

THE WORD OF

TRUTH

Bible Study Course

Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 8:32



THE VICTORY AND FAITH OF JESUS

Our previous lesson focused on the power of God's promises for victory over every sin. We learned that in our own strength failure was inevitable, but in the strength of Jesus Christ, nothing was impossible for the believer. We also alluded to the principle that Jesus relied on a power outside of Himself.

In this lesson we shall study His methods, how He used them and what that means for us. We shall also look into what He was like when He became a man and was confronting temptation like every other man and woman.

1. While as a man, how does Jesus describe His ability to do anything and where does His dependence lie?

John 5:19,30 John 8:28 _____

Note: These texts seem to indicate that Jesus had no power of His own while as a man.

2. How much power did Jesus actually possess?

Matthew 28:18 _____

Note: What the references of Q1 and Q2 are telling us, is that Jesus laid aside His divine power totally and became a man having the same degree of dependence upon His heavenly Father as do you and I.

In this way, Jesus left us an example to show us, not what a God could do about living a sinless life, but what a man could do, when that man is surrendered totally to God and filled with divine power.

3. Give an example of where Jesus surrendered His power.

Philippians 2:7,8 _____

Compare John 10:17,18 _____

4. What act on the part of the Father-God reveals that Christ has absolute dependence on and trust in His God?

Acts 2:31,32; 10:40 _____

So then, if Jesus was to demonstrate what a Spirit filled man could do, He needed to become fully a man. If Jesus had some advantage that is not available to every member of the fallen race, then His achievements of a sinless life, could not be held up as a model, or example for weak sinners to follow. The objective of Jesus was to set a pattern that all of mankind could follow and that they become righteous as He is righteous. By using the method of our great Exemplar, we may have our attitude toward sin changed and hence every sinful desire and act removed from the life.

5. In a few words, sum up the purpose of Christ's mission to this world.

John 1:29 _____

Note: The taking away of sin involves the transformation of the heart, a renewing of the life, the forsaking of every unholy desire (Romans 12:1,2; 11:27; Hebrews 8:10).

CHRIST'S METHODS

To understand the methods Jesus used to conquer sin, we need to understand His relationship to mankind. What was Jesus like? Was He God, or was He a man and what power did Jesus use that He may refuse the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life? (1John 2:15-17).

6. What was Jesus like? What form did He take when He became a man?

Romans 8:3 _____

Note: This text may need a little amplification ---

a) *What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh.*
The flesh (fallen man) is too weak (unable) to do what God instructed (Romans 7:18,19).

b) *God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.*
So God sent His Son, made with the sinful flesh. That is, with the same physical degeneration and natural properties of man, those same properties that render man unable to abide by the words of God. But Jesus did so abide - read on.

c) *And for sin, condemned sin in the flesh*
In spite of, or notwithstanding, the inherited human handicap of physical and mental weakness, Jesus proved that fallen man could

live by every word of God. Thus He condemned sin by living a life free from sinful acts or thoughts, proving that there was no justification for its existence. No-one will be able to truthfully say that it was their weakness or natural tendencies that compelled them to sin. Satan will have no excuse to put before God, as a reason for God not to remove sin and cleanse this earth of all defilement.

The fact that Jesus did not practice any sin, while He was in the form of fallen man, indicates that we too can cease from sin, using the same method that He used.

7. What method did Jesus say we are to use in order to overcome every sinful trait of character?

Revelation 3:21 _____

8. How do we know, or learn this method that Jesus described?

1Peter 2:21 1John 2:6 _____

If Jesus was not made the same as one of those He came to save, and had a sinless condition that is not available to you and to me, then He has an advantage that we do not have and His methods could not work for us.

To illustrate: If Adam had resisted temptation and never fallen into sin, he would have had a power of resistance against evil that you and I do not now possess. It follows then, that if Jesus took the form of man before the fall to sin in Eden, that is, He was made like Adam before he sinned, then Christ would not have been like us, for we are sinners and He would have a power that is not available to us.

This is not to say that Jesus was a sinner. Consider this - is it possible for we sinners to not do some transgression, say, steal a car? Yes it is. So it was with Jesus, except that He said NO to sin right to the finest detail. And

this is possible even for you and me, by applying the power that Jesus used.

Now that we have established the need for Jesus to be like fallen man, yet not commit sin, we should spend some time and thoroughly confirm that He was like us and not like Adam before the fall or like anything else. Why this is so important is that if Christ's victory over sin is not our pattern (see Q7), then we have no possibility of victory and no removal of sin from our lives. We will die in our sin!

THE LAW OF HEREDITY

9. How did Jesus regard His relationship with mankind?

Hebrews 2:11 _____

Matthew 12:46-50 _____

Note: He that sanctifies is Christ. They that are sanctified are the real Christians (John 8:12; 1John 1:5-7) and He calls them brethren. Jesus considered Himself to be fully a part of the human race.

