of the song was leading to, it scared me and I didn't care to go on singing it. I knew God wasn't wrong and He had *never* failed. So how could I sing, “Our God has always failed, so why not murmur and doubt? You'll be sorry you trusted Him tomorrow!” If there's anything I know, it is that God has never failed and I've *always* been glad I trusted Him tomorrow. So I knew that was a lie and I just couldn't possibly sing

the song in reverse, no matter how bad I felt. It just wasn't the truth!

Look what a horrible lie even that little song is, if you sing it in reverse. That's the way the Devil operates: He starts out seemingly innocent and honest with something that doesn't seem too bad. "Fold up, ye saints of God, there's nothing to be happy about"—which is the way we sometimes feel when we get discouraged. But it's the horror that this leads to that shakes us up and shocks us into realizing what a liar the Devil is and how bad a state we're getting into.

Thank God for His shock treatments when we realize what a terrible thing we're saying or doing as a result of some little doubt or fear or disobedience that we started with. One of the things that helped snap me out of it was when I realized what a terrible example I was being to my wife, who was trying to lift me up and encourage me, while I was resisting it. Even if I was half joking, the danger of dragging her down with me finally woke me up. I realized that I had to get the victory for *her* sake, if nothing else!

My grandfather used to say, "If you must go to Hell, at least don't let somebody else stumble over you into Hell too!" But this isn't possible, because if you're going to Hell you're bound to drag others with you. Everybody has influence. No man lives to himself, and no man dies to himself.¹ Each of our lives is bound to affect others. No man is an island. Everybody's influencing somebody, even when they seem to be alone.

¹ Romans 14:7

Sometimes just a word or a glance or a smile can make a big difference—how we act or sound or seem. If it's not cheerful and victorious and uplifting, then it could easily hurt others and pull them down with us. We're either going to pull people up to our level or drag them down to it, one or the other. There's no in between, no neutral ground. We're going to be either hot or cold eventually—and lukewarmness is the worst form of coldness, because it doesn't know it's cold.¹

In this sense, that old poem about the high road and the low road is deceptive:

To every soul there opens a road:
To the high soul, the high road,
And the low soul, the low;
But the vast multitude drifts back and forth,
On the misty flats between.²

The vast multitude, let me tell you, is not drifting back and forth! They're settling down to the bottom, but so gradually that they don't even know it!

Just a little bit of doubt, a little bit of fear, a little bit of complaint, a little bit of discouragement, can grow and grow until you are completely defeated and a terrible influence on others. It seems innocent enough at first, and the Devil tries to persuade you that it's not so bad, but it has a bitter end!

¹ Revelation 3:15–16

² John Oxenham (1852–1941). “The Ways,” paraphrased.

You'll go one way or the other—up or down! There's no standing still. You're either climbing and getting to the top, or you're sinking and drifting downward, ever downward! And when you start going down, there's no stopping place. You never stop until you hit bottom—unless you repent and snap out of it and ask God to forgive you and throw out the Devil's whole pack of lies and all your doubts and fears and discouragement, and follow Jesus and His Word, and hold on to His promises. The future is as bright as the promises of God! You've got to keep your eyes on Jesus, because there's no other way to look but down—and that's the pit, the dismal abyss of horrible nothingness.

You're going to either be positive or negative, one or the other. You can't be just a little bit of both. That's what the Devil will try to tell you: "It doesn't hurt to be just a *little* disheartened, to feel just a *little* bit sorry for yourself. After all, you deserve to enjoy a little bit of discouragement so you can get some sympathy from others. Why not? Misery loves company! Let's make everybody else a little bit miserable, too, so we can *all* enjoy it!"

The minute you start listening to the Devil you're done for, because there's no end to it, no stopping place! He'll never quit until he's dragged you to the very bottom and left you utterly defeated, a terrible reproach to the cause of Christ and a drag on everybody around you. That's the Devil's kind of witnessing! That's the result of putting his doubts and fears

into words and sharing his lies with others. It has just the opposite effect of witnessing the truth of God and His Word. It drags others down and causes them to become unhappy, discouraged, doubting, fearing, and complaining just like you are.

Words are *real* things! They bless or they curse; they lift up or they knock down; they save or they damn. There's no in between! Jesus said that each of us will have to account for every idle word. "But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the Day of Judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."¹

So, if you're discouraged, friend, for God's sake don't murmur, complain, and voice your doubts and fears to others! "Confess your trespasses to one another,"² yes, but don't go around spreading your doubts, discouragement, worries, and woes to other unsuspecting souls. Keep those things to yourself, and just share them with God.—Or if you sincerely want help, ask someone who is spiritually strong to advise and pray for you. Others have enough troubles of their own without you dumping on them. They may already have burdens more than they can bear. Yours may be the last straw.

When the Lord said, "Bear one another's burdens,"³ He didn't mean that kind—a burden of doubt and anxiety and a lack of trust and faith in

¹ Matthew 12:36–37

³ Galatians 6:2

² James 5:16

God. He meant to get under the load somebody else has and help them to lift it—not dump yours on top of somebody else who’s already overloaded! It means to help lift, not hinder, to ease the load—somebody else’s load—not your own.

As for us, Paul says, “Each one shall bear his own load,”¹ and, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”² Ask God for help, and if you really are overloaded, He’ll help you. If you really need help, tell it to Jesus first of all. Seek the Lord. “Cast your burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain you.”³ If you’re weighed down with care at the end of the day, just roll it over on Jesus and go to sleep—and let *Him* stay up all night. Don’t worry about it. Let the Lord do the worrying. His shoulders are broad enough to carry any load—all the burdens of the world put together, including His own!

It reminds me of the story of the little girl who prayed: “Please take care of Yourself, dear God, because if anything were to happen to You, we’d *all* be sunk!” That’s for sure, because every one of us is a big mess. If we don’t keep our eyes on the Lord and our mind on His Word, we’re doomed to defeat, doubt, disillusionment, and final failure!

Sometimes you don’t know what to believe: Somebody says, “Hang on!” and somebody else says, “Let go!” Well, if you put each in the right context, they’re *both* right: Let go of the Devil’s dis-

¹ Galatians 6:5

³ Psalm 55:22

² Philippians 4:13

couragement, doubts, fears, and burdens, and hang on to the Lord. Hitch your wagon to His star and there'll be no stopping you! But if you fill the wagon with all the rocks the Devil would like to pile on, you'll sink for sure. Just roll them overboard and let them fall behind, while you go on with the Lord.

Maybe you think the Lord can't bear the weight of some of your problems. Some people are like that. They remind me of the fellow who was crossing a frozen river one winter, many years ago. Fearful that he might fall through the ice and drown, he was crawling very slowly and cautiously on his hands and knees. Hearing a noise in the distance, he looked behind him and saw a team of four horses confidently coming towards him, pulling a large wagon full of heavy scrap iron over the very ice on which he was so hesitantly crawling. Let me tell you, God can take it! He can handle any load you want to give Him.

You've got to have some faith in God or you're sunk, for without Him you can do nothing.¹ If you don't hold on to the Lord, you're lost. Anything, everybody and everything can get you down—in fact, almost nothing. Your spiritual balance will be so delicate that nobody will be able to say anything to you for fear that it will tip you off balance and you'll crash. The slightest provocation, exaggeration, or insinuation, and you're defeated. Your Christian veneer, that nice Christian polish, is so thin that it's easily scratched. It's only on the sur-

¹ John 15:5

face, so it only takes one little scratch to expose the horrible truth underneath.

