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The Roots of Victory

Earl Clement Davis

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Servin F. (12)

Subject, "The Roots of Victory."

Scripture. Twatthem 41-11.

Yext Luke 23.2

"Auch Jesus achoused in mischon and stature, and in form with fort and men"

I wish to speak upon the volve and the necessity of quiet fersistent frefarohir for critical moments in left. you and I are bring Rollect of our courtainty to face wilicol situations. The degree of ruccers with which we meet such wowents defends not upon the conditions of the woment, but ofor the condition of the fast, The worth of weeting rest deep with the history of frefaration. I toke

for a text Throther 2 ? as suggesting the essence of what I wish to say. "And Jerus actionseed in wireline and statue, and in form with first and men."

according to the colendair of Kitwolistic Churches, this day is Rumm on the 17 Lunchy in Lent. how Levet is a surrive of the old femish custom of boring feriores of fearting or farting when special religion cerewon: ies were forformed. It wor ersentally a string time festival which, after about 400 years after Jerus limed, some to be worleful into a ferious of fortung and Juyer in initation of the forting and fuger of form during his

40 chys tenftation in the hillener as described in watthew in the foreign which I need to you. The ferior of Leut for we special sig= inficorce for us except as it stauch for the sewgritin, for the form, for the celebration of an event which marks the turning fourt in the life of Jesus, and Jertop a turning in the lift of the feight where tradition we share.

But what, in fast, is the real event in Joseph life that the ruritar of the Gasfel is trying to fixture in this forsage, It is evident from the fort that the winter twentous whe it so unvolved and forinful that he regarded it or an event of some informations. Then, let

us seek what it really means, We remember that just fremous to this so collect 40 days temptohis in the mildener. Jenn took hear boftised by John the Boptist is The forder The story of Luke Telle us that about 18 years before this time of Bof tim and tenftation, Jenus bock gove with his father and wother if to Jerusolem to the feart of the Passoner. at the time of this mil-forus for the 1th time in his life boil cought a glimpse of the kind of life he worted to live, This little scene of the boylond of Jesus, which we Rum so well from Hoffwor heartiful fairling, is very

real to us, for each one of us en recoll some great woment of our early life, when we first conget a glinger of the life before us, when me 17. begun to give whood and were took, and first begon to think of what we would like to do in life, Duch a woment in Jesus life in this one with the doctor in the length. Here he begins to become a won. But he goes book home with his farents, works away at his tracke, Keefing his mind alet, studying hum voture, leaving to see the spirit of fire in all life, Slowly but such he wor selvering in miselver and

statue, and in form with god and wow." But after there 18 years, he somes to the firebox to be Buftirdel of John in the Justin. This is one important day for form. Behince him is that long hard stuggling ferior of fre = facation. Referr him is the uncertainty of his lofe, the week: tain furtire. It is one of those great critical woments of life when one stops, heritates, before actually going where. On he actually comes to the formt of herking awy from the fast, and going toldly into the future, he stops, heritates, awayed at the signifi = come of the stef in his life, he about seeves from its formitte

charges and ever, Just as one stop, holf tune book ufon the Therhold as he is obot to leave the worm furtisted have avel go into the sold mintery clarkmen without so Jenn stouching upon the therhold of his quiet, fortested, secheled life in hogneth, heritotes hefore he step forth into the eved chiefy world to meet there his whift and diroffintmetts, his successes and wisteres, this woment of Jenus life, a woment of downt heritation, or he turn from his early life to his firste minuty is the real event of form both that wither is trying to describe. It is this event that riburlistic should have and solver

