The Thrill of Victory

Nov 16, 2026

Summary

The Thrill of Victory in Christ

Big Idea: Because Jesus has already won the ultimate victory through His resurrection, believers can—and must—live each day in that triumph instead of the agony of defeat.

Overview

The speaker contrasts the famous sports slogan “the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat” with the Christian's position in Christ. Too many followers of Jesus know the truth of the gospel yet crumble when trouble comes because they do not exercise faith in the finished work of Christ. From 1 Corinthians 15 the pastor reminds the congregation that the resurrection guarantees forgiveness, power, and eternal hope. Life may be hard and national circumstances bleak, but God is tougher, and His victory is secure. The message challenges listeners to reject negative, defeated thinking, to stand together in faith, and to make sure—today—that they have personally embraced Christ's victory. The service ends with an altar call for assurance of salvation and a prayer for the Holy Spirit's empowering.

Key Scripture

- **1 Corinthians 15** — The foundation of the whole message: Christ's resurrection secures our faith and victory.
- **John 14** — The comfort promise: Jesus prepares a place and will return for His people.
- **1 John 5** — The assurance anchor: whoever has the Son has eternal life.

Main Points

1. Christ's victory is the believer's daily thrill

- Resurrection Sunday celebrates “the victory of victories,” but that triumph is meant for every day, not one holiday.
- “Thrill” means something that pierces and penetrates; the victory of Jesus should bore into our hearts, producing joy, strength, faith, and hope.

2. The agony of defeat is real—but it is not our destiny

- Illustration: the ABC “Wide World of Sports” ski-jumper crash looked disastrous, yet the athlete walked away and kept competing—appearances deceive.
- The disciples felt all was lost on Good Friday; their fear did not change the fact that Jesus had already won.
- In the same way, bills, broken relationships, or national turmoil shout “defeat,” but they cannot overturn Christ's finished work.

3. What Christ's victory gives us

- **Forgiveness of sin**—no condemnation, regardless of the size of the sin list.
- **Power through the Holy Spirit**—God did not forgive us only to leave us powerless; He enables us to rise above the flesh.
- **Unshakeable hope**—we deserve hell but are offered heaven; this eternal perspective shrinks today's problems.
- Life with Jesus is “way better” than life without Him, making us better spouses, parents, friends, and witnesses.

4. Move from negative programming to victorious living

- The world's fixes—self-help, hypnosis, psychics—fail; only Jesus provides true abundance.
- Believers must refuse “woe is me” talk, stand together, and face culture's lions with heads up and eyes forward.
- Current testimony matters: share what God has done for you today, not just decades ago.

5. Be sure of your salvation and walk in it

- The pastor asks, “If you died today, are you dead-dog sure you'd be in heaven?”
- An invitation is given; those unsure come forward, confess Jesus, and pray for the Spirit's filling.
- Scripture promises “settled and absolute knowledge” of eternal life—now live from that certainty.

Application

The call: Stop trying to win a victory Jesus has already secured; receive it, stand in it, and share it with a world in despair.

Head — Remember: the resurrection is historical fact; therefore your faith rests on an unshakable foundation.

Heart — Let the “ice-pick” of Christ's victory pierce complacency and fear, filling you with joy and confidence.

Hands

1. Reject defeated speech; when negativity surfaces, confess the truth of 1 Corinthians 15.
2. Link arms with other believers—pray together, encourage one another, stand firm as one body.
3. Share today's testimony of what Jesus has done for you with someone who is hopeless.

Reflection Questions

1. When hardship strikes, which voice do you tend to believe—the thrill of victory or the agony of defeat?
2. How has the reality of Christ's resurrection pierced your heart this week?
3. What negative thoughts or words do you need to replace with resurrection truth?
4. Who in your circle needs to hear a fresh, current testimony of God's work in your life?
5. Are you “settled and absolutely sure” of your salvation? If not, what step will you take today?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for conquering sin, death, and the grave. Let the thrill of Your victory penetrate our hearts, drive out fear, and fill us with hope. Empower us by Your Holy Spirit to live above circumstances, to stand shoulder to shoulder with Your people, and to share the good news with a weary world. We praise You, victorious King. Amen.