

Covenant of Grace

by Al Henson

Al Henson's sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the Covenant of Grace and our identity in Christ for living a victorious Christian life.

Duration: 52:14

Scripture: Romans 1:17, Galatians 2:4, Ephesians 3:16-17, Ephesians 3:20, Hebrews 10:38

Topics: "Grace Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the revelation that the apostle Paul received from God regarding the gospel. Paul had a deep understanding of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which he learned through direct revelation. The speaker also highlights the concept of dying to the law, as explained in Romans 7, where through death, one is freed from their covenants. Paul testifies to his relationship with Christ, stating that he is a prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ. The sermon emphasizes the theme of Christ in believers and the importance of living a consistent and victorious Christian life.

Transcript

Do you ever sit and dream about the things of the Lord? I spend most of my life doing that. Dreaming about God's people gathering together, worship and praising the Lord, rejoicing in their God, filled with His life and with His joy. And when I see us singing, like those courses that we were singing in, see you singing out to the Lord and worshiping God, I feel like I'm dreaming.

I know God must be pleased. Galatians, if you would, in chapter 2. We've been studying through the covenants and then a lot of comparison of the law and grace. Trying to understand what our new relationship to the law is.

And beginning to try to understand what this new relationship to grace is. This morning, as we're going to move over into the book of Galatians, doesn't mean that we're abandoning Romans 5, 6, 7 and 8. I do have in my intention to come back after we continue to lay some foundation and go back to help understand a little bit of Romans 6 and some of Romans 8. Maybe even a little more of Romans 7. Anytime I do a series of messages like this, I lay aside more messages that I don't preach than I do preach. Somewhere along the line, out yonder somewhere, I might get the chance to preach them and teach them.

If I was speaking to a group of Christians and I had one last message to preach, I would either preach on the subject of brokenness or I would either teach this message this morning. I say that to give the seriousness and I think the value of what we're about to learn out of God's word this morning. I believe that for the Christian life, I think brokenness is so critical because brokenness is that that makes us the kind of vessel that God does not stiff arm.

God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble. But here we're about to read a second testimony of this man Paul. The testimony is going to be short.

It's going to be in just a verse. I'm not going to give a lot of introductory material of things that we have covered because several of the verses are going to go back and recover the major issues that we've already covered prior to his testimony. If you remember last Sunday out of Romans in chapter 7, we shared Paul's testimony, a testimony of the early part of his life.

How he as a Christian, that which he wanted to do, he could not, he did not do. And that which he didn't want to do, he ended up doing. And he pulled out, the Holy Spirit allowed him to pull that personal testimony out for the purpose of showing that he was not shunning the law of God, that he had not abolished the law or saw no value in the law, but rather because he was willing to say that which I don't want to do, I do.

And that which I do, I don't want to do that he is saying by his very testimony that he still sees the law as holy and he still loves it and cherishes it because he's willing to say what is right is right and what is wrong is wrong and he's willing to understand that when he is wrong, he is wrong before God. But often, Romans 7, we find some comfort in that because all of us can relate to that kind of Christian experience, can we not? But yet, often we have come out of that passage to think, well, that is the normal Christian life and it is not. So today, we're going to have the opportunity to look into a further testimony of Paul that is a testimony of the latter part of his life, if not the last two-thirds of his Christian life, if not the majority of his Christian life.

And out of this testimony, we are going to find the keys, the simple keys that are yet need to be understood, how to walk a consistent, victorious Christian life. Let's begin in Galatians chapter 2. I want us to pray first and then after we pray because I want to walk through this and sort of explain it as I go until we come to his testimony, then we're going to stop and park there for the rest of our time this morning. Now, Father, our Father who art in heaven, we thank you for the precious word that we're about to read.

We thank you for how it is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. We thank you, Father, that the word of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof and for correction and for instruction in righteousness that we as men and women of God might be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. We praise you for the indwelling Holy Spirit that gives us a hunger and thirst after thy word.

And I pray that that aspect and work of the Holy Spirit would be activated in every one of us now. Give us a great desire. Father, for there's none of us here that do not need to learn more about this matter of walking consistently, victoriously the Christian life.

Now, Father, God need every man and woman at their point of need. God, encourage every heart. Lord, not only do I desire this morning to teach thy truth, but, God, I want to be an encouragement to everyone present.

I want to encourage everyone present to faith, God. I want to encourage everyone that there is no one here who cannot walk consistently with God and experience and know the victory and the joy that God has. Now help me, Father.

I trust you to do so. I yield my mind, my heart, my soul. I want to think what you think, God.

I want to feel and sense in my emotions what you feel and sense for us this morning in your emotions. I, God, I yield my hands and my tongue that they may be instruments of righteousness. I, by faith, release Christ and the Spirit of the living God within me to control me and empower me and anoint me that my word and my preaching this morning will not be with enticing words of man's wisdom, but rather, dear God, would be in the demonstration of the Spirit and power of the Lord.

