



Go for God! > SIX KEYS TO VICTORY:

> KEY #1 – REJOICE! (v1)

– “*Rejoice in the Lord*” – The key to continuous rejoicing is our Lord Jesus Christ, thus Paul says it is “*not tedious, but for you it is safe.*” Paul sees this call to “REJOICING” not redundant, but *encouraging, fulfilling and SAFE (secure).*

- The Biblical definition of **JOY** is: *A positive attitude or pleasant emotion; delight.* Many levels of joy are also described, including gladness, contentment, and cheerfulness. But the joy which the people of God should have is holy and pure. This joy rises above circumstances and focuses on the very character of God.

- In the Psalms, for example, the psalmist rejoices over *God's righteousness (71:14-16), salvation (21:1; 71:23), mercy (31:7), creation (148:5), word (119:14,162), and faithfulness (33:1-6).*

- *God's characteristics as well as His acts are the cause of rejoicing. The joy required of the righteous person (Psalms 150; Philippians 4:4) is produced by the Spirit of God (Galatians 5:22).* This kind of joy looks beyond the present to our future *salvation (Romans 5:2; 8:18; 1 Peter 1:4,6)* and to our sovereign God, who works out all things for our ultimate good, which is *Christlikeness (Romans 8:28-30).* This kind of joy is distinct from mere happiness. Joy like this is possible, even in the midst of sorrow (1 Corin. 12:26; 2 Corin. 6:10; 7:4). (Nelson's Bible Dictionary)

> KEY #2 – BEWARE! BEWARE! BEWARE! (v2)

– Three BEWARES are listed:

#1 - BEWARE of DOGS! – The commentator Barnes writes, “The Jews called the pagan dogs, and the Muslims call Jews and Christians by the same name. The term dog also is used to denote a person that is shameless, impudent, malignant, snarling, dissatisfied, and contentious, and is evidently so employed here.”

- Jesus said in Matthew 7:6 - *“Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.”*

- Referring to the crucifixion of Christ the Psalmist declares in Psalms 22:16-18 - *For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.*
- Peter writes in 2 Peter 2:22 - *But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."*
- Dogs, the ungodly are also found outside the New Jerusalem in Revelation 22:14-15 - *Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.*

#2 - BEWARE of EVIL WORKERS! – An evil work comes from an evil heart, Jesus said in Mark 7:20-23 - *"What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man."*

EVIL WORKERS defines one who labors and teaches disorder in a moral world. It is the failure of rational and free beings to conform in character and conduct to the will of God. This great evil is defined and realized in Romans 1:18-32.

#3 - BEWARE OF THE MUTILATION! – Warren Wiersbe writes, “Here Paul uses a pun on the word “circumcision.” The word translated “circumcision” literally means “a mutilation.” The Judaizers taught that circumcision was essential to salvation (Acts 15:1; Galatians 6:12-18); but Paul states that circumcision of *itself* is only a mutilation! The true Christian has experienced a spiritual circumcision in Christ (Colossians 2:11) and does not need any fleshly operations. *Circumcision, baptism, the Lord's Supper, tithing, or any other religious practice cannot save a person from his sins. Only faith in Jesus Christ can do that (Romans 2:25-29).*”

> **KEY #3 – WORSHIP! (v3-6)**

– Paul writes in Colossians 2:11-12 - *In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ. We have no confidence in the flesh as Paul unveils his religious self-righteousness, which is worthless, as only faith in Christ brings true worship of God in Spirit and truth! (John 4:19-24).*

> **KEY #4 – FAITH! (v7-11)**

- **FAITH IN CHRIST** produces:

- (v8) the **KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST**;
- (v9) the **RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD**;
- (v10a) the **POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION**;
- (v10b) the **FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS**;
- (v11) the **RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD!**

> **KEY #5 – HOW TO PRESS ON AND OBTAIN THE PRIZE!**

(v12-14)

- **FORGET!** - We are called to PRESS ON, to REACH FORWARD in CHRIST, FORGET past failures, sins, and shortcomings; learn from each event, then exercise spiritual disciplines to strengthen your faith unto **VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIVING!** - 2 Corinthians 5:17-18 -

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

- **REACH!** - Believers are called to “PRESS TOWARD THE GOAL FOR THE

PRIZE OF THE UPWARD CALL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.”

