

Victory Ground



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Introduction

The crowd noticed he was tall and lanky, as he made his way to the altar at the end of the service. The young man's shirt was wrinkled and his pants well worn. As he knelt at the altar, he buried his face in his hands, with only his tousled blond hair showing. Tears leaked through his fingers and dropped to the altar. With anguish and much emotion, he poured out his heart to the Lord. The men of the church gathered around, placing their hands on him as they prayed with him and for him, one man to his side having embraced him. Soon the victory was accomplished and the young man looked up, a bright smile covering his tear-stained face. "I feel so different inside. I never expected such a feeling," he finally said. "Son," a wizened old man said, "That's because you're on Victory Ground now!"

Victory Ground is my term, it won't be found in the Bible. There you will find *heavenly places*. But by the time

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you finish this book, you will understand why I call it Victory Ground.

Many have heard the old story of the poor immigrant from war-torn Europe heading to a new life in America. He put together all the money he had to purchase the ship's ticket. Stuffing his suitcase with crackers and cheese, he set out on the voyage of hope and promise in the new land. While others were enjoying the dining rooms at each meal, he would steal away to a quiet place along the ship's rail and watch the ocean pass by as he ate his crackers and cheese. Somewhere near the end of the voyage one of the ship's crew passed by. Returning to the man, the crewman asked if he did not enjoy the ship's food. The man replied that he had just enough money for the ticket, and none left over for food. With astonishment, the crewmember asked, "Did no one tell you the food was included in the price of the ticket?"

Too many of God's children are living below their privileges, not knowing what is included in Victory Ground. My prayer is that this book will open doors and remove blinders, that God's wonderful children will come to know what is theirs as a gift from Him. I do not intend to be exhaustive on any subject contained in this book. It is my belief that each Christian should do his own study, that is the way to make something real out of theory and begin to enjoy it in the now of life. But

Introduction

what is contained herein is a good beginning, if one is willing to begin the journey.

Jesus lifted us up to live on Victory Ground when He saved us and forgave us and gave us new life. He always promises ultimate victory in every situation. It may take some time to *appear* in this world that we are victorious, but it always *appears* in the new world in which we live with Christ Jesus.

We go to school to learn our ABCs, always learning them in proper order. The learning of these basics starts us on a life journey of realizing who we are in this world. We will begin to envision what we want to do in life, who we want to marry, where we want to live, etc. All of that begins with our ABCs.

When we believe in Jesus, we have ABCs to learn. We have become His new creations of a new order, and so we need to learn what that means. As we begin that learning process, we will begin to see what His purpose is for us, where and how He wants us to be effective in life, and where we are heading. All of this can be learned from the basis of Victory Ground, that is, living in the reality of victory while we are attaining its principles and benefits.

Simply put, Victory Ground is where the Christian lives. Americans live in America, Britons live in England, and Germans live in Germany. Christians live on Victory Ground. Victory Ground is not

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visible in this world, although we find churches where Christians gather, homes where prayer groups and study groups meet. We see symbols on cars and in jewelry that indicate some association with Victory Ground. But to see Victory Ground with the natural eye is impossible.

To begin to reap more of the benefits and privileges of this wonderful place, we will explore how we got there and where it is. Then, and only then, will all its benefits and privileges seem attainable to us.

May the blessings of God fall on you richly and may you discover the joy of Victory Ground.

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Victory Ground Basics

Fasten your seatbelt as we focus on God's life-changing victory manual! Great vistas will open before your eyes! Get ready for new strength and confidence in God and His power in your life.

Ephesians 2:4-7, the basic scripture for Victory Ground, tells us:

⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

God's Love and Mercy

God's rich mercy is based on his great love. His love, and therefore His mercy, is based on something outside of our existence and ourselves. The Bible tells us God is love (1 John 4:8, 16). Love is His nature. When speaking about the true God, the God of the Bible, to say, "God is love," is to say real love is God. And because of Who He is, it is natural for Him to extend love to us—even when we were dead in our sins. If God is love, then there are no outside requirements for Him to act in love. Nothing outside of His Being can induce Him to love. He cannot be talked into loving, blackmailed into it, cajoled into it. His love is not based on what anyone can do, has done, or might do. His love is Who He is!

Flowing out of that love, flowing out of Who He is, we find mercy. The Greek word for mercy would be translated something like this: *kindness or good will towards another, joined with a desire to help the person*. Mercy gives us a further understanding of His love. He has kindness that expresses itself in a desire to help. And more than just some mercy, God is rich in it! The origin of the Greek word means *to be filled up with something*." He is filled up with mercy towards us. Furthermore, the Old Testament says, His mercies are new (renewed) every morning (see Lamentation 3:22, 23). If we are to live on Victory Ground, we must change our thinking. We must quit thinking that God is mad at us, doesn't love us, or may not answer our prayers, etc. But rather we must force ourselves, our minds, to believe that God loves us and has great mercy toward us.