Some people are so delicate that they can't take the slightest bit of pressure. They collapse because they're not holding on to the Lord, they're not standing on the Word, they do not believe in His promises. They're depending on some supposed righteousness of their own, some greatness they think they have. And let me tell you, that kind of sanctimonious hypocrisy can't stand the shock treatments of the Devil. It shatters very easily. Then everyone else is given a terrible look at all the horror within, because they didn't really hold on to the Lord and keep their eyes on Heaven. Remember the little saying:

All through life, my brother, if you'd be a happy
soul,
Keep your eye upon the doughnut, not upon
the hole!

Keep your eyes on Heaven. Keep your eyes on the goal, and the victory in your soul. Always shout, never doubt! When the Devil tempts you to get down and discouraged, fight! Don't even listen to him, much less surrender. Start doing something positive. Start saying something cheerful and encouraging—like my wife did for me this morning, when she began to sing, “Cheer up, you saints of

God” in her sweet way, the best she could, trying to remind me to trust the Lord.

Don't just stand there, *do* something! Sing, shout, praise the Lord, quote Scriptures! Hit the Devil back! Rebuke him with the Word! That's what Jesus did when the Devil tempted and lied to Him in the wilderness. He just quoted the Scriptures: “It is written.”¹ The Devil is a liar and the father of it,² and he can't take the Word. “Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.”³ He will turn tail and run. Put on the helmet of salvation and the breastplate of righteousness, use the shield of faith to quench all the fiery darts of the Evil One; gird yourself with the truth; be shod with the Gospel of peace, and take up that white-hot sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and cut the Devil to the heart.⁴ Drive him away! Tell him that you have no part in him, and he has no part in you!

Then get busy working. Tell others about Jesus and salvation. Get positive. Help somebody else. Get so busy with someone else's troubles that you can't think about your own stinking self. Get so busy trying to make somebody else happy that you can't help but be happy yourself.

Talk about Jesus. Talk about the Word of God. Talk about the needs of others. Talk about the *good* things. “Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things

¹ Matthew 4:3–10

³ James 4:7

² John 8:44

⁴ Ephesians 6:10–17

are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.”¹ “Speak evil of no one”—not even yourself.²

Keep the faith! Keep your eyes on Jesus! Get busy helping somebody that needs help, and forget your own stupid self. Of course you’re a failure! Of course you’re a big mess! We all are! When we start looking at ourselves, we really get down.

Let’s get going with God! He’s the only One who can make it, and He’ll pull you through if you just give Him a chance. Hang on to His Word, and let Him hang on to you. Let go and let God! There’s an old song that says, “He’ll hold me fast!” I can’t hold myself. I can’t help myself. Only God can help me. He’s my only hope.

“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, who alone is wise,” commit your way, your life, your mind, your thoughts, your time.³ “For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.”⁴ Only *He* can do it! Just give Him a chance. Keep your eyes on Jesus. Let’s talk about *Jesus!* Let’s talk about love—*His* love!

¹ Philippians 4:8

² Titus 3:2

³ Jude 24–25

⁴ 2 Timothy 1:12

As you pour out, He'll pour in, and you can never outpour Him! It's like the little discovery I made the other day when I was trying to get some scum off the surface of a pot of water. Every time I tried to pour it off, it just got more stirred up. Finally I got the idea of putting the pot under a faucet of running water. This caused the water level in the pot to rise until it overflowed. The scum on the top just rolled off and went down the drain.

God does something similar with us in the refining fires of His trials and tests. He puts our "pot" over the fire and brings us to a boil so all the scum and dross comes to the top. It was always there, but it just didn't come to the surface where everybody could see it until God put us on the fire. That's what the fire is for—to get rid of our dross. We have to let Him boil it off and get rid of it!

Don't tell us how bad you are. We don't want to know! We want to think about Jesus. Let's talk about Jesus! Don't voice your doubts and fears and lack of faith. We don't want to hear about it. We want to hear about Jesus. Keep your eyes on Jesus! As the famous old hymn says,

Only Jesus, only Jesus, only He can satisfy.
Every burden becomes a blessing,
When I know my Lord is nigh!

Fighters

“Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”¹

Many people, when they receive Jesus as their Savior, assume that they’ll immediately become very happy and all their problems will be solved. They think they’ll never have any more difficulties, but this usually isn’t the case.

When discussing the tests and trials that new Christians often face, especially those who are witnessing their newfound faith to others, my mother used to say, “The Devil doesn’t start shooting until you ‘go over the top!’” She was alluding to the trench warfare of World War I. The soldiers on both sides often spent days or weeks huddled in their trenches, during which time they held their fire. But whenever one side ordered an offensive and their soldiers climbed over the top of the trenches to attack their enemy’s territory, the other side would immediately start shooting at them with all their big guns!

¹ 2 Timothy 2:3

It reminds me of the story about Sam, a Christian who was the servant of a wealthy, unbelieving plantation owner. One day Sam's boss asked him, "Why is it, Sam, that you're a Christian, and yet you have all sorts of problems and tribulations? I don't even believe in God, and I don't have nearly as much trouble as you do!"

Sam replied, "Well, boss, I guess I'll have to think about that one before I can answer you."

A few days later, Sam's boss went duck hunting, and took Sam along to help him.

After Sam's boss had shot several ducks, he shouted to Sam, "Bag the live ones, Sam! Bag the live ones! Leave the dead ones lay!"¹

When Sam returned with the ducks, he said, "Boss, I think I have the answer to the question you asked me the other day. I'm a *live* one!" And he went on to explain, "The Devil's afraid I'm going to get away, so he tries to bag me first. You're a dead one! He's not a bit worried about you. He's already *got* you!"

The Devil is out to stop each new Christian the best he can. He can't get us back once we're saved, because we can't lose our salvation; we're the Lord's forever. The battle for our souls is won, and it's a permanent victory.² We will never have to fight *that* battle again, thank God! That was a battle we

¹ When hunting ducks or other fowl, some are killed outright. Others are only wounded and will sometimes revive enough to fly away if the hunter doesn't quickly grab and "bag" them.

² John 6:37; 10:28–29

couldn't have possibly won ourselves. Jesus won it for us when He suffered and bled and died on the cross to save us.¹

Although the Devil can't get us back, he can still give us a lot of trouble. He will especially do all he can to try to keep us from serving God and winning others into the Lord's kingdom. Every person won to Christ is a threat to the Devil. Every new Christian is potentially capable of winning hundreds of others away from him, so the Devil tries to destroy his or her usefulness to the Lord. Of course, he tries to destroy these new Christians, too, through accidents or sickness or any way he can. He can't destroy their *spirits* any longer because they're saved, but he can sure try to give them a lot of other troubles.

In the face of such opposition, some Christians ask, "Well, what did receiving Jesus do for me, anyway? I'm having these horrible trials now!" Christians who complain like that need to stop and think about what Jesus has done for them. They're *saved*; that's the main thing. They've got eternal life; they're not going to Hell; they don't have to worry about death anymore. Even if they die, He's going to take care of them. Jesus said, "I will *never* leave you nor forsake you,"² and, "I am with you *always*], even unto the end of the world."³

Where's their gratitude? Where's their love and loyalty? Isn't the love of their Savior worth fight-

¹ Ephesians 2:8–9; Romans 6:23; 5:8

³ Matthew 28:20 KJV

² Hebrews 13:5

ing for? Aren't their new Christian brothers and sisters worth fighting for? Maybe they don't want to go through all these trials and tribulations just for themselves, but shouldn't they be willing to fight for the sake of others? Jesus won the battle for *their* eternal happiness. He fought and suffered for their salvation, and now He wants them to be willing to fight and suffer some, if necessary, to save others.