We want to trust you, God, as we preach thy word and as we pray here and as we serve that you would raise up in this community a lighthouse, God. People who are walking in salt and light. People who are enjoying the Lord Jesus, who are going about in the offices and in the marketplace and the workplace and in their communities and they can do nothing but speak of Him whom they've tasted and seen and heard like the apostles of the book of Acts.

May it be so among us, God. May Jesus Christ so excite our very being and heart that we have nothing other to speak of than Him. And we dedicate and commit this time to thee.

Thank you for our visitors, God. Lord, they're so special and precious this morning that they've come to listen and to sing and to listen to thy word. Now, bless them, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Galatians 2, I want us to pick up in verse 16 of Galatians chapter 2. Now, Paul is writing this letter to a group of Christians, a church in which he has started in Galatea, the people of Galatia. And he has found among them the problem that we've been sharing for weeks and weeks and that is that they were saved by grace, they had begun their Christian walk by grace, walking in the Spirit, but now they're going on and trying to be sanctified by works or by law.

The common problem that we find in Christians' lives, the same problem that Paul testifies that was in his own life in Romans chapter 7. This struggle was coming because he was trying to be sanctified by the law. Now, he speaks of this issue in verse 16. Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ Jesus.

Now, we've heard that and heard that over the last weeks. Again, Paul brings out that same issue that as man is in sin, in the bondage of sin, you remember the eagle that we had here and we wrapped that eagle in the net, picturing that we're in the bondage of sin and then we placed the law over that eagle and that man was under the law and man bound by sin under the law could not be justified by the law. And even though the law is holy and good, that man in all of his effort and all of his works could not be justified by the law.

But rather, he is justified by faith in the person of Jesus Christ. Notice there, by faith, and even last week we've come to the teaching that we move into Christ. Notice the word, by faith into Jesus Christ.

It's not faith into a person way off out there, but it is rather heart faith into the very person of the Lord Jesus Christ. We're going to come back to that. That we might be justified by faith.

He says it again. That we might be justified by faith in Christ so that we would be clear and not by the works of the law. For by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

You see how after we've been learning and studying together through the weeks, passages become alive of what Paul is saying? Again, just emphasizing here that our justification, now that is our salvation, that justifies us to walk with God, that justifies us to fellowship with God, that justifies us one day to live in heaven with God eternally. That justification cannot come by the law nor by our effort nor by our works to live according to the law. But it comes by faith in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now verse 17. But if while we seek to be justified by Christ, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not. Again, he wants to bring out this issue as we're walking and living and seeking to please God and we find ourselves sinning or doing something wrong.

Do we say that is Christ's fault? No. Do we say that it is Christ that has led us to do that? No. Do we say that it is Christ that has caused us to sin? No.

We would never say that. Certainly not. A very powerful statement.

A very strong statement. Certainly not. Verse 18.

For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. Now he's making a transition here from justification to sanctification. And he's saying if I go back and through faith in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, I was set free from myself and from my flesh and came into Christ.

And I was set free from the law and I was set free from sin. Now if I go back as a Christian and try to rebuild those things again and try to be sanctified and try to please God by my works and try to walk consistently by the strength and the power of the law, then I am nothing more than a transgressor again. For I cannot do that.

I end up transgressing the law. I end up not only transgressing the law, but I end up sinning against the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 19.

For I... Now he's speaking of the person again. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. The same principle that we learned in the first four verses of Romans 7. The law said this.

The law said that if you die, then you are free from your covenants. And he used the picture of the marriage, that through death you are free from the marriage vows in which you're made. The law states that through death you are freed from your covenants and your vows.

So he says here, For I through the law died to the law. The law said that if I died, I could die to my covenant. So through death, and through the death that the law spoke about, I was set free from the law.

The same thing we learned in Romans in chapter 7. The first four verses. Why? Romans 7, the first four or five verses told us that I might live to God. Now here's his testimony.

And I know I went through that quickly. But we're going to slow down right here. We're going to learn.

This is one of the most... We sung it earlier in our services. Now this is Paul's testimony. I have been crucified with Christ.

It is no longer I who lives, but Christ lives in me. And the life which I now live in this body, the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate or set aside the grace of God.

For if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain. I want to show you again the reality of this passage of Scripture here of what we were sharing last week. Notice Paul's testimony here now.

Paul says, I am crucified with Christ. What I is he speaking about here? He is speaking about the I. The old man was crucified with Christ. I was crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless, I live. Follow me there now. I have been crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless, I am alive. Notice, I am alive. It is no longer I who lives though, but rather Christ lives in me.

Now these are synonymous statements. Christ in me and I in Christ. And the life which I now live in this fleshly body, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

Now notice, if you would, that Paul sees himself now in this testimony, in this position, not in the position of Romans 7. In Romans 7, he saw himself freed from the old man through death. He saw himself freed from the law through death. But he saw himself up here, on his own, isolated, trying to make a decision to either yield to the old man or to yield to Christ.

And that was a wrong picture of his position. Rather now, he is testifying as we have shared here. He is now testifying, I have come to understand that not only through my death in Christ's death, Romans 7 that we talked about, that I have been freed from the old man, I have been freed from sin and its reign, I have been freed from the law, but I now find myself in Christ.

