**THEME 2023: JESUS VICTOR, the foundation for a victorious life-style** by Leen La Rivière

**Background:**

In Christianity we focus on Christmas, the birth of Jesus; with Easter we focus on the suffering of Jesus for our sins, cross and resurrection. With Pentecost the focus is on the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the church. In the other months of the year we divide the church attention between some great redemption stories from the Old Testament and parables Jesus told and some other remarkable stories from the New Testament.

What sometimes is missed, is the focus on Jesus as THE VICTOR, the foundation of our faith and the hope on a victorious life in the here and now and in the future an eternal life.

**Starting points from our fallen state:**

Romans 3: 22-25 *This righteousness from God come through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Him as sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood.*

Romans 5: 1-2 *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.*

Romans 7: 24-25 *What a wretched man I am! Who will recue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God – through Jesus Christ our Lord!*

**We need Jesus:**

Because the fallen state of mankind, God sent Jesus His son for the redemption of mankind. Jesus performed many miracles during his stay on earth, proving He was the Christ, the anointed One. But his resurrection proves He is the real salvation, that gives us eternal life. **Jesus as VICTOR** over sin, the world, death, is promising us a VICTORIOUS life too. The point is: not only our sins are forgiven and we have the promise of eternal life, but we are called to be victorious too!

Romans 8: 1 -2 *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.*

**And that will result in a victorious life:**

Romans 8: 37 *In all these things we are more that conquerors through Him who loved us.*

1 Cor.15: 56-57 *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

And keep the faith, as Jesus walks with us:

John 16: 33 Jesus*: I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*

**And God is challenging us to do the right and good: the practice of a victorious life style**

Romans 12: 21 *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good.*

1 John 4: 4 *You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them* (evil spirits, the world), *because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world* (=satan)

1 John 5: 1-5 *Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God*

*overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.*

**Ruling over the fallen state, moving beyond:**

2 Tim. 2: 12 *if we endure, we will also* ***reign*** *(as kings) with Him*

1 Peter 2: 9- 10 *But you are a chosen people, a* ***royal*** *priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.*

Romans 5: 17b *those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness* ***reign*** *in life through the one man Jesus Christ.*

God gives you the power to overcome sin and live a victorious life.

**The purpose of our life:**

Romans 8: 19 *The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration….that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.*

**Special promises made by Jesus for who overcomes (so will be victorious):**

Revelation 2: 7 *To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.*

Rev. 2: 11 *He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.*

Rev. 2: 17 *To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.*

Rev.3: 26 *To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations*.

Rev.3: 5 *He who overcomes will like them (believers in the city Sardis), be dressed in white (clothes). I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels*.

Rev.3: 12 *Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will write on him my new name.*

Rev.3:21 *To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.*

**Final destination:** At the end of the Biblebook Revelation, chapter 21 gives God an incredible breathtaking panorama about the new heaven and earth and he city of God, the new Jerusalem, to come. Verse 6 and 7:

*He (Jesus) said to me: “It is done”. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. He who* ***overcomes*** *will inherit all of this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.*