They also need to remind themselves that there are all kinds of benefits to being a Christian. They've got all the promises in the Bible on their side now. Yes, "many are the afflictions of the righteous," but the second half of that verse promises, "but the Lord *delivers* him out of them all."¹ Even if they have to make some sacrifices, the Lord's going to repay them a hundred times over in this life.² They can also have peace of mind, contentment of heart, and a feeling of genuine accomplishment for all they do for the Lord.³

They have the greatest power in the universe—God Himself—on their side. They can rest assured that no matter what happens, they're going to win in the long run. Regardless of how difficult the day-to-day battles may be or how heavy the fighting may get, they're going to win the overall war. The final victory is already theirs. They cannot lose because they're on the winning side!

¹ Psalm 34:19

² Mark 10:30

³ Isaiah 26:3; John 14:27;

Romans 5:1; Philipians 4:7

They need to keep their eyes ahead on the eternal goal, as is brought out in the “faith” chapter, Hebrews 11: “By faith, by faith, by faith...” It says that all the great patriarchs of the Bible looked forward, through the eyes of faith. They weren’t satisfied with being citizens of this world; they looked for a heavenly country, a heavenly city, made by the Lord. They were willing to go through trials and tribulations and be strangers and pilgrims here—people without a country—because they knew they had one coming and they knew it was worth fighting, living, suffering, and sometimes even dying for!¹

Paul wrote, “I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”² So although there are battles, the eternal rewards for fighting those battles are worth paying a price for, worth sacrificing for.

Even the rewards received along the way for serving Jesus make it worth the fight. What soldier on earth gets paid a hundred times everything he gives up to join the army? That’s what the Lord promises His soldiers here and now. All this and Heaven too!³ Our sufferings aren’t even worthy to be compared with the blessings that we already have, much less the glory we’re going to enjoy!

Christians who are besieged with problems should count their blessings and think about all

¹ Hebrews 11:13–16

³ Mark 10:30

² Romans 8:18

these positive things, not the negative—the doubts, fears, woes, troubles, and afflictions the Devil sends their way. They should thank God for their blessings, thank God for His love, thank God for His salvation, thank God for His protection, thank God for His provision, thank God for everything—whatever God sends their way or lets the Devil bring!¹

New Christians need to realize that there's a war going on—a war of the worlds between the Devil's dominion and the kingdom of God—and they need to be prepared to fight in that war. They need to understand that they've joined the Lord's army and it's engaged in battle with the Devil and his evil works. It's a fight! After all, that's what armies are for—to fight battles. They're on the winning side, but they've still got to fight!

Christians who start doing something for the Lord and then complain about some of the hardships sound like the athlete who joined a sports team and then moaned, “Well, now that I've joined the team, why do I have to *train*? Why do I have to go through these tests and trials? I thought I was *appointed* to win!” That's not the way it works! You've got to earn your laurels in this fight. His Word says, “Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”²

In the Lord's army, He often lets His soldiers go through some of the heaviest tests in the very begin-

¹ Philippians 4:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:18

² 2 Timothy 2:3

ning, just like boot camp in the army, where new recruits experience some of the toughest training in order to weed out all those who just can't make it. The Lord allows the Devil to test the "recruits" to see if they can take it. The battles will often rage hot and heavy until the Devil sees that he can't stop them, but then he usually gives up for a while and tries something else. The Bible says, "Resist the Devil and he will *flee* from you,"¹ and, "When the Enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him!"²

Serving the Lord is often a struggle, but we learn to like it because we know we're on the right side, the winning side, and we've got the right Commander, Jesus, who we're proud of and happy to live for and serve. We like the battle, just as an athlete likes the athletic trial. We like to fight the Devil and defeat him in the never-ending battle for the souls of men. We like the fight, the excitement, and the exhilaration of victory on the battlefield. Every time we win a soul to the Lord, that's another victory, another battle won. What a contrast to the quitters and complainers!

God got so sick of the way the children of Israel complained and murmured against Moses and Him after they left Egypt that He let all but two of the older generation—millions of people—die in the desert. Imagine! He had delivered them from slav-

¹ James 4:7

² Isaiah 59:19

ery, miraculously guided them, and provided their every need, and all they could do was complain.

He had told them to go in and possess the Promised Land, and had promised to help them overcome all obstacles, but when their scouts came back and reported that there were walled cities and giants, the people whined, “Oh, yes, it’s a land flowing with milk and honey, but we don’t want to fight those big giants!”

So the Lord as good as said, “If you prefer to die in the desert rather than fight for the Promised Land, if you feel that God’s country is not worth fighting for, then you can die for the desert!” And they wandered for 40 more years in the wilderness. The older generation died there and their bones, bleached white on the desert sands, became a testimony to their unbelief and constant complaining.

God then allowed their believing children, who by that time were adults, to enter the Promised Land, conquer and possess it. Only the second generation had faith; the older generation had lost it. The older ones had survived all those hardships in the desert, but were never able to enjoy the benefits of the Promised Land. They suffered so many things in vain—and this has been a sobering lesson to all God’s children ever since.¹

The people that fight almost to victory and then complain and quit just before the victory

¹ Numbers chapters 13–14

is won never get to enjoy it. They go through so much suffering and hardship, and then miss the victory. Talk about losers! Those who quit just short of victory are the *real* losers. They lose so many benefits and blessings and rewards. The Lord says, “Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.”¹

It reminds me of a story that was supposed to have taken place during the early days of communist Russia, when Christians suffered terrible persecution. A platoon of Red Army soldiers rounded up some Christians and forced them to strip naked. Then the soldiers forced the Christians at gunpoint to go out onto a frozen lake. The officer in charge told them that if any of them wanted to save themselves from freezing to death, all they had to do was renounce their faith.

So the Christians froze and dropped one by one, until only one was left alive. He finally could not endure it anymore and stumbled across the ice toward the guards, screaming that he would deny his faith. As he approached the soldiers, one of them suddenly ran out onto the ice to meet him.

“Here, take my uniform! Take my gun!” exclaimed the guard. “I’m going out there to die in your place! I was watching all of you, and as each one dropped dead, I saw a crown placed on his head! But just as the hand was coming down from Heaven to place a crown on *your* head, you broke

¹ Revelation 2:10

and ran. So here, take my uniform and my gun. I want to take your place! I want that crown!”

There’s no crown without a cross, no testimony without a test, no triumph without a trial, no victory without a battle! Remember, that’s what you joined the army for—to fight and to *win!* So let’s get on with the battle! As long as you keep fighting, you’ll keep winning.

Take a lesson from John Paul Jones (1747–1792), a famous captain of the fledgling Continental Navy in the American Revolution. During a 1779 sea battle, his ship had been shot out from under him and was sinking. Half his men had been killed and many others had been wounded, including Jones himself. When the enemy captain called upon Jones to surrender, Jones screamed back, “Surrender? Hell no! I have not yet *begun* to fight!” He refused to surrender and kept on fighting—and he eventually won the battle.

That is the kind of fighter who wins victories—the kind that refuses to stop fighting. No soldier who gave up and quit ever won a battle. No soldier who waved the white flag of surrender was ever able to wave his own flag over the enemy’s battlements.

May God raise up soldiers who *like* to fight for the Lord with the weapon of His Word, who enjoy defeating the Devil, who know they can’t lose—conquering heroes who like to live and fight and sacrifice for Jesus and their brethren and the truth! That kind of soldier can’t be conquered. Even if he dies

fighting, he can't lose, because he'll get a crown of glory!

The apostle Paul said, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness."¹ Will *you* be able to say the same?

¹ 2 Timothy 4:7–8

Attack Your Fears

Fear!—We don't realize how much of it is subconscious until we analyze it and try to put it into words; yet we're often afraid to talk about our fears, or even confess to *ourselves* that we're afraid, because that would expose our innermost selves.

But being afraid to talk about our fears is one of the worst fears of all, because fear is like a disease: We can't find the cure until we confess we have it and reveal the symptoms. And it often seems like a *shameful* disease, because if we're honest, we know our fears are often the result of our failures—past failures or possible future failures.