10. The children or descendants of Adam and Eve took what form? What were they like?

Genesis 5:3 _____

11. When God created man, in whose likeness was He made?

Genesis 1:26,27 _____

Note: Made in the image of their parents, physically and morally. As the generations passed the results of that genetic inheritance became apparant, physical and moral degeneration.

12. At the end of His creating this world, how did Christ assess the quality of His work?

Genesis 1:31 _____

Note: Review lesson 1 concerning man's creation. There were no defects or sin in any of the things that God had made.

Notice that Adam and Eve had no children until after their fall into sin, consequently, those children, born after the fall, inherited the same weakness toward sin that their fallen parents had. They were made in the likeness of sinners, not in the likeness of unfallen man before sin entered.

This genetic transfer of moral and physical degeneration caused by sin, should not be confused with the *theory* of inheriting actual sin. No man or woman is guilty of sin because his/her parents are sinners. We do not become a sinner until we personally transgress the law of God (Ezekiel 18:20; Jeremiah 31:29,30). Actual GUILT is not inherited, only the WEAKNESS toward sin is passed on to the offspring.

The definition of sin is the transgression of God's law (1John 3:4). Psalm 51:5, which states -- *I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me*, does not contradict this, for David is simply stating that he was born of sinful parents and thus inherits their nature weakened by sin. Being weak toward temptation is not in itself the transgression, it is the actual doing, or the mental approval (if opportunity is not present) that is the sin. If this were not the case, then Jesus was born a sinner, as His mother was a member of the fallen race (Galatians 4:4). Even though Jesus had our fallen nature, He never chose to sin. Quite unlike what the rest of Adam's descendants have chosen to do (Hebrews 4:15).

WAS JESUS REALLY LIKE US?

For Jesus to truly be like fallen man He would need to possess the same inherited weaknesses toward sin that every child of Adam inherits. We hasten to add that, irrespective of the fallen nature, Jesus did not fall to temptation. Let us now examine the inherited nature of the Son of man, then we shall see why Jesus made this infinite condescension, leaving the throne of glory to become as one of those He wished to save.

13. When Jesus was born, what law, or principle is implied in respect to His being born of a woman?

Galatians 4:3,4 _____

14. That He might redeem what people?

Galatians 4:5 _____

Note: Christ became as one of those He wished to save (compare 1Cor. 9:19-22). Mary was the human link whereby the Son of God inherited the nature of man. Mary, born of sinful parents, was NOT without sin (immaculate), otherwise, God could have done for all of mankind what, has been supposed, He had done for Mary and Jesus would not have had to come, as there would have been no sinners to die for.

15. Does Mary consider herself to be sinless, or in need of a Saviour?

Luke 1:46,47 _____

Note: Mary was as human as anybody else, accepting the great law of heredity. she was as much a sinner and as much in need of a Saviour as everyone else. She recognised God as Her Saviour (Isaiah 45:21) and rejoiced in her salvation. Jesus, the Son of the living God, made flesh, is the only one who has never sinned.

16. As the children, or descendants of men partake of the inheritance of their forebears, of what did Jesus partake?

Hebrews 2:14 _____

Note: Flesh and blood is not here limited to physical properties only, but includes the human nature, weakened by sin. Without this latter property, Christ would not be fully man.

17. God uses many distinctive expressions to convey the single point of redemption through the blood of Jesus. One such expression is given in the following text. Examine that text and note, that if the land can only be cleansed by the blood of man, what "man" only can fulfil that demand on behalf of those who choose life?

Numbers 35:33, compare Hebrews 9:22 _____

Note: The sins of men have polluted the earth (Isaiah 24:5,6). Through the laws of the Jewish economy, God is trying to teach men that the land (earth) can only be redeemed, or the debt paid, by the death of man himself. In order for the blood of Jesus to meet that need, Jesus had to be *fully man* and in order for His death to be a substitute for every repentant sinner, He had to be *fully man without committing one sin*. If Jesus had sinned, His death could only have paid for His own sin. It follows that every unrepentant sinner will die for his own sin (Ezekiel 18:20-24; Hebrews 10:29). Thus the earth will be cleansed, the sins of the unrepentant will be gone when the unrepentant are destroyed, while the sins of the penitent, those who obey Jesus, will be paid for by the blood of their Redeemer (lesson 32 expands on this).

18. Jesus did not take the form of unfallen angels. What form, or nature did He take?

Hebrews 2:16 _____

Note: In taking the seed of Abraham, Jesus identified with man in two ways -- Firstly, He inherited the weakness of man (represented by the man, Abraham). Secondly, apart from being a direct descendent, He was counted to be of the seed in a spiritual sense as well. He received the spiritual identity because He obeyed His heavenly Father (Gal. 3:6-9; Rev. 14:12; Rom. 4:3). The difference between Christ's obedience and ours is that Jesus obeyed all His life and never faltered once. Jesus did not take the higher life form of an angel, He became a man with the weaknesses of man. But He did not let those weaknesses stand in the way of His obedience to His Father. Hence, in spite of the moral and physical weakness of man that He inherited, He did not sin.

