

"But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Corinthians 15:57

My older brother was severely mentally handicapped. They say that he only had a measurable IQ of 39. But he taught me many valuable lessons in his own way. My brother could walk, talk, dress himself and interact with the family. But because of his limited understanding of language and his strange pronunciation of many words, communication was sometimes difficult or misunderstood. This was the case with one hymn that he had learned at a summer camp.

When there was a church "hymn sing," he would often request his favorite song, "Buckwheat and Jesus." Obviously a mispronunciation, the family tried to figure out what he meant. He would attempt to help us out by singing the song for us, loud and proud – "Buckwheat and Jesus, my Savior forever!" But as loud and insistent as he would be, we could never figure out what he meant. His disappointment and frustration would sometimes lead to loud, embarrassing outbursts.

Years passed and the song remained a mystery. Then one day, I heard a familiar tune. They were playing "Buckwheat and Jesus," but the words were different! People were singing: "Victory in Jesus, my Savior forever!"

When my brother was called to heaven, we sang his favorite hymn at his funeral. Now, whenever I hear that song, his 'strong and wrong' version still rings in my head. The memory of my brother's great love for Jesus overwhelms my heart. And the true words of the song remind me of Jesus' amazing love for us.

In this season of Lent, the words of my brother's favorite hymn teach us what we should all be singing. (You know, there are some intelligences that cannot be measured on a scale!)

*"Victory in Jesus, My Savior forever!
He sought me and bought me with His redeeming blood;
He loved me ere I knew Him, and all my love is due Him,
He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood."*

Dear Lord, Thank You for the victory that comes from knowing You as Lord and Savior. Make me worthy of Your sacrifice as I strive to serve others and share Your love. In His name, Amen.

Kath Doerr