The fear of failure is probably one of the greatest fears people have—the fear of failure in life, love, labor, and for Christians, failing the Lord. For the Christian, the fear of failing God is perhaps second only to the fear of failing *others*, because we know that God will forgive us, but others sometimes find it hard to forgive. The fear of hurting others because of our failure, the fear of letting them down, disap-

pointing them, disillusioning them, discouraging them—the fear that because of our failure, others will also fail—this is hardest to bear. The fear of failing ourselves is least of all. In a way, that is fear of the truth about ourselves: We don't want to admit our limitations and shortcomings.

But *whatever* your fears are, it pays to face them. That's how you draw a line of distinction between the truth and the lie, between reality and the imaginary, between fact and fear.

An incident from my childhood illustrates this principle: As a boy, I delivered papers and handbills door to door, and I frequently encountered big dogs that would chase me and nip at my heels. Occasionally they actually bit me, but most of the time their bark was worse than their bite. I soon discovered that if I turned my back on them and tried to run from them, they were more apt to bite me than if I faced them.

Actually, a dog barks and growls at you because he is afraid of you, and the more afraid *you* are of *him*, the more afraid *he* is of *you*. If he senses that you're afraid, he knows instinctively that you're apt to do something to protect yourself; you're apt to hurt him. When a dog is afraid of you, he is much more apt to bark and growl and possibly even attack you. But as long as you face him and stand your ground, he usually won't attack. The very fact that you face the dog lets him know that, though you may be somewhat afraid of him, you're not *too*

afraid, and that lessens *his* fear of *you*. I've had this happen numerous times, with big and small dogs. If you stand firm and face the dog, though he will probably still growl and snarl a little, he will often turn his head and find a way to get out of your presence, watching you out of the corner of his eye all the time. He will usually back down, turn around, and leave you alone.

But if you're so afraid that you turn your back on him and run, even the littlest dog will probably chase you and possibly even bite you, because he knows you really *are* afraid of him, therefore you are an enemy. His fears of you were well founded; you proved that by running! So he promptly takes advantage of your fear as you retreat by leaping to the attack. Nearly everybody who gets bitten by a dog gets bitten not on the toes, but the heels; not on the shin, but the calf of the leg. Of course, some dogs are so mad or so diseased or so trained that they'll attack you to the face, but even these can be faced down in the power of the Spirit of God!

Now back to that childhood incident: I was about 12 years old. I had gone into a certain yard to deliver a handbill, when out from the backyard came a huge Great Dane, barking and growling furiously. He was coming at me full speed, leaping and bounding, and I thought, *This is it!* I knew I didn't dare turn my back on him or he would bite me for sure, but on the other hand, he was too big for me to face and I *was* invading *his* territory! Thank God I

remembered to pray for the Lord's help. I suddenly jugged my hand out toward him and yelled, "I rebuke you in Jesus' name!"—And did he put on the brakes! He skidded to a stop and looked absolutely startled, turned tail and ran.

So it not only pays to *face* your fears, acknowledge and confess them, but to take a positive stand against them, especially in the power and Spirit of the Lord, claiming the promises from His Word. It wouldn't have done me a bit of good to try to take the "positive thinking" approach and say, "Big old dog, you just don't exist, so I'm going to ignore you!" He would have promptly finished me off to prove that he *did* exist!

It doesn't pay to try and say there's no such thing as evil, sin, or sickness, and just try to ignore the facts. That would be like trying to ignore that you have a disease when you've really got it. As long as you try to hide it, you can't very well find the remedy.

You have to differentiate between reality and the imaginary, the truth and the lie. It doesn't do any good to just shut your eyes and hope the problem goes away, or hope that when you open your eyes again you'll find out it didn't exist, that it was just your imagination.

That big dog *existed*, and he was coming right for me, and it wouldn't have done a bit of good to shut my eyes and hope he would go away, or to tell myself that he was just a figment of my imagination. He was *there*, as real as you or me, and he was headed

for *me!* In that situation, the best thing I could have done was to face him and take action to eliminate the danger, and I did so by launching a counterattack by the power of the Spirit. At first he was on the offensive and I was on the defensive, but the Lord helped me turn the tables. Suddenly he was put on the defensive, and that's when he turned and ran.

As any military strategist knows, it's impossible to win a war as long as you stay on the defensive. Defensive warfare is doomed to defeat. To win a war you have to launch an attack; you have to go on the offensive. You have to attack the enemy! You have to take the initiative! You have to be positive! You have to attack and invade and overpower! You can't just sit there and try to ward him off while *he* attacks and invades, or he'll eventually overpower you. A passive defense never won a war.

Attacking initiative is what wins a war. This is why commando and guerrilla warfare is so successful, even when greatly outnumbered and outgunned. By sudden surprise attacks in unexpected places and weak spots in the enemy's defenses, a few commandos can do a lot of damage. They can hit and run before the enemy even knows what happened, and before the enemy has a chance to retaliate.

It's like little David with Goliath: One little guerrilla defied a whole army.¹ Or like Gideon and his little band: A small bunch of guerrillas defied a whole army.² Or like Jonathan and his armorbearer:

¹ | Samuel chapter 17

² Judges chapter 7

Two more guerrillas defied a whole army.¹ If you've got God with you, you're unbeatable, no matter how small you are! God is not limited to save by many or by few.² Any military strategist knows that no matter how small his forces, if he takes the initiative and attacks first, if he goes on the offensive, he has a definite advantage over his enemy.

So it pays to face your fears, recognize they're there, decide between the real and the unreal, the truth and the lie, and then to go to the *attack* to dispel the vaporous fiction of the fairy tale and to drive away the genuine reality of real threat!

Fear is the exact *opposite* of faith. Just as "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,"³ fear of Satan is really the beginning of death. The Hebrew word translated as "fear" in this verse is *yirah*, which means "reverence." So to fear God is to give Him the respect He deserves. It's a form of worshipping God. Therefore, to fear Satan and his devices is to give him just the kind of worship that he wants.

So you must rebuke that kind of fear just as Jesus did when the Devil tried to get Him to worship him on the mount of temptation. Jesus put the Devil in his place: "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him *only* shall you serve.'"⁴ The implied meaning from the original is: "You shall worship the Lord your God and Him *only* shall you *fear*." You're only to fear

¹ I Samuel 14:1-14

³ Proverbs 9:10

² I Samuel 14:6

⁴ Luke 4:8

God. When we've done something wrong, we *should* be afraid of God. But we're not to be afraid of the Devil, ever!

God's Word says about other kinds of fear that "fear involves torment."¹ Fear of the Devil will wear you down and wear you out. It is damaging and disastrous to you if you harbor it! Fear of the Devil is not of God, "for God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."² And, "You [God] will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You."³

Fear was one of the terrible problems of a girl I once prayed for, Helen Jones. She had been in bed for eight years and had gotten so thin that her skin was stretched over her bones. She looked like a skeleton. She wasn't able to eat any kind of solid food, and could hardly even drink water.

Doctors couldn't find anything wrong with her. They examined her, tried every test, and finally said, "There's nothing medically wrong with her. We don't know what's the matter." Well, God is the Great Physician who can heal *all* our diseases, and forgive all of our sins.⁴ He is the greatest Doctor, and He showed us that her main problem was fear.

Just before several others and I went to pray for her, the Lord reminded us of the Scripture that describes people "who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."⁵ As I laid my

¹ 1 John 4:18

³ Isaiah 26:3

⁵ Hebrews 2:15

² 2 Timothy 1:7

⁴ Psalm 103:3

hands on Helen and began to earnestly pray for her, suddenly I felt the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, and I rebuked the Devil and this fiend of fear that was tormenting her. In the name and authority of Jesus, I ordered him to depart from her and from that house. Because of our faith in God's Word and the power of the Holy Spirit, Helen was instantly delivered!