Children of Mr. and Mrs. Disobedience

Even when we were dead in trespasses, (God) made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) (Ephesians 2:5).

God loved us even though we were dead in our sins! That was our before condition, our state of being before God expressed His love and mercy to us. And just what was our before condition? What was our state-of-being? We were, all of us, under the control of *the prince of the power of the air* (the devil) *and were children of disobedience* (Ephesians 2:2). Furthermore, *we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath* (Ephesians 2:3).” This is not a pretty picture!

We were not disobedient children (as to our actions), but we were children of disobedience (as to our nature). That means that no matter how good we were, how kind we were, how nice we were, our father and mother were Mr. and Mrs. Disobedience. All of us had the same parents. Since Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and fell into a state of disobedience, all of their descendants were children of disobedience. That is why every male, every female, is stillborn, *dead in trespasses* (Ephesians 2:5). That is not a warm fuzzy feeling, being controlled by satan, who led Adam and Eve (Mr. and Mrs. Disobedience) into sin. Furthermore, since we were dead in our sins, we couldn't do any-

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thing about getting out of the condition—not any more than a dead man can do anything about getting out of a casket! We were at the mercy of someone else to help us. No other person was interested in helping, and if he were, he couldn't. They, too, were dead! Satan certainly wasn't going to help us; he liked the control he had over us in this condition.

Made Alive!

But God! Hallelujah! Here comes God, Who just happened to be rich in mercy toward us based on the great love He has for us. Not based on us, but on His nature alone! He makes us alive together with Christ Jesus. Even when we were dead, the fact of our deadness didn't bother Him at all. And in our dead state, He made us alive. When His Son Jesus died for our sins, it wasn't enough for God. His intention was not merely to save us from our sins; but rather, to make us alive again. What good is being free from sin, if we remain dead? What good is making a dead corpse rich or pretty or clean? God intended to bring His Son alive from the grave. And, while He was at it, He decided to make the way for everyone who was dead to live—every one of us! He made us alive together with Christ. If you have received the forgiveness of sin that Jesus offers, then this is your present condition. Your before condition was dead, your present condition is alive.

Remember, all that we are saying about Victory Ground must

Victory Ground Basics

be preceded by being saved, forgiven of our past, washed by His blood, and made a new person. This is an absolute necessity. Here is how to be lifted up to this new standing of Victory Ground:

If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation (Romans 10:9, 10).

Given the Best Seat

And look where God has placed us. *And (He) raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus* (Ephesians 2:6).

Not only did He make us alive with Christ, He raised us up with Christ, and made us sit with Him in heavenly, glorious places! Here comes even greater victory. When we believe God raised Jesus from the dead, His resurrection life flows into us and makes us alive. When God seated Jesus on His right hand, He also seated us in the heavenly places with Christ. It had to be, because He is the head and we are His body (see Ephesians 1:22, 23). Where else could we be positioned without severing us from our life-giving head?

Look Beyond the Physical

Though not physically in heaven with Jesus, we are in reality sitting with Him in heavenly places. Before we get too far in the things of God, we realize that there is more than what we can see with our eyes. In fact, what we see with our eyes may not be real at all. Can you see Jesus? Yet, you know He is with you. His promise is that He will never leave you (see Hebrews 13:5). Not only must we change our minds to believe that God really loves us and has mercy toward us, we must change our minds to the reality of things, which cannot be seen. That brings us to those heavenly places.

The Greek word translated heavenly places is *epouranios* (ep-oo-rah'-nee-os), and strictly means *heavenlies*. We add the word *places* for fuller expression and understanding in the English language. Paul does not say that we are in heaven with Christ, but rather another place—the heavenlies. This is what I call Victory Ground. In Paul's writings, we can easily conclude that though we live in this world, we are not of this world. He tells us in Romans 12:2, *...do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind*. There obviously is something else besides this world and its habitation in Paul's thinking, and that something is the heavenlies of Ephesians chapter 2.

Your Blessings Are Up Here

The book of Ephesians tells us that our blessings are in the heav-
enlies (1:3), our head of the church is in the heavenlies (1:20), our
arena of operation is in the heavenlies (3:10), and our enemies and
weapons of warfare are in the heavenlies (6:12). So it should be ob-
vious that our place of dwelling is in the heavenlies where all of our
stuff is (2:6). We are establishing that God has deliberately placed
us in the heavenlies, and expects us to stay there.

God has raised us up from death to life—our condition. And He
has made us sit together with Jesus—our company. Furthermore,
He has made us sit in heavenly places—our location.

*That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His
grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:7).*

Why are we seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus? Jesus, our
head, is seated there, and our blessings from the Father are there.
Simply said, God puts us where everything that pertains to us is
located. Now isn't that extremely logical? If all your possessions,
home, friends, and job were in one state, and you were in another,
you wouldn't be much use to anyone—not even yourself. You
would probably be saying something like, "Wait till I get home so I
can look in my stuff and check this or that out." Or, "Wait till I get
home so I can check with my boss." Or, "That tool is in my garage,