

## HOW TO WIN IN 2010

1 Corinthians 15:17; 2 Corinthians 2:14

INTRO: How can we be winners spiritually in 2010? I don't know about you, but I personally want to be a champion for Christ in this new year. In Hebrews 12:1, we are reminded that we are in a race, a spiritual race, and the course is set before us. In 1 Corinthians 9:24, we are told to run that we may obtain the prize.

To win there is a price that has to be paid, there is a discipline that has to be achieved, and there is a battle to be fought. The great Vince Lombardi said this about being a winner, and yes, the principles of winning spiritually are much the same as winning in anything. "You have to pay the price...Winning is not a sometime thing; it's an all-the-time thing. You don't win once in awhile, you don't do things right once in a while, you do them right all the time. Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing...I've never known a man worth his salt who in the long run, deep down in his heart, didn't appreciate the grind, the discipline. There is something in good men that really yearns for, needs, discipline and the harsh reality of head-to-head combat. I don't say these things because I believe in the 'brute' nature of man or that men must be brutalized to be combative. *I believe in God, and I believe in human decency. But I firmly believe that any man's finest hour- his greatest fulfillment to all he holds dear- is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle-victorious*" (Fallwell 132-133).

Will 2010 be a winning year for you spiritually? I hope and pray so.

- I. TO BE A WINNER IN 2010 WE ARE GOING TO HAVE ENDURE HARDNESS AS GOOD SOLDIERS (2 Timothy 2:3).
  - A. Enduring hardness speaks of discipline. We live in an undisciplined age, an age of little self-control. The reason that soldiers have to go to Boot Camp is to get them in shape, to discipline them, to get them ready for the battle.
  - B. It takes discipline to do right, to swim against the flow of the world. A good soldier needs to be concerned, not about the world but about the things of God's Kingdom (2 Tim. 2:4).
  - C. It takes discipline to study the Bible daily and pray for wisdom (2 Tim. 2:15). A good soldier will be fully equipped for battle (Eph. 6:10-11).

- II. TO BE A WINNER IN 2010 WE MUST PULL DOWN STRONGHOLDS IN OUR LIVES (2 Corinthians 10:3-4)
  - A. No army can win the war without taking ground. All of us at times have surrendered ground to the Devil and that ground must be taken back.
  - B. We must pull down the strongholds that are keeping us from winning, from being victorious. We must pull down the strongholds of hatred, bitterness, anger, lust, covetousness, unforgiveness, fear, discouragement, resentment, lack of self-control, jealousy and debt.
  - C. Once we have retaken ground we are not to let the Devil enter that part of our lives again (Ephesians 4:27, "Neither give place to the devil.")
  
- III. TO BE A WINNER IN 2010 DRAW NEAR TO GOD
  - A. To draw near to God, you are going to have to submit to His will and way. Remember that the scripture that says: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."
  - B. James 4:8 says: "Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you..."
  - C. We have a decision to make in 2010; we will either get closer to God, or we will draw away from Him. We will either be hot, lukewarm or cold (Rev. 3:15-16).
  - D. When we seek first the kingdom of God, He takes care of the rest (Matthew 6:33, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God...")
  
- IV. TO BE A WINNER IN 2010 WE MUST RESIST THE WRONG AND CLEAVE TO THE RIGHT
  - A. In Romans 12:9 we are told to, "...Abhor that which is evil; and cleave that which is good." The Greek word for "abhor" is *apostugeo* meaning "to dislike, to have a horror of." To resist sin, we must see it as exceedingly sinful, to see it as the scourge that it is. Sin brings heartbreak and headaches.
  - B. In James 4:7 we read, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
    - 1. To win, we must resist the temptations that come our way. To resist is to say no to the Devil's lies, to say no to his attempts to destroy you.
    - 2. If you do not resist him, he will not flee. If you keep on playing around with sin, you will be defeated.

3. To resist the Devil, you must stand up against him in the name and through the blood of Jesus Christ. It is through the power and strength of the Lord that we win (Eph. 6:10, "...Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might"). We must not be fearful when we stand in the power and might of the Lord Jesus Christ for the Bible says, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

V. TO BE A WINNER IN 2010 WE MUST HAVE THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ON OUR LIVES

- A. We need to live our lives being filled with the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:18 admonishes us to: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." If our lives are filled with the world and its trash, we cannot not be filled with the Spirit.
- B. As children of God, we do have victory through the Holy Spirit. 1 John 4:4 says: "Ye are of God little children, and have overcome them [the spirits of this world]; because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world."

VI. TO BE A WINNER IN 2010 WE MUST HAVE THE BIBLE AS OUR GUIDE

- A. The Word of God is our light for traveling in this dark world. Psalm 119:105: "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."
- B. Charles Haddon Spurgeon said of the Bible: "The *truth of God* is the *only treasure* for which we seek, and the Scripture is the *only field* in which we dig for it! If you keep close to the inspired book, you can suffer no harm; you are at the fountain-head of all moral and spiritual good. This is fit *food* for the people of God— this is the *bread* which nourishes the highest life. The prayerful study of the Word is not only a means of *instruction*— but an act of *devotion* wherein the transforming power of grace is often exercised, changing us into the image of Christ, of whom the Word is a mirror. Within the Scripture, there is a balm for every wound, a slave for every sore. Oh, the wondrous power in the Scripture to create a *heart of hope*, within the *ribs of despair*! Amidst sharp and strong *temptations*, and fierce and bitter trials, the Word of the Lord has preserved us. Amidst *discouragements*

which damped our hopes, and *disappointments* which wounded our hearts, our Bibles have brought us a secret, unconquerable consolation.”

- C. The Bible is the most needed book in all the world; it is the book that God Himself gave by inspiration (2 Timothy 3:16).
- D. If we are to survive as a nation, there is going to have to be a revival of reverence to the Book as it was revered in Nehemiah’s day (Nehemiah 8:1-6).

#### VII. TO BE A WINNER IN 2010 WE MUST PRAY

- A. Jeremiah 33:3 tells us to call upon the Lord, and He will show us great things.
- B. “This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting” (Matthew 17:21). We will never be the winning kind if we do not follow the scriptural plan.

Conclusion: It is my prayer that you will be a winner spiritually in 2010.

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