She got out of bed that day and walked for the first time in years! She had been bedridden, with her feet under the weight of the covers so long, that her feet looked almost like hands. But thank God, that day the Life Giver—Jesus Christ, God's Son—came into that room and delivered her from that horrible spirit of fear that had kept her so bound!

When we saw her just a few weeks later, she was well and strong. Her appetite had been restored, she had gained 40 pounds, and she was absolutely beautiful and charming. She entertained us in her home—perfectly well, fully restored. She even had a new boyfriend.

The Lord promises “perfect peace” to those whose minds are fixed on Him, to those who trust in Him.¹ So if you are troubled by a spirit of fear, put your trust in the Lord. Just tell Satan, “Begone, Devil! Get out of here! I'm putting my trust in God, in Jesus!” The Bible says that if you submit yourself to God and resist the Devil, he will *flee* from you.²

¹ Isaiah 26:3

² James 4:7

God's Word makes it clear that we are in a *spiritual* warfare¹, and that our weapons are not physical, but spiritual and mighty, to the tearing down of strongholds.² This is a picture of Christians attacking the spiritual strongholds of the Devil and ripping them apart.

Jesus said of the Church—which is true Christians, not an institution—“The gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.”³ When I was a boy and I heard preachers use that verse, the way they interpreted it made it sound as though the Church was standing firm on the *defensive*. They pictured the Church as a church building, standing on a big rock, and though all Hell was pounding on its gates, Hell couldn't triumph over the Church. The fires of Hell lapped against its fortifications, but the Church was all bottled up in its little fortress, and the Devil and all the demons of Hell couldn't get in. And that's exactly the way many Christians act. Theirs is a hold-the-fort, purely defensive warfare—a battle for mere survival!

But this is *not* God's picture at all! In that verse, Jesus is referring to Peter's declaration that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior, the Son of God. Jesus told Peter, “Upon this Rock—the fact that I am Christ, the Savior, the only Foundation—will I build My Church!” He was literally saying, “Upon *Me* will I build My Church!”

¹ Ephesians 6:12

³ Matthew 16:18 KJV

² 2 Corinthians 10:4

But now notice the rest of the verse: “And the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it [the Church].” What this really means is that the gates of Hell will not be able to defend themselves against the Church. The gates of Hell itself, the Devil’s territory, his fortresses, Satan’s strongholds, *his* gates, will not be able to withstand the onslaughts of *God’s* people. The gates of Hell shall not prevail. The gates of Hell will not be able to withstand *our* attacks!

It’s a case of mistaken identity, due to people assigning the most common modern usage to the word “prevail”: to overcome, to triumph. What Jesus meant was closer to the meaning of the Latin word *praevalere*, from which “prevail” was derived: to be stronger. What He was saying was that the gates of Hell would not be able to be stronger than, or to stand strong against, the attacks of God’s people.

So the picture Christ painted was not of the Church standing fast behind its closed doors while all Hell attacks, but of Hell trembling behind *its* closed doors, while the Church is in an all-out attack against Hell’s gates, which are collapsing and crumbling under the weight of the power of God through His Church. The people of God are on the *offensive*. The people of God are invading *Hell’s* gates. Do you get the picture?

Jesus said, “I give you authority [power] over all the power of the Enemy.”¹ Through Jesus’ name and

¹ Luke 10:19

authority, you have power over the Devil and can order him what to do. The demons and evil spirits are subject unto us; they have no free will of their own. They cannot do as they please.¹ They have to do what we *tell* them to do in Jesus' name.

If you love God and know that He loves you, you know that He's going to take care of you; you know that *everything* is all right, because God loves you. So why should you be afraid? There's no reason to fear! His perfect love casts out all such fear.²

So face the Devil! Attack him! Resist the Enemy and he'll flee from you! Face your fears in the power of God's Spirit, standing on the promises of His Word, and you cannot fail!

And tho' this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us.

The Prince of Darkness grim—
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo, his doom is sure.
One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers,
No thanks to them, abideth;

¹ Luke 10:17,20

² 1 John 4:18

The Spirit and the gifts are ours,
Through Him who with us sideth.

Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still,
And we will win the battle!
—*Martin Luther (1483–1546)*

Staying Alive

The signs of life are principally manifested by motion, action: There must be change, movement. Just so, to stay alive spiritually, we must have movement. In our lives with the Lord, there are only two directions we can move; there is no standing still. We are either moving forward or backward. When we stop making progress, we're backsliding.

It reminds me of the story about the little boy who fell out of bed. When his mother asked him why it happened, he said, "I guess I went to sleep too near where I got in." That is what is wrong with some Christians. They have gone to sleep spiritually too close to where they "got in." And that's why many of them eventually have problems of a nature that lead to falling out, falling away from the Lord.

Every Christian, every church, every fellowship, every movement of God has to have constant change, revitalization, movement, and action in order to stay alive. And believe me, there is plenty to keep us alive and moving until the Lord comes! Some people think that because Christianity has

spread throughout the world, that there is nothing more to do.

It is said that Alexander the Great died weeping that there were no more worlds to conquer. The irony was that he had hardly *begun* to take over the world! He wasn't even aware that more than half of the world was out there! He had only conquered a little bit of the world—from Greece to India. But because he had conquered the entire world that was known to him, or at least the parts he considered valuable, he believed there was no more to conquer.

Well, he hadn't conquered Rome, the rising world power that was soon to take over his whole empire. It seems that he made a slight mistake. Rome was viewed as a bunch of barbarians at the time of Alexander, so why bother with them? But Rome finally triumphed over *him*—or at least what was left of his empire—and established an empire that went much further than his ever went, subduing France, England, Spain, and other countries that Alexander had probably never heard of. Legend has it that Alexander died somewhere in Persia, drunk and weeping because there were no more worlds to conquer—but he hadn't even heard of most of the world!

The reason some Christians stop making progress is simply because they have lost their *vision*. And when they lose the vision they lose faith. And when they lose faith they no longer have any initiative to do anything. Backsliding is the reverse

of going forward, or pioneering. When you stop pioneering you start backsliding. So when people stop making progress and going forward because they no longer have any faith to take the initiative, to do something different, it's because they have lost the vision, and "where there is no vision, the people perish."¹ They backslide and sink into spiritual oblivion.

When people stop making progress, it shows that they have lost the initiative. Any army that ceases to attack loses the initiative. Attacking initiative is what wins a war. The minute an army stops attacking and settles down, it will be defeated, because either the enemy will then launch a counterattack, or the army's very immobility and lack of vision and initiative will cause it to lose faith in its cause and give up without a fight!

This is one of the Devil's favorite tactics with Christians. He can never win outright, because Jesus has already defeated him by dying on the cross. So the only way the Devil can get the victory is to persuade us to give up, by telling us that we have a hopeless cause. "It's no use," he says, "so you might as well surrender and leave the field to me."

The only way we Christians can ever be conquered is if we give up, stop attacking, and stop having the faith to take the initiative to do something for the Lord—win converts, train workers, develop new ministries and methods of outreach,

¹ Proverbs 29:18 KJV

and reach new fields. If that happens, we will be doomed to defeat. We will have already lost.

People with this attitude are already beaten, because they have lost the battle of the spirit. They have given up and fainted in their minds,¹ and their bodies will soon faint too; they'll stop and backslide. They will stop pioneering because they will have lost the initiative, the spirit, and courage to fight for what they believe because they have lost faith, and they have lost faith because they have lost the vision!

