

**“How To Live as a Victor in Jesus Christ”
1 Corinthians 15:57, 1 John 5:4**

Big Idea – God has given us the victory through Jesus Christ.

“But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 15:57)

“Whoever is born of God overcomes the world. And what is the victory that overcomes the world? Even our faith!
(1 John 5:4)

Did you know that NIKE gear is mentioned in the Bible? Look at 1 John 5:4 and answer this question: What does our faith give us in overcoming the world? The answer is “victory.” The Greek word for victory in this verse is nike, pronounced (nee kay). Our faith is NIKE! It is victory for us! But you have to make a choice!

1. Choose to be a victor. How?

Be Pro-active not Re-active –

“pro” means “for” and “active” indicates “doing something”. In other words, don’t just sit there and wait for something to happen to you, do something, make something happen.

3 Kinds of people in life:

those who make things happen,
those who watch things happening,
those who don’t even know what’s happening!

Pro-active people focus on roots

things you **can** control– principles of life that produce right attitudes, right beliefs, and right commitments.

Re-active people focus on fruits

things you **cannot** control, like results; will this person like me, will I be happy, will everything work out okay for my kids.

What good comes from focusing there? None, absolutely none; in fact, this creates negative emotional energy and often results in fear, worry, manipulation and worse!

It's like a battery in your car. If you turn on the lights without turning on the engine, the battery will run down. So too, if you just react to challenges without taking any action (turning on the engine), your internal battery, your ability to cope, your hope will also run down.

But if you turn on the engine of your car and then the lights, radio, etc., the car's actions will recharge the battery, and so it is with life and pro-active people. If you take charge and do something, the challenges of life will not deplete your battery, but will actually help recharge it, and make you a beacon of light and hope for others.

2. Be self-disciplined.

1 John 2:15 "Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of your Heavenly Father in you.

16 For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world."

Note John's warning here about 3 things:

Pride – pride of life, ego, power, success, fame, popularity.

Appetites - lusts of the flesh, desires for sex, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, food. Stop and think about how many TV commercials are geared to feeding your fleshly appetites. If it feels good, do it.

Greed – desire for more stuff, more toys, more things. People live on plastic, and so we have a society in slavery, bondage, and debt, to the credit card companies.

It takes discipline to say no to your human body and desires.

1 Corinthians 9:25 & 27 All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize.

27 I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should.

1 Corinthians 9:27 But **I keep under** my body, and bring it into subjection:

Richard Shelley Taylor said, "Self-discipline is basically the ability to subordinate" to put under, to put down my body's appetites and demands. It's done by making your spirit and mind control your body, not the opposite way around!

Word "*discipline*" comes from Greek word *gymnatsu*, where we get our English word *gymnastics* from

Without discipline, one is sure to fail. An athlete's strength comes from discipline. Here's a story about the strength of the first marathon runners, which is where the NIKE company gets its name.

The battle of Marathon was fought around 490 B.C. when king Darius launched an attack on Athens. Since the surrounding city-states would offer little support to the Athenians, the Athenians were outnumbered by the Persians. Although the Athenians were outnumbered, they caught the Persians by surprise by running the full length of the plain and catching the Persians unorganized.

The Athenians were able to defeat the Persians by not only striking from the front, but they also flanked the Persian army from the sides. Because of this sudden attack the Persian troops broke ranks and fled back to their ships. Since the Athenians won they wanted to send word back to Athens to tell of victory so the city could prepare for the Persian fleet attack from the sea. So Miltiades sent his best runner Pheidippides to take word to Athens. He ran the whole distance, about 26 miles, and when he arrived he was able to say one word . . . and then he died.

What was the one word that Pheidippides was able to say before he died? It was "Nike!" He cried "victory!" The Athenians ran the whole distance of the plain of Marathon, which is some 26 miles. This could not have been accomplished without hard training and discipline.

3. Don't quit – endure, continue, persevere

2 Corinthians 4:1, 13, 16 God, with his mercy, gave us this work to do, so we don't give up.

13 It is written in the Scriptures, "I believed, so I spoke." Our faith is like this, too. We believe, and so we speak.

16 So we do not give up. Our physical body is becoming older and weaker, but our spirit inside us is made new every day.

Colossians 3:23 Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

1 Corinthians 15:57 But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.

Have a servant's heart

Matthew 20:28 In the same way, the Son of Man did not come to be served. He came to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many people.“

Use things and care for people – many people do the opposite. If you have people under you at work, why not focus on developing them to be better? Helping train them personally and professionally. Invest yourself in the lives of people.

Never stop learning – read books, listen to Cd's or podcasts, watch YouTube videos or DVD's. If you keep growing and developing in your skills and abilities, you'll be more productive and more fulfilled and satisfied in your work.

“You can become a world class expert on any subject in just 18 months.”

4. Develop habits of excellence.

Philippians 1:10 tells us to "approve things that are excellent..."

Aristotle said, “Excellence is not just an act, but a habit.”

Robert Ringer in his book *Million Dollar Habits* says that success does not depend upon superior intellect, special skills, formal education, luck, etc. He states, “The world is filled with intelligent, highly educated, gifted people who experience ongoing frustration because of their lack of success. Millions of others spend their lives working long hard hours, only to die broke.” He went on to say, “Success is a matter of understanding and religiously practicing specific, simple habits that always lead to success.”

Ringer said, Remember, life is nothing more than the sum total of many successful days, weeks, month, and years. That's why practicing successful habits day in and day out is the most certain way to win over the long term.”

What are the habits I need for spiritual growth?

Quiet Time – Bible study & prayer – Josh. 1:8; Psa. 119:9,11

Tithing – Lk. 6:38 give to God first, Matt. 6:33.

Worshipping – Heb. 10:25 *“not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together (except on Super Bowl Sunday!)...”*

Witnessing – a growing Christian is a witnessing one.

How can I make or break a habit?

Begin – attitude is everything. Habits are a combination of desire, habits, and skills. You have to want to succeed, have the desire to change habits to do so.

Repetition is the key – just do it

First mentally, then physically. See yourself as a winner, not a loser, a victor, not a victim. Then you can begin to act like one. And as you act, do so repeatedly. This means **PRACTICE**. Psychologists say if you can do something 21 days or times in a row, it can become a habit!

These are the keys to success if we uphold them.

1 John 5:4 says, “And this is the victory (NIKE) that has overcome the world—our faith.” The main key to success is our faith in the Lord Jesus. Faith will bring the victory.

In Isaiah 40:31 the Lord gave us the promise that faith in him will bring us victory. He said, “But those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.”

Now that’s what you call NIKE Air!