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II But why should Jesus so heretite and doubt at this feriod! what wor there in his life or his teaching that works him feel was sectain at the section women't or to whether or not he should toke of his fablic life. The fact is that four Ruew that the ideas that he was going to teach, the religion that he believed, that he must fresh, were not the traditional time forward religion of the fews. The few mere formed hand and foot, orely and some by their strict my relding obeclience to the Four of their fother to the traclities ribore, to the time town Est enregtors

concerning God and his selection to his storen feefle. There old forms bol seased to horr that with word meaning that they ouce bod. Jeun himself attocked them bitterly," have unto you Scuber. Phariseer, Hyforites, for ye clause the outricle of the cuf and of the flotter, but within they are full of extention and excer! but in contrast to there confering Jenu tol leaved to see good in watere, in wow, and in his own sevel, Jerus tool fred Joel the folker, to him the real essence of the seligious life war love to God and love town. In long or there forms actually contributed to the word and religious loge, Jews

did not object to them. Only when they locked word cutent, and dwafed the spiritual life did ferm ignore there form, when the Phanica of haided him for flucking the grain on the Soffolt which wer senting to the line, The Sofboth was worke for won, and not were for the Soffoth; so that the son of war in First even of the Soffott. The fortis that Jesus was a won of flain comme seure, and he world accept there forms only on they minitud to his work and efective life.

Two fewer som the great wood significence of his ideas; he reverged That to fine expersion to These would bring contention

and stripe into the femile life. He unclosterly volyech that it would bring ufor him refront, dirgore, and fer: hop death, to know that the iden which were developing in his wind, and were feeding his more and spiriture waters, would bring entention and florition away the feofle when he knew, for it we that form heritated just of the time he was to begin freveling. HE was tempted. It weld he keef to himself thre great iclear, that were so wable and soul solinfying, a should be worke the societies, and at the risk of his own life give them to other! Ilst wor the great

templotion of Jenn. Become Jame realized the great imfor= twee and significance of his terring, he stood there as it were, after his Boftism, deboling with himself as to whether he should do the greater work of his fullie winsty, or reheating to enjoy his own quiet life as a conferter in hogoeth. It is fut or when a great sailing verel beating against the weed sails along on one tout for a time. When the time comes to toke a new trek, to sail in a clifferent cheeting, responsible to the Tune of the ruckle, she begins to sluge her course, but there is a women't, when the sails bridg

love, when the shif guener and Keritres, seeing uncertain just whit to do, and then suddenly the mind fills the soils well with a flung she to has uf her now come, for form, at This turing fruit of his life, stop heritales, uncertain. but seen the decision is worke, and he follows his new sense of forther left everyly, unfaultungly, Though the offorition of his own feefle, through the desertion of his friends. the true of his evenies. Though all there tich he were showly and steadily to the very sly when for his live for fork and were, for his unconfroming elevation to

truth he stood the great tent, and laid down his life for over one of three tuning foints, one in his life. when great issues was at stake, and when he were coeled upon to show who he were coeled upon to show who he were of stuff he were words of.

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former at stoke, that we have to find an exploration for the wishry. where are the roots of wicting? When died he win the wietry." We go The a flaut where giveth we borz been wateling for weeks, to, me find there the full blown flower. We stof in amore ment. a univale for been ferformed, then mucheful! When diel it blorsen. , he stop To think, we trace book of the worth of growth, We remember the germing seed breaking of though the earth, me remember the 1? twelve leaf; we remember when the swell delicate bud affected, and then four me watched it give, and extrel and enlarge, and wor suddenly the flower, When did it blorsom, It has been blorsoming all

The Time, try by day the growth and frequen hor hem towards that blossens the worte of the flower go bock to the earliest werenest of seed life under the general. When chief ferm win the victing. but at this great critical woment, long before that the nistry bod here were. This women't of shawotic wictory is singly the flowering of his long frefarahirs. The worth of his nictury was book into thre early years. There with his fother and worther in Hoyneth. There among his young friends, on a tog, or o youth, or o young won, there at the confertus heuch, there in the quiet, employ willige life of noqueth, that is when Jesur had won his wistery.