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 - *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

- **PRESS ON!** - Hebrews 12:1-2 - *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so*

great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

- **GO FOR THE GOAL!** - 2 Timothy 4:7-8 - *I have fought the good fight, I have*

finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

> **KEY #6 - LIVE LIKE A CITIZEN OF HEAVEN! (v15-21)**

- **Have this “MIND” in you, which is:**

(v8) the **KNOWLEDGE** of CHRIST JESUS our **LORD!**

(v9) to be found in the **RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST by FAITH IN GOD!** (not saved by the Law or by works)

(v10) to know Him and the **POWER of His RESURRECTION and the FELLOWSHIP of His SUFFERING!**

(v12-14) **FORGET** those things which are behind, **REACH FORWARD** to those things which are ahead, for the **PRIZE** of the upward call of GOD in CHRIST JESUS!

- TWO CITIZENS – EARTHLY OR HEAVENLY? (Romans 8:6 - *For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*)

(v18-19) **Observe the EARTHLY MINDED:**

- (1) they are “*enemies of the cross*” (1 Cor. 1:18);
- (2) their “*end is destruction*” (1 Cor. 6:9-11);
- (3) “*whose god is their belly;*”
- (4) “*whose glory is their shame;*”
- (5) and they “*set their minds of earthly things.*” (1 John 1:6)

- *What does it mean to be SPIRITUALLY MINDED? A SPIRIT FILLED BELIEVER WILL:*

(1) **WITNESS JESUS CHRIST to family, friends and to those who are far away!** (*Acts 1:8*);

(2) **MAKE DISCIPLES!** (*Matthew 28:19-20*);

(3) **SHARE their wealth, time and talents to LOVE GOD’S FAMILY!**
(Acts 2:41-47)

- A citizen of heaven: **WORSHIPS GOD!**

- A citizen of heaven: **STUDIES THE WORD OF GOD!**

- A citizen of heaven: **WILL WITNESS THE LOVE OF GOD!**

- A citizen of heaven: IS **WEDDY (READY)** TO GO IN THE RAPTURE!

In the RAPTURE we have:

~ **CONFIRMATION!** - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (Precedence – *Enoch in Genesis 5:24 - And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.*)

~ **TRANSFORMATION!** - 1 Corinthians 15:51-58

~ **GLORIFICATION!** – 2 Corinthians 5:1-8

> **Many people ask when will the RAPTURE happen?**

- The RAPTURE will happen when the gospel has gone out to the whole world (Matthew 24:14). (It has!)
- The RAPTURE will happen when Israel has become a nation once again (Matthew 24:32-35). (It is!)
- The RAPTURE will happen when there's a revived Roman Empire; today we have the European Union, which is the revived Roman Empire (Daniel Ch. 7 & 9); leading the way to a one-world government! (With us today!)
- The RAPTURE will happen at the conclusion of the church age (Rev. Ch. 2 & 3); the last days church will become *lukewarm* (Rev. 4:14-22) and *apostate* (to fall away from the faith, which is the Word of God) (2 Thessalonians 2:3).
(We are there!)
- The RAPTURE will happen when the world is full of sin and corruption like the “*days of Noah*” (Matthew 24:36-39); like “*Sodom and Gomorrah*” (Luke 17:28-30).
(Today, rebellion is ripe against God’s moral ways and truth!)
- After the RAPTURE then comes the “*Great Tribulation*” (Matthew 24:15-28), also known as the “*day of Jacob’s trouble*” (Jer. 30:7) (Jacob represents Israel). Daniel 12:1 reads “*And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time.*” Jesus said in Matthew 24:15 - *For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.*
- Let’s be WEDDY! (ready) – Matthew 24:40-51 the word “taken” in verses 40-41 is *para lombanomi*, this Greek word is also found in:
 - (1) Matthew 1:24 when Joseph takes Mary as his bride; (Jesus takes believers as His bride!)
 - (2) Matthew 17:1 when Jesus took Peter, James and John to the Mt. of Transfiguration and HE was glorified; (Jesus takes believers to be glorified!)
 - (3) John 14:3 – “*I will come again and take you unto myself that where I am there you may be also.*” (Jesus takes us to heaven!)

- Matthew 25:1-13 displays the “*Parable of the ten virgins*” five wise (ready/spiritual); five foolish (earthly) – let’s be wise and ***LET’S GO FOR GOD!***