What makes a pioneer? First of all, they have a vision, a goal. Because they have a vision, they have faith. Then that faith gives them courage to take the initiative, and they pioneer and make progress. So when people stop progressing, that shows they have lost all these things. Why have they lost faith and courage? Because they have lost the vision.

How do people lose the vision? Somewhere there's been a break in the contact with the source of power. It's like turning off a TV: Push the button that cuts off the power, and the picture disappears. So why do people lose their faith and drive to do something for the Lord; why do they backslide? Because they have lost touch with God—direct personal contact, intimate contact with God, that direct personal hotline to God.

The trouble with some Christians is that they've gone as far as they want to go. They're stuck in a rut

¹ Hebrews 12:3 KJV

and are often not really interested in reaching the souls near them, much less the rest of the world. They think they have arrived, and don't care to take on the responsibility of winning others to the Lord and helping them grow spiritually. They're satisfied with what they've got, so they stop. But there's no such thing as stopping! Anyone who doesn't have the vision, faith, and courage to take the initiative to win new souls and train new workers needs to watch out, because there is no such thing as standing still!

If any Christian workers or missionaries have lost the "pioneering spirit," if they're not going forward to establish the kingdom of God on earth, if they're content short of that goal, if they're satisfied with what they already have and are not interested in progressing until they see righteousness covering the earth "as the waters cover the seas,"¹ then they're backsliding.

Some Christians want the coming of Christ to do it all for them. They say, "Why should we do anything? Jesus will do it all." Well, they are going to get a surprise when the Lord comes—a very *big* surprise! What they've failed to do and have left undone, they're still going to have to do. Maybe that's why there is going to be the thousand-year period known as the Millennium, after Jesus returns.² There is going to be a job yet to do after

¹ Isaiah 11:9; Habakkuk 2:14

² Revelation 20:1–6

the Lord comes. Parts of the world will still need to be evangelized. Of course, those of us who have received Jesus in this life will have supernatural bodies and powers and the authority of Christ's kingdom on earth,¹ which will really facilitate the job—and God knows we'll need it!

Throughout history, God's people have often failed to be the witnesses and soul-winners that He wanted them to be. Jesus gave His life and got His followers started, and as long as they and the other early Christians had the vision and kept in close contact with the Lord, they were sweeping the world. Eventually they even overthrew the Roman Empire with the Good News of the Gospel. But then they got to the point where they thought they had arrived and overthrown the temporal power of Rome, so that now it rested in their hands; the Church ruled Rome. They had arrived and were satisfied. They had power, wealth, and glory. They now ruled all the world that they knew, or all of the world that they felt was important. Then they more or less sat down and stopped really progressing.

Well, the fact was, they hadn't yet really completely reached India or China or Russia or Africa or any of North and South America or the islands of the sea.

The minute people come to the conclusion that they have arrived and are satisfied and have come as far as they want to, *watch out!* I will never be sat-

¹ Philippians 3:20–21; Revelation 1:5–6; 20:6

ified until everybody on earth is saved, which will never happen, of course. But I'm looking forward to the day when—and this may be a shocking thought for some people—*almost* everybody will be saved, and I think that's when God will be satisfied too! But that's a long way off. We have a lot to be thankful for, but we still have a lot to do. We haven't got just a few years left to live and work for the Lord, we have thousands to go!

Some Christians just twiddle their thumbs, waiting for Jesus to come and solve all their problems. They figure that then they'll be able to just sit around in Heaven and play their harps all day. Not so! After Jesus returns, all of us Christians are going to have to work 24 hours a day to establish the kingdom of Christ on earth, and that's going to be a *big* job!

If people think that when they go on from this life to be with the Lord, that their work is over, they're mistaken. Their job will be far from complete! The dear apostle Paul said he'd "fought a good fight" and finished his course—his earthly course.¹ He won that *crown*, but according to all we read in the Bible, he and the rest of us still have a long way to go. The spirit world is a Heaven of a lot busier than this hell on earth! We will have rest in a sense, but like the angels, we'll fight on!

We're a long way from the end of the road, and anyone who looks forward to death as the end is going to get a big surprise! Death from this life is

¹ 2 Timothy 4:7–8 KJV

just graduation from this grade. Some things will get easier. Right now, our fleshly bodies burden us, but in the next life we'll no longer be weighed down with the flesh and problems of this physical life. Yes, we will have graduated from the grade of this earthly life, but when someone graduates from one grade to another, the work in the next grade is usually a little more difficult. We'll have added responsibilities and new duties, but we'll also have new abilities—new powers to respond to those responsibilities. We'll be given the power to do a lot more than we're doing now. And we're going to do it—even more!

In Revelation it says about the saints, those believers who are in Heaven, “Their works do follow them.”¹ They haven't finished their works. They're still going to be working at them. They simply have passed this grade and have arrived in the next one. You tell that to some people and they'll be downright discouraged! They'll say, “I've done as little as I could here, and I'm looking forward to getting to Heaven and doing even less!”

They'll be surprised to hear God say, “Nothing doing, buddy! Get busy! You've still got a lot of work to do!” The work is not even over in Heaven, or in the Heavenly City after the Millennium. We'll still be serving God, and quite a few things will not be finished yet: total redemption, universal reconciliation, cosmic restitution—all of which Paul wrote

¹ Revelation 14:13 KJV

about and John recorded in the book of Revelation.¹ There will still be earthly kings and nations that need healing. Read it!

It's only the beginning, folks! Heaven is not the end—it's only the beginning! God only knows how much more we'll have to do after we've learned how to govern the earth and won all the souls and helped Him resolve all the other problems. Who knows what other worlds we may have to win, what other universes we may yet have to learn how to rule.

My idea of Heaven is not floating around on a cloud strumming a harp, doing nothing! That would be my idea of *death*. Total inactivity, cessation of movement, total rest, is death. That doesn't seem to be God's idea of Heaven either. His universe is full of movement, and He'll never stop. We'll go right on through the coming of Christ and the Millennium and Heaven. God only knows how far we all have to go—and we'll enjoy every minute of it if we're His faithful servants!

That's my idea of the next life, and I believe it's God's and His Bible's idea as well. We're a long way from the end. In fact, according to the Bible, for us there isn't going to *be* an end. Eternity has no end!

We've been talking about cessation of progress, when people stop winning and teaching new Christians and taking the Gospel to new people and places. When we stop winning the world, we're

¹ 2 Corinthians 5:18–19; Philippians 3:21; Colossians 1:20; Revelation 21:24; 22:2

beaten! We have failed! We're defeated because we defeated ourselves by giving up!

Some Christians gave up long ago and have no desire to go any further. They're fully satisfied with where they are. They like it like it was. They love the old, dislike the new, resist change, and have solidified. They have lost their love for the Lord and for winning souls, training new workers, and opening new fields. They think that when they give up, they are going to keep what they've got, but God's law of progress is: If you don't keep on getting more, you'll lose what you've got! Jesus said, "For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away."¹

The minute you think you have something and sit down to enjoy it, that's when you're apt to lose it. That's why many a great civilization, empire, nation, religious movement, or business has vanished from the face of the earth. They stopped advancing, progressing, and moving. They had all they wanted and thought they had arrived, so they sat down to enjoy it and *whoosh!* God blew upon it and it came to naught.

When you stop moving, you die. Try it. Go to bed and never get up again. How long do you think you will live if you lie there and never eat or drink or move or get rid of waste matter? You might last a few days. Some people have lasted a couple of weeks.

¹ Matthew 25:29

But if you stop drinking, eating, cleansing, and moving, you're soon dead! And that is what is spiritually wrong with some people. They have stopped drinking the Water of Life; they have stopped eating their spiritual food, the Word of God; they have stopped eliminating their daily besetting sins, and therefore they have died on the vine!