on the guiet, lovesure town of daily life ferm both sherely mercure his great trunglotus, although at the very woment when he is to show the for chet of his years of pefaration, he stop, teritotes doubts, yet the tenflotion book here over come, and the wisting bot to en won in thre days when in the sworld things of clarly life, he had beauced to do the Thing that wor night, and note and here, It is after all The munitum record of Jenus life that is the vallet and trust, We find him in this great crisis of his life but the to a deep worted frie eight, and in our imagination me go both of thet went, and find the work

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Int wor the chamotic critical woment, but the wisting wor wor in The long hard dulls when the ende wore of wer wor being worke one with a well organized, throughly direlled any. The nisting were won in those silent lovely tour when the men setting before the comf frie, solumly awarech to Theuseher that They would give Their life for the country. For For worrow me all stof in on rushing busy left to do for or to the work who we like to think in and from of feil won a great virting for our country? We read in the accounts of his life, and we the stories of american history of the

great chamolic events when great misteries were won, and the indefendere of the colonists as = smed. But you know and I how that it is in the un z written record of Workingtons both that there victories were being slowly would the year of wable won: by fafaration. We know that the great emage and former of the america colonist disfloyed at that would, mae but the notural flowering of the flant of well = fendovie which how here florted in new soil generations before.

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Sometimes me feel distentined and discouraged because me do not get along faster, sometimes me are milling to find family with our offertuniters, but me must remember that it is only at rowe womento that our lives are vaired of other the comment flore, of me are to min the wistorier me must min them in the quiet every dry round of duhin in our tomer, away on french in our this wer, of me con min victories Their, the nictories mul some shor st the guest womenls. The flant for wany leaves but fen blown.

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pefaring for, we live along year often year without sonow or wishof, But soone or lote the line is sowing when me must fait with some dear friend, Out of the very stillness of the night comes the great sorrow, It token us by sufrise, me are not frefared for it. Crushed, not knowing in which direction to turn, we suffer and desfair. It is to frefare for such fruit the liters on that that you to week the gunth and development in the deep spiriture things of life. When I hear a won soy that he how we need for the religions life, I shoulder to think to the before and desfair which any great colonity, way

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Jews temptohin, and the temptohin of Liheral Christins, We know that we torra a conception of good and were and the religious life, that is were real, wital send insfiring, then the corn= seftens belch by the so collect conservatures. you to enjoy our simple faith in god and wer, but we know that there are throwell of human souls whose liner are forsomed, worke un hoffy and wireable, singly become wo one by told them of a simple religion, of love to god and were, which finds its wringertain two in a five trans and on wohle life. The min in the Thuffy with the Sorters were seen

by Choming and Vorken and Enverm, well the hundreds of Brown such who work a sociefie for their conscience soke, but the great temp tohun for out yet come, when me sheet to collect you to wrke the sacrefice. The worts of the wistory must be in the frefration that you and I are wohing in our liver vous, I say the gust lengtoten for out get come, but you know and I know that the Churchin Elineh is being judged and meighed or it were for been before, we are entering of The feriod of chamolic templatois. By our lines of funty, and love

and serve me must woke on selver revealers of the touth of great religious lefte. By the in= di wichool him will the volue of the church be deturned, WE are the any of truth and our nicting in the women't of bottle must be won by the daily chiels. Jenn won his nictory, because he had ad: somech in wischen and stotus, and in four with gol & Inn's East Boston. Feb. 21, 1904.
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The Roots of Victory

Earl Clement Davis

February 21, 1904¹

Boston, MA

Scripture: Matthew 4:1-11

Text: Luke 2:52

"And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and $\operatorname{men.}$ "

I. I wish to speak upon the value and the necessity of quiet persistent preparation for critical moments in life. You and I are being called upon constantly to face critical situations. The degree of success with which we meet such moments depends not upon the conditions of the moment, but upon the conditions of the past, "The roots of victory rest deep in the history of preparations." I take for a text Matthew 2:52 as suggesting the essence of what I wish to say. "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."