19. What particular attribute is held by those who are counted as faithful to God, like Abraham was faithful to God?

Galatians 3:6-9 _____

Note: Review Lesson 4 to explain the significance of this attribute. Also see Genesis 18:18,19 and 22:16-18 and notice that God's blessing on Abraham was totally provisional on his obedience to God.

20. What was Jesus' motive and purpose in life?

John 4:34 _____

Note: See Luke 22:42 and Philippians 2:8 for Jesus' attitude toward His coming crucifixion. So when Jesus took the seed of Abraham, he was a man, faithful and obedient to His heavenly Father. He was just like every other faithful, obedient son or daughter of God (1John 3:1-3) who had forsaken sin and became converted. He could legitimately call them His brother and sister, for they were all of the family of God.

21. Who did Jesus regard as His brother and sister, those to whom He could relate as one in purpose?

Matthew 12:46-50 _____

22. Why were these people considered to be intimately a part of Him?

Matthew 12:50 _____

1John 1:6,7 _____

John 17:21-23 _____

Philippians 2:5 _____

Romans 8:9 _____

Ephesians 3:14-20 _____

Note: The people that Jesus identifies as His brethren, are the converted, not the practising sinners (Luke 13:25-27).

23. How did Jesus perceive His relationship to His Father God?

Philippians 2:6; John 5:18 _____

Note: "Form" of God must equal "same" as God. See Q34.

24. How closely did Jesus adopt human nature and form?

Philippians 2:7,8 _____

Note: "Form" in verse 6 equals "same". Hence "form" in verse 7 will also mean "same". Jesus came in the capacity of servant. In one respect He will serve the redeemed in heaven (Luke 12:37). But principally Jesus came to show men how to serve the heavenly Father (John 13:15,16 ; Hebrews 10:7. Also see Q17). In serving the heavenly Father, we are ministers to our fellow men (Matthew 20:27,28).

25. Jesus was made in the likeness of those He came to save. For what purpose?

Romans 8:3-4 _____

26. Even though Jesus was made with the same nature as fallen man, does this mean that Jesus was also a sinner?

2Corinthians 5:21; 1John 3:5 _____

Note: Can a murderer stop killing? Can a thief stop stealing? Yes. Then a sinner can stop sinning. Jesus was, what we may become when fully converted.

Some people feel that Jesus, being so good, would not be exposed to the temptations that you and I suffer. But if Jesus DID bear the temptations, as we are able to bear them, then this again is evidence of His total adoption of the fallen nature of man. Likewise, if He, while as this man, can be victorious over those temptations, it is evidence that we may also be victorious and overcome as He overcame sin (Revelation 3:21).

WE COPY JESUS' VICTORY**27. How comprehensive was the range of temptations that Jesus experienced? In other words, what kind of temptation, trial, or endurance did Jesus suffer compared to the those suffered by man?**

Hebrews 4:14,15; Hebrews 2:17, 18 _____

28. To what extent are our temptations experienced by other people?

1Peter 5:9, 1Corinthians 10:13 _____

Note: Refer to 1John 2:15,16, to see how all sin may be reduced to three basic catagories.

29. If Jesus has empathy with us, what provision has He made to offer us help to be victorious over sin and help us to gain the holy character with which we may become reconciled to God?

Hebrews 4:16 _____

Note: Review lesson 5 concerning reconciliation. Character is what we develop through life and is the result of what we take into the mind. Nature is what we are born with and left to itself will produce corruption (Jeremiah 17:9, Proverbs 29:15). An unholy nature can be totally suppressed by the holy character. That takes dedication and effort and that's what Jesus did to attain the holy mind (Heb.2:10).

30. How did Jesus, with the weakness of fallen man, attain His victory over sin?

John 5:19,30 _____

John 8:28,29 _____

John 3:34 _____

Note: When the reference is to the heavenly Father instructing Christ, we today also understand it to be the Holy Spirit. The Heavenly Father, or Holy Spirit empowered Christ, He also empowers us (Matthew 10:20; Zechariah 4:6).

31. While empowered by the Spirit of God, what other weapon of warfare did Christ use against Satan? You and I may also use this weapon.

Matthew 4:10,11 _____

James 4:7 _____

Ephesians 6:17 _____

While as a man, Christ at no time called upon His Divine power in any of His conflicts with Satan. Every victory of Jesus was won with the power He received from His heavenly Father. As He received power from the Spirit of God, so may we. This is the example that Jesus came to give to all mankind.. He did not come to show what God could do, but what MAN can do when filled with the Spirit of God.