There is no in-between! We cannot stop! It's like breathing: We don't dare stop or we're dead. We have to keep doing more every day and progressing. We need to sit down at the end of the day and keep books with our soul. We need to weigh up the accounts and say, "Now what did I do today that I won't have to do tomorrow? What progress, what accomplishment, what more have I done than the usual things I always have to do each day?"

If we come to the point where we're just going through the motions by habit, just coasting along on former momentum, then we'll be just like the little girl who heard her kitten purring in its sleep and exclaimed to her mother, "Oh, Mama, the kitty's gone to sleep and left its engine running!" You will have gone to sleep and left your engine running, and you'll soon run out of gas and coast to a stop.

My grandfather once said to me, "David, do you know how to recognize when you're getting old? It's when you start living in the past." So true! It doesn't matter how things were done in the past, if that's not the way that we ought to do them now. It doesn't matter how we did it yesterday, if we should

do it differently today. But some people insist on a rigid pattern of total conformity to the past, living according to the tactics and patterns of the past.

Some of these methods may be up to date, just like some parts of the Bible—but there are other parts that are no longer up to date. For example, much of the Old Testament contains hundreds of complicated rules that God told His people to live by then, but that was before Jesus came and boiled it all down to two simple rules: Love God and love your neighbor.¹ God means for us to be governed by *love*, not the complicated, impossible-to-keep rules He gave to a different people at a different time for a different purpose.²

We Christians today don't even have to be limited by the way the Early Church did things. We are not the Early Church! We're the Latter Church, the latest Church, and the pattern God wants us to live by today is not exactly the pattern they lived by 2,000 years ago.

There is a saying, "All things change, but Jesus never." God Himself never changes but He does change some of His tactics and messages and methods, depending on what suits His purpose and the situation. Paul said, "I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."³ If we as Christians are not going to constantly keep

¹ Matthew 22:37–39; Romans 13:8; Galatians 5:14

² Galatians 3:24–25

³ 1 Corinthians 9:22

changing our tactics and methods and modes of operation, just like God does, according to what He knows will work and what won't with each new day and new situation and new people, then we're going to become has-beens. If we're not flexible, pliable, able to stretch or shrink or bulge or bend to accommodate the Lord's new wine—whatever new thing He has for us—then we're going to burst and lose even what we've got, and He won't be able to give us any more.¹

But as long as we have and love Jesus and lost souls, as long as we seek Him and desire to do His will, as long as we go to His Word daily for fresh vision and inspiration, we have nothing to worry about. He will continually renew us in body, mind, and spirit,² and we'll do *more* than stay alive. We'll really go places and accomplish a lot for the Lord!

¹ Luke 5:37–38

² Romans 12:1–2

Your Best Friend

All of us have been guilty of getting down in the dumps. It's a terrible state to be in, especially because we can never be down in the dumps alone. We always drag somebody down with us. We can't keep our problems and our draggy spirits to ourselves. Others can just take one look at us and know that we're in the dumps. We can't hide a bad spirit that radiates gloom and doom any more than we can hide a good spirit that radiates happiness and light.

Happiness is what you make it. It's a spiritual law of God, just as sure as the law of gravity, that we don't get happy by trying to make ourselves happy or by trying to get somebody else to make us happy. We don't find happiness by chasing it. We get happiness by trying to give it to *other* people. If we go around trying to make others happy, then happiness will find us. Sooner or later it will catch up with us, and we'll find we're happy too.

There's a saying, "Love isn't love till you give it away." What does that mean?—Love isn't real love

unless the main motive behind it is to make the other person happy. Trying to *get* love isn't love; it's selfishness.

When we're down in the dumps, we want everybody to be miserable with us; we want everybody to sympathize and be sad with us. "How can you be happy and cheerful when I'm so sad? Come down here in the dumps with me!" It's pitiful! That's human nature. But it's *godly* nature to try to encourage and cheer up others, even when we need cheering up ourselves.

The manifestation of the problem is not the important thing. The symptom is not the disease. The core of the problem is *us*. We need to quit blaming our lack of victory on everybody else.

Most people's problem is that they blame all their problems on somebody else! They think, "It's that person I have to work with" or "that person I have to be with"—or this one or that one. But when they move on to a new job or new relationship, they take that same selfish spirit with them and drag down a whole new set of people. And the thing is, no one will ever be able to make them happy, because the problem is not the other person; it's their own selfish, self-centered, proud spirit.

It's the Devil's own tactic to try to get people to always blame their problems on everybody else. "Why *me*, Lord? It wasn't *my* fault! It's his fault or her fault! *They're* to blame! They're the ones that made me feel like this!" If those people could only

see themselves the way others see them, they'd understand how ridiculous and wrong that attitude is.

My, how we love sympathy when we're down! But sometimes that's the last thing in the world we need. Somebody needs to come along and wake us up out of our stupor of self-pity so we can get our minds on the Lord and others, and forget ourselves! We'll never get the victory by looking at ourselves. There's nobody that drags me down worse than me! Self is horrible! Self is terrible—*that* kind of self!

Christian denominations have various doctrines about getting the victory. Some say that everybody's got a "good" self and a "bad" self, and the only way to get the victory is to get the good self on top of the bad self and hold him down. They call it "the doctrine of suppression."

Others preach the doctrine of eradication: "Yes, you've got a good self and a bad self, and the only way to get the victory is to get rid of the bad self. Go through the operation of entire sanctification, have the bad self cut out, and throw it away like a cancer, so there's nothing but good self left." They then say, "This is the *good* me! This is my real self, my good self! There's no evil thing left in me now, I'm *all* good!" Self-righteous and holier-than-thou is what they *really* are!

Well, the true doctrine of the Holy Spirit is neither one! You don't get the victory by holding down that bad spirit, that bad self, that temptation

or weakness yourself, in your own strength. You'll never get the victory that way!

Neither will you ever get the victory by thinking that you can have God cut out the bad self once and for all and leave only the good self. There is no such thing as *good* self! Even the apostle Paul said, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells."¹

True victory is not found in ourselves, but in Himself—Jesus. "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."² "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."³ "Christ in you, the hope of glory."⁴

That's the theological doctrine of "habitation"—cohabiting with the Lord. God tosses out the bad self and He also tosses out the good self, because it's bad too. Sometimes it's even worse—self-righteous, hypocritical, holier-than-thou, and critical!

No self is good! "There is none righteous, no, not one! ... All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."⁵ You're no better than me, and I'm no better than you. Nobody except Jesus is any better than anyone else! He's the only one who can be truly

¹ Romans 7:18

² I Corinthians 15:57

³ Galatians 2:20

⁴ Colossians 1:27

⁵ Romans 3:10,23 KJV

good, and without Him we're nothing, empty, zero! We can't be good without Jesus, so why keep trying? We can't be good. We can't be righteous. We can't get the victory. We can't overcome. We can't get rid of the darkness by trying to chase it away, but we can get rid of it by letting the light in. Let Jesus in, and He'll take care of the whole problem!

We can't get the victory! Jesus has to get it, and we have to let Him or we'll never have it. Let's quit trying to be something we aren't and can never be, and that's righteous. Only Jesus can make us righteous. We don't have to work it out, pray it off, pray it on, or pray it down. We don't have to do anything except just let God do it through us. Just let Jesus in! Get our minds off of ourselves—even our supposed good selves—and let Jesus come in and shine through us. There's an old song that says:

Lift your heart to Heaven and His glory will
come in.

Let Jesus have possession, He'll save you from
your sin.

Lift your heart to Heaven and His glory will
come in.

Only Jesus is good enough, but He's good enough for us all! What is the glory?—It's the Spirit of the Lord! It's His Spirit, His glory, His self—not our self.