According to the calendars of Ritualistic churches, this day is known as the 1st Sunday in Lent. Now Lent is a survival of the old Jewish custom of having periods of feasting or fasting when special religious ceremonies were performed. It was essentially a spring time festival which, after about 800 years after Jesus lived, came to be modified into a period of fasting and prayer in imitation of the fasting and prayer of Jesus during his 40 days temptation in the wilderness and described in Matthew in the passage which I read to you. The period of Lent has no special significance for us except as it stands for the recognition, for the hour, for the celebration of an event

According to notes on the text of the sermon, this was also given at the Harvard Divinity School Chapel on February 29, 1904, and "in a modified form to young people at Salem," March 6, 1904. There is good reason to conclude that Earl Davis' sermon, "Preparation and Temptation," which was also written for February 21, 1904 (the first day of Lent in 1904), was an early attempt to approach Jesus' temptation.

which marks the turning point in the life of Jesus, and perhaps a turning in the life of the people whose tradition we share.

But what, in fact, is the real event in Jesus' life that the writer of the Gospel is trying to picture in this passage? It is evident from the fact that the writer tries to make it so unnatural and powerful that he regarded it as an event of some importance. Now, let us see what it really means. We remember that just previous to this so-called 40 days temptation in the wilderness Jesus had been baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan. The story of Luke tells us that about 18 years before this time of Baptism and temptation, Jesus had gone with his father and mother up to Jerusalem to the feast of the Passover. At the time of this visit Jesus for the 1st time in his life had caught a glimpse of the kind of life he wanted to live. This little scene of the boyhood of Jesus, which know so well from Hoffman's beautiful painting, is very real to us, for each one of us can recall some great moment in our early life, when we first caught a glimpse of the life before us, when we 1st began to grow into manhood and womanhood, and first began to think of what we would like to do in life. Such a moment in Jesus' life is this one with the doctors in the Temple Hall he begins to become a man.

But he goes back home with his parents, works away at his trade, keeping his mind alert, studying human virtue, learning to see the spirit of God in all life. Slowly but surely he "was advancing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." But after these 18 years, he comes to the Jordan to be baptized of John in the Jordan. This is an important day for Jesus. Behind him is that long hard struggling period of preparation. Before him is the uncertainty of his life, the uncertain future. It is one of those great critical moments of life when one stops, hesitates, before actually going ahead. As he actually comes to the point of breaking away from the past and going boldly into the future, he stops, hesitates, amazed at the significance of the step in his life, he almost recoils from its possible dangers and errors. Just as one stops, half turns back upon the threshold, as he is about to leave the warm protected home and go into the cold wintery darkness without so Jesus standing upon the threshold of

his quiet protected, secluded life in Nazareth, hesitates before he steps forth into the cold chilly world to meet there his rebuffs and disappointments, his successes and victories. This moment of Jesus' life, a moment of doubt, hesitation, as he turns from his early life to his public ministry, is the real event of Jesus' life that Matthew is trying to describe. It is this event that ritualistic churches honor and celebrate by their period of Lent.

II. But why should Jesus so hesitate and doubt at this period? What was there in his life or his teaching that made him feel uncertain at this critical moment as to whether or not he should take up his public life? The fact is that Jesus knew that the ideas that he was going to teach, the religion that he believed, that he must preach, was not the traditional time-honored religion of the Jews. The Jews where bound hand and foot, body and soul by their strict unyielding obedience to the Law of their father to the traditional ritual, to the time-honored conceptions concern God and his revelations to his chosen people. These old forms had ceased to have that vital moral meaning that they once had. Jesus himself attacked them bitterly, "Woe unto you, Scribes. Pharisees. Hypocrites. for ye cleanse the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess."