32. How may we receive the righteousness of Christ/God?

Philippians 3:9 _____

Note: This property that Jesus exercised, is how He enlisted the power of the Holy Spirit, that He may live a victorious life. We need to have the same attribute. See lesson 4.

33. In the midst of the wickedness of the last days, what characteristics are found in the saints

Revelation 14:12; Revelation 13:10; 1John 5:4 _____

Note: These people have learned to overcome as Jesus overcame. In Revelation 14:12, the saints are contrasted with the wicked mentioned in verses 8-11. Similarly, in Revelation 13, the wicked are described in verses 1-9.

The "faith of Jesus" refers to the type of faith that Jesus had. It was faith in His Father to preserve Him from sin. When God's people have this kind of faith they have attained to implementing the heavenly power in the same manner as did Jesus. This is also what it means when we believe that Jesus is the Son of God (review lesson 4 concerning faith). They are following Christ's example and have become one of His disciples. They have attained to the righteousness of Christ by faith (Philippians 3:9; 1John 5:4,5).

34. If the faith of Jesus is our faith and we believe on his name, what does the Word of God promise has begun for us in this life now?

1John 5:13 _____

Note: The belief spoken of here is that believing which is the product of experiencing the working of Christ upon the heart, with the visible evidence of victory over personal sins and receiving a changed life.

JESUS CHRIST TOOK GOD THE FATHER'S PLACE ON EARTH

While Christ was totally man, we should not make Him altogether as one of ourselves, for He was also equal with God. At no time during His incarnation did He call upon His divinity to aid His earth directed objective.

Jesus never sinned and His pure and holy character maintained under the severest of trial stands as a rebuke to our feeble efforts in seeking Him for righteousness. As His purity and holiness is above ours, so were His temptations and afflictions proportionally more than ours. Whenever we may be tempted to waiver under trial, remember Him who suffered more than anything we may be called upon to suffer (Hebrews 12:3,4).

In Q13 it was noticed that Jesus was born into the human race and took upon Himself the weakness of degenerate man.

35. While Jesus had a human mother, who was his "father".

Luke 1:35 _____

Note: The Holy Spirit, the Highest and the heavenly Father are the same in this context.

36. Whom did Christ claim was His father, was it the Holy Spirit, or God the Father?

John 3:16; John 10:31-36; Hebrews 1:1-3 _____

37. Whom did God and Christ Himself, both consider Jesus to be?

John 1:1-5,14 _____

Hebrews 1:2,3,8 _____

Philippians 2:6 _____

38. At times the divinity of Christ flashed through humanity. Give an example of one such incident.

Matthew 17:2 _____

Note: A further occasion when the divinity of Jesus flashed before men, was at the time He was seized by the mob who came to crucify Him (John 18:4-6). From Matthew 28:2-4, compare the effect of the radiance of one angel upon men. What the evil crowd beheld in Jesus was a greatly reduced vision of His true glory. Had His glory been fully revealed, it would have destroyed them (2Thessalonians 2:8). These men had been given sufficient evidence that they were about to lay hands on the Son of God. Those who took part in the crucifixion of Jesus will again see Him coming in all His glory with the whole retinue of heaven (Revelation 1:7; Matthew 26:63,64). Notice their response -- Revelation 6:14-17.

CONCLUSION

We have learned that Christ, being equal with God, became fully man. Notwithstanding His inherited physical and mental weakness, Jesus successfully repelled every attack of Satan to induce Him to distrust His heavenly Father (as Satan did with Adam and Eve) and go contrary to His Father's instruction. Jesus did not sin, not even in thought.

The power Jesus used to conquer this foe, who is stronger than unaided man, is the power received from His heavenly Father. As Jesus was a man like every other man, He was our Example and using His methods we too can be like Him, leading a victorious life.

Have you surrendered your life to Christ and put these principles to the test? Have you been enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift? Have you been made a partaker of the Spirit of God and have tasted the good word of God and the power of the world to come? (Hebrews 6:4,5). God has promised joy unspeakable to those who have (1Peter 1:8).

Maybe you have seen in your life, since your conversion, the missteps that you know are sin and you wonder about your hold on Christ. Take heart, do not forsake your commitment and notice the following verses...

- ◆ A just man falls seven times, but rises up again (Proverbs 24:16).
- ◆ If we sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, who is the propitiation for our sin (1John 2:1,2).

These texts and others like them, do not negate all that has been said before. While the grace of God gives us time and power to learn, no-one will be saved who does not genuinely, by faith, apply the power of Christ to gain the victory over cultivated and inherited tendencies to sin. Our next lesson will discuss this apparent paradox, that we may understand what happens when a Christian sins.



**I can do all things through
Christ who strengthens me.
Philippians 4:13**