

Victory Over The Grave

One popular story attributed to St. Teresa of Avila happened when she was on the toilet. The devil mocked her for thinking about God even in the bathroom, and in response, St. Teresa said, “what comes out of my mouth is for God. What comes out the other end is for you!” This story really makes me laugh, and it isn’t just because of the candor of St. Teresa, but primarily that this story is a reminder of victory. As Christians, we are all told that Christ’s death won for us our salvation, something that we could never achieve. But why do we sometimes act as if we’re losing? When we look at the world and see wars, famine, climate change, and geopolitical tensions, it seems to dampen our resolve. It feels as if the cause of the world is lost. We see nations push the boundaries of tolerating evil, all while the poor, marginalized, and forgotten are pushed to the borders of society and are being crushed. So, what do we say? How do we justify our Christ-given victorious state when the world seems so broken?

Before I share my thoughts on this question, I’d like to tell you about one of my favourite movies, Darkest Hour. In this movie, Winston Churchill, played by Gary Oldman, has been chosen as the new Prime Minister of Great Britain. He has to deal with rising tensions with Nazi Germany, a reluctant America and a political party ready to stab him in the back; all of which seems to be a herculean task. But throughout the movie, when Churchill is bombarded by questions from the press, with a cigar in his mouth, he gives a ‘V’ with his two fingers, his sign for victory. Close to the end of the movie, before Churchill is to give a speech to Parliament, he escapes from his security detail and takes the subway. There, he has a frank conversation with his fellow passengers about their feelings when it comes to the inevitable war with Germany and if they would accept surrender. With a loud cry both man and woman, old and young shouted “never!” The British people who had lived under the Great Depression and the prospect of another war shouted a resolve that resonated its way into the House of Commons. The movie ends with Churchill giving a rousing speech to Parliament and unifies not only his party but the country towards victory, for the sake of freedom and justice.

While Darkest Hour ends with this rousing speech, the history of the Second World War seemed like a losing fight for the British people no matter what words were spoken. With the Blitz destroying parts of London, food shortages and economic hardships, it seemed that the light of democracy and freedom would be eradicated. But there has been one central truth that has been documented, the resolve of the British people never faulted. When faced with almost certain defeat, the hope of victory endured. And isn’t this the same hope we so long for? Isn’t this the hope that the world needs?

When we look at the world and see its hopelessness, what must our response be as Christians? Strangely enough, I’d say look at our Church’s history first. When the Christian world would literally tear itself apart, with swords in one hand and Bible in the other, or when seriously broken popes would use the Church for their own goals and ambitions, and even when tyrants would purposefully persecute the Church as a scapegoat, it seemed that God had

abandoned his Church. But let us look closely, not at the events of nation states, but rather the movements of the human heart. Was it not saints like St. Ignatius of Loyola and others who fought for sound Church teaching, St. Catherine of Sienna who reminded pontiffs of their place and John Paul II that told us “we are an Easter people, and alleluia is our song!”?

As Christians, we know the outcome of the darkness. We know which banner stands victorious; it is Christ’s! As Christians, we are called to proclaim this victory to every person to the ends of the Earth. No matter the conditions, no matter the trials, and no matter the discomfort. We must clear the smoke that clouds the eyes of our brothers and sisters. The justification of our victory cannot be only said by kind words to one another, it must consist of two things, using our words in prayer and our words connected to action - to love. The first thing we must always do is pray, let us keep in mind that the saints who saw the pains of life simply prayed even harder than when things were easy. The second is to fight, to fight for justice and righteousness, not by guns or outlandish tweets but with love. The Christian victory was not won by Christ leading Israel into a physical war, the victory was fought and won by the change of the human heart.

Let us see God in all things, in every face and in every heart, let us be courageous and sing of this victory, let us change our hearts to change society. And so, when the world seems to face its darkest hours, let us be reminded of one word that has resonated throughout history, VICTORY!



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Altar Server, St. Paul's Crusader, karate student, eats anything, and loves to sleep and sit around. Someone who stays strong in his convictions and beliefs. Whenever you write for God you are letting the Holy Spirit work in you. We are all responsible for the growth of the faith, we must continue the journey of building that faith in one another