But in contrast to these conceptions Jesus had learned to see God in nature, in man, and in his own soul. Jesus had found God the father. To him the real essence of the religious life was love to God and love to man. So long as these forms actually contributed to the moral and religious life, Jesus did not object to them. Only when they lacked moral content, and dwarfed the spiritual life did Jesus ignore their forms. When the Pharisees upbraided him for plucking the grain on the Sabbath which was contrary to the law, he replied, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: So that the son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath." The point is that Jesus was a man of plain common sense, and he would accept those forms only as they ministered to his moral and spiritual life.

Now Jesus saw the great moral significance of his ideas: He realized that to give expression to them would bring contention and strife into the Jewish life. He undoubtedly realized that it would bring upon him reproach, disgrace, and perhaps death. He knew that the ideas which were developing in his mind, and were feeding his moral and spiritual nature, would bring contention and opposition among the people whom he knew. So it was that Jesus hesitated just at the time he was to begin preaching. He was tempted. Should he keep to himself those great ideas that were so noble and soul-satisfying, or should he make the sacrifice, and at the risk of his own life give them to others? That was the great temptation of Jesus. Because Jews realized that the great importance and significance of his teaching, he stood there as it were, after his Baptism, debating with himself as to whether he should do the greater work of his public ministry, or retreat to enjoy his own quiet life as a carpenter in Nazareth? It is just as when a great sailing vessel beating against the wind sails along on one tack for a time. When the time comes to take a new tack, to sail in a different direction, responsive to the turn of the rudder, she begins to change her course, but there is a moment when the sails hang loose, when the ship quivers and hesitates, seeming uncertain just what to do, and then suddenly the wind fills the sails and with a plunge she takes up her new course. So Jesus, at this turning point of his life, stops, hesitates, uncertain. But soon the decision is made, and he follows his new course of public life unerringly, unfaulteringly, through the opposition of his own people, through the desertion of his friends, the hatred of his enemies. Through all these trials he moves slowly and steadily to the very day when for his love for God and man, for his uncompromising devotion to truth, he stood at the great test and laid down his life for others. So Jesus' great temptation was one of those turning points, one of those dramatic critical moments in his life, when great issues were at stake, and when he was called upon to show what kind of stuff he was made of.

III. We are especially interested in this particular event of Jesus' life, not because it was a temptation, not because it was a moment of trial, but because we can look back upon that moment, and with a feeling of pride and satisfaction know that it was a moment of great victory. So great and momentous were the powers at stake, that we have to find an explanation for the victory. Where are the roots

of victory? When did he win the victory? We go to a plant whose growth we have been watching for weeks. So we find there the full blown flower. We stop in amazement. A miracle has been performed. How wonderful! When did it blossom? We stop to think. We trace back of the months of growth. We remember the growing seed breaking up through the earth. We remember the 1st tender leaf. We remember when the small delicate bud appeared, and then how we watched it grow, and expand and enlarge, and now suddenly the flower. When did it blossom? It has been blossoming all the time. Day by day the growth and progress has been toward that blossom. The roots of the flower go back to the earliest movement of seed life under the ground. When did Jesus win the victory? Not at this great critical moment, long before that the victory had been won. This moment of dramatic victory is simply the flowering of his long preparations. The roots of his victory run back into those early years. There with this father and mother in Nazareth. There among his young friends, as a boy, as a youth, as a young man, there at the carpenter's bench, there in the quiet, complex village life of Nazareth, that is when Jesus had won his victory.

In this quiet lonesome hours of daily life Jesus had already overcome his great temptation. Although at the very moment when he is to show the product of his years of preparation, he stops, hesitates, doubts, yet the temptation had been overcome, and the victory had been won in those days when in the small things of daily life, he had learned to do the thing that was right, and noble and true. It is, after all, the unwritten record of Jesus' life that is the noblest and truest. We find him in this great crisis of his life true to a deep-rooted principle, but in our imagination we go back of that event, and find the roots of the victory in the silent conquests made in the hours of slow plodding preparation, when unnoticed by the world, by the very nobility of his own soul, he won victory after victory. Such a training, such a preparation but then the beautiful blossom.