I play a little Ping-Pong [table tennis], but I'm not very good. I miss the ball and usually lose, and

it's not always because my opponent is all that good. It's because of my own mistakes. When that happens, I often say that I'm my own worst enemy.

We can be our own worst enemy! I've heard people complain, "The Devil did this and the Devil did that. The Devil caused me all this trouble!" Well, I'd say that in many cases the real trouble was not evil spirits but their own spirits.

We can't blame it on everybody else or evil spirits or even the Devil. He can't touch us unless we let him in through our wrong attitudes and own bad spirits. It's our own spirits that we have the most trouble with. It's our own spirits that are the most difficult to conquer, and the only way we're ever going to conquer them is *not* to conquer them, but to let *Jesus* conquer them. He's our own best Friend! He is the only one who can help us get the victory—not over our situations or others or whatever, but over ourselves where the *big* problem is. If we let Jesus conquer our spirits, He can easily take care of all the rest!

Keep your eyes on Jesus;
Do not watch the waves.
Keep your eyes on Jesus;
It's faith in Him that saves.
Keep your eyes on Jesus;
His promises avail!
Keep your eyes on Jesus;
Praise God, He cannot fail!

Quit trying to succeed yourself. Quit trying to win the victory yourself. Just let Jesus come in, and let Him win it. Get your mind off the supposed problem and on the Lord. Get your mind on helping others. Seek their happiness before your own. Have real, genuine, sacrificial, unselfish love. Ask Jesus to help you love Him and others so much that you'll forget yourself, your worst enemy, and live for Him and others. Get filled with His Spirit, His joy, and His happiness, and your best Friend, Jesus, will do it all. Let's pray and ask Him right now to do it.

(Prayer:) Do bless and keep us, Jesus. Keep us not only from the Evil One and his minions, but most of all keep us from our evil selves. Help us to keep our hearts right and wide open to You, so Your light can come in and chase away the shadows and the darkness. Amen.

AFTERWORD

How can you know beyond doubt that Jesus Christ really is the Son of God, the way to salvation? The answer is simple: Try Him! Simply humble yourself and sincerely ask Him to reveal Himself to you. Ask Him to come into your heart, forgive you for all your sins, and fill your life with His love, peace, and joy.

Jesus is real and He loves you—so much so that He suffered for your sins and died in your place so that you wouldn't have to, if you'll just receive Him and His forgiveness and His free gift of eternal life. But He can't save you unless you want Him to. His love is all-powerful, but He won't force His way into your life.

Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20). He gently knocks at the door of your heart. He doesn't break it down or force His way in. He stands there meekly, lovingly, patiently, waiting for you to open your life and ask Him in.

Will you receive Him? If so, He will be your closest friend and companion, who will be with you always! He came for love and lived in love and died for love, that we might live and love forever!

You can receive Jesus into your heart right now by sincerely praying this simple prayer:

Dear Jesus, please forgive me for all the wrongs I've done. I believe that You are the Son of God and that You died for me. I open the door to my heart and invite You to come in. Please come in, Jesus, and give me eternal life. Then help me to share Your love and truth with others. Amen.

God has promised to answer your prayer, so you are now His child. And He has said that He will *never* leave you nor forsake you! He loves you that much!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Brandt Berg (1919–1994) dared to be different.—So different that his back-to-the-basics approach to Christianity started a worldwide missionary movement.

Berg's parents were both active Christian pastors and evangelists, and his early years were spent traveling with them in evangelistic work. In 1941 he nearly died of pneumonia, shortly after being drafted into the U.S. Army. After determining to rededicate his life to Christian service, he experienced a miraculous healing.

For most of the next 27 years he worked as a pastor and in various evangelistic endeavors until, in 1968, he received God's call to take the Gospel to the hippies of southern California. There he and his then teen-aged children began a ministry to the youth that grew and eventually became known as *The Family*. Today, members of *The Family* engage in missionary and humanitarian work in over 100 countries worldwide.

Berg called on his followers to devote their full time to spreading the message of Christ's love and salvation as far and wide as possible, unfettered by convention or tradition, and to teach others to do the same.

Berg also decried the de-Christianization and decay in moral values of Western society. He viewed the trend towards a New World Order as setting the stage for the rise of the Antichrist, a godless world dictator whom the Bible predicts will rule the world in the last days before Christ's return.

Berg's lively, down-to-earth and sometimes unconventional approach to heavenly matters makes his writings a unique contribution to Christian literature. He once said of his writings that his aim was to leave his readers feeling either "mad, sad or glad." Without a doubt, he succeeded in doing just that.

Also available from Aurora ...

Dare to Be Different

From the *Mountain Streams* collection: Inspirational and refreshingly iconoclastic essays on some of the fundamental issues of Christian life and faith. Guaranteed to challenge you to be different and make a difference!

God Online

David Brandt Berg uses key verses from the Bible and sometimes-surprising analogies to make communicating with God as simple and natural as God means for it to be. Get online with God!

More Like Jesus

More Like Jesus puts true Christian living where it belongs—within easy reach of anyone who loves Jesus and wants to please Him. In 12 Bible-based articles, David Brandt Berg points the reader to God's profound yet simple rules for a happy, productive, love-filled life.

More Than Conquerors

In the 10 Bible-based articles that comprise *More Than Conquerors*, David Brandt Berg explains how to rise above disappointment and failure—with God's help.

Discovering Truth

This two-volume topical study guide to the Bible will help you quickly find what the Bible has to say on a wide range of topics related to your faith and daily life!

From Jesus, With Love

A heartwarming collection of capsules of wisdom, comfort, and instruction from the greatest Teacher of all: Jesus Himself!

My King and I

Looking for ways to express your thankfulness to God? The sample praises in this book will provide you with the words to say and a springboard from which to formulate your own! Learn the art of praise today!

Wings of Prayer and The Wild Wind

These two music CDs will lift you into the heavenlies! *Wings of Prayer* is a collection of soothing and heartwarming songs of prayer to God, the lyrics taken straight from the Bible! Its companion CD, *The Wild Wind*, is a rhythmically upbeat tribute of praise and thankfulness to God; its lyrics also taken from the Bible. (Available as a set or individually.)

The *Get Activated!* series

If you would like to learn more about how you can develop your personal relationship with God and receive His blessings, love, and happiness in your life, don't miss *Get Activated!*—a series of booklets covering the fundamentals of faith and how to apply them to your life today. Titles include:

- Prayer Power
- Hearing from Heaven
- Obstacles Are for Overcoming
- Love's Many Faces
- Understanding God's Word
- God's Gifts
- One Heart at a Time

If you would like to know more about Jesus or the Bible, or order more volumes of *Mountain Streams*, please contact:

Activated Ministries

P.O. Box 462805

Escondido, CA 92046-2805

USA

E-mail: activatedUSA@activated.org

Phone: (1-877) 862-3228 (toll-free)

Activated India

P.O. Box 5215

G.P.O.

Bangalore-1

INDIA

E-mail: activatedIndia@activated.org

Activated Europe

Bramingham Park Business Centre

Enterprise Way

Bramingham Park

Luton, Beds. LU3 4BU

ENGLAND

E-mail: activatedEurope@activated.org

Activated Africa

P.O. Box 2150

Westville 3630

South Africa

E-mail: activatedAfrica@activated.org

Phone: 083 55 68 213

Visit Activated on the Web at:

www.activated.org

Get ready to win!

Greater Victories will help you conquer...

- worry
- fear
- doubt
- discouragement
- negative thinking
- bad habits
- and whatever else may be holding you back from being as happy and successful in life as Jesus wants to make you!

In this series of seven articles, **David Brandt Berg** combines basic spiritual principles from the Bible with up-to-the-minute analogies and explanations to form a game plan that is easy to follow and sure to succeed!



ISBN 3-03730-043-4



9 783037 300435