In the early morning hours the sleeping army is aroused by the Bugle call to arms floating out across the still dark air. Suddenly as out of the very darkness of the night an enemy had come upon them. The call is sounded.

Immediately all is life and activity. Men fall into places, lines are formed, the charge is sounded, the battle fought, the victory won. That was the dramatic critical moment, but the victory was won in the long hard drills when the crude mass of men was being made over into a well-organized, thoroughly drilled army. The victory was won in those silent lonely hours when the men sitting before the campfire solemnly avowed to themselves that they would give their life for the country.

Tomorrow we all stop in our rushing busy life to do honor to the man whom we like to think in a time of trial won a great victory for our country. We read in the accounts of his life, and in the stories of American history of the great dramatic events when great victories were won, and the independence of the colonists assured. But you know and I know that it is in the unwritten record of Washington's life that these victories were being slowly won by the years of noble manly preparation. We know that the great courage and power of the American colonists displayed at that moment were but the natural flowing of the plant of independence which had been planted in new soil generations before.

So the victories of these moments, when so much is at stake, when the issue of a life or a nation is to be determined, are won, not at the critical moment, but in the hours of preparation. Jesus' great temptation had already been resisted in those quiet years of hard work by the carpenter's bench, and in his life among the people of Nazareth. For in those days, "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

IV. It is not because these ideas are of historic interest, it is not because they throw light upon the character and power of Jesus, but it is because they throw light upon the problems of your life and my life. Each one of us in our own way is working out the problem of his life. Sometimes we feel disheartened and discouraged because we do not get along faster, sometimes we are willing to find fault with our opportunities, but we must remember that it is only at such moments that our lives are raised above the commonplace. If we are to win the victories we must win them in the quiet everyday rounds of duties in our homes,

among our friends, in our business. If we can win victories then, the victories will come also at the great moments. The plant has many leaves but few blossoms.

Then again there is one problem of our life that we ought to be preparing for. We live along year after year without sorrow or misery. But sooner or later the time is coming when we must part with some dear friend. Out of the very stillness of the night comes the great sorrow. It takes us by surprise. We are not prepared for it. Crushed, not knowing in which direction to turn, we suffer and despair. It is to prepare for such possibilities as that that you and I need the growth and development in the deep spiritual things of life. When I hear a man say that he has no need for the religious life, I shudder to think of the hopelessness and despair which any great calamity may bring upon him. The roots of a victory over a great sorrow and hardship are in these quiet hours when we learn to fix our minds upon the great and inspiring ideas and hopes of brotherly love, in the household of the great Father.

But let us direct our thoughts in another direction. I think that this story of Jesus' temptation is of special interest to such people as have inherited or been so fortunate as to see the real worth of modern liberal religion. I had hoped that, as I suggested the great importance of Jesus' victory, that you would see the very close analogy between Jesus' temptation and the temptation of Liberal Christians. We know that we have a conception of God and man and the religious life that is more real, vital and inspiring than the conceptions held by the so-called conservatives. You and I enjoy our simply faith in God and man, but we know that there are thousands of human souls whose lives are poisoned, made unhappy and miserable, simply because no one has told them of a simple religion, of love to God and man, which finds its manifestation in a pure mind and a noble life. The mission in the Temple with the Doctors was seen by Channing and Parker and Emerson, and the hundreds of brave souls who made a sacrifice for their conscious' sake. But the great temptation has not yet come when we shall be called upon to make the sacrifice. The roots of the victory must be in the preparations that you and I are making in our lives now. I say the great temptation has not yet come. But you know and I know that

the Christian Church is being judged and weighed as it never has been before. We are entering upon the period of dramatic temptation. By our lives of purity, and love and service we must make ourselves members of the truth of great religious life. By the individual lives will the value of the church be determined. We are the army of truth and our victory in the moment of battle must be won by the daily drills. Jesus won his victory, "because he had advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."