And it is not I that am living, but Christ who is living in me. Now, I have come for 12 weeks to tell you this statement. There are two things that are absolutely essential for you to walk a consistent, victorious Christian life.

Now I want to give you the first of those two things. For 12 weeks I have taught you to tell you this. You need to write this down.

These two things are critical. Number one, before you can walk a consistently victorious Christian life, before you can please God, before you can fulfill the law and walk in a way that is honoring and pleasing God, you must first understand your position. Now that's simple.

Before you can ever walk a consistent, victorious Christian life, you must understand your position. Now let me give you a few things under that, that we have learned over the last weeks. First of all, you must understand the freedom of your position.

You must understand that you are free from the reign of sin, Romans 5 and 6. You must understand that in this new position, you have been freed from the reign and the slavery of sin in your life. You must understand that. Number two, you must understand that you have been freed from the old man, Romans 6, 6. For the old man has been crucified with Christ on the cross.

Knowing this, that our old man died with Christ on the cross. You must know that. You must understand that and be assured of that, that in this new position that you have in Christ Jesus, you have been set free and that's what we're picturing here.

This eye of you has been set free from the old man, from the reign of sin, from the reign of the flesh. Thirdly, you must recognize that you have been set free from the law. You have been set free from the reign and the dominion of the law in your life.

In this new position in which you have, as God views you, as this new position, you are free not only from the reign of sin and the old man, but from the law. Now, not only in this position must you realize what you have been set free from, but you must secondly realize what you are now under. You are now under grace, not under the law.

Romans 6, 14. For you're no longer under the law, but you are now under grace. That means that all that God is, is available to all that you need.

That means that God is dealing with you in every situation as a child of His from a gracious position. Even if He chastens you, and He will. Even if He disciplines you, and He will.

He disciplines you in a spirit of grace, in a spirit of mercy, and in a spirit of love. And in this new position, not only are you free from the reign of sin, and from the old man, and from the dominion of the law, but you are under grace. Grace raining and pouring into your life.

Lastly, as we learned last week, and we hear Paul testifying of in this passage of Scripture, and very critical, not only must you realize that you are under grace in this new position, but you must realize in your new position, you are in Christ. You are in Christ. Most of our message last week dealt with that, that you are just not freed up and under grace, but you are in Christ, and Christ is in you.

Now, I want to carry you through a little bit of a Bible study to show you how critical this is, this knowing of your position. And then we're going to come, and I'm going to give you this morning, and we're going to break on it in the end of this message, out of this passage of Scripture, what is the second thing that you must do in order to walk consistently, and there are only two. There are only two on the basis of the Bible.

And I want to talk to you about your position and how vitally important this is. Come, if you would, with me into the Bible, and go into Galatians, in chapter 1, in verse 6. Paul says, I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ to a different gospel. He calls this trying to live and be sanctified by works or by the law as a different gospel.

And he marvels. He said, I marvel that you are so quickly removed from that. Now, in verse 18, I want to give you the history of Paul coming to this understanding that he was in Christ.

In verse 17, he speaks about going out into the desert three years. Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went to Arabia and then returned again to Damascus. Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and remained with him fifteen days.

So he speaks about being out into the desert three years. Paul going along to study, to fast, to pray and to seek God. Now verse, chapter 2, verse 1. Paul begins then after that three years to go out and minister among the Gentiles.

And as he ministers among the Gentiles, he says in 2-1, Then after fourteen years, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas. I also took Titus with me. Now notice, And I went up by revelation.

Notice the key words there. I went up at the end of this fourteen years by revelation or literally because of revelation and communicated to them the gospel which I preached among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation lest by any means I might run or had run in vain. So Paul says, this at least is my understanding here, somewhere between that three years and then that fourteen years out in ministering, he had come to understand by revelation.

Now revelation means that he was taught it face to face by God. He had come to understand the fullness of this gospel. A full understanding of the good news, the death and the burial and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so I went up to those who were of reputation. I went to the chief apostles, Peter and James and John and all the apostles and I went in privately to them and I said and began to share with them what God had taught me by revelation so that I could get the heads of the church, the disciples that had walked with the Lord Jesus Christ to confirm the truth of this that when I run and when I minister and when I walk it would not be in vain. Now let's go to other parts of the Bible and find out what had been revealed to Paul.

Go if you would to the book of Ephesians. The next book in your Bible there. The book of Ephesians.

And chapter 3. Ephesians and chapter 3. There is no doubt in any Bible student's mind that the book of Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians and Philippians, those four books, their central theme is Christ in you. The theme is to bring this message to the church that we are trying to preach and bring to you. Christ in you.

Now notice in Ephesians 3.1 For this reason I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles. Notice Paul's relationship with Christ. I am bound to Christ.

I am the prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 2. If indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you. Now Paul distinguishes what he's talking about here.

He says you have heard about how this dispensation or this age of God's grace and the understanding of God's grace and living under grace how it was given to me for you. That was to preach it to the Gentiles. How did it come? Verse 3. How that by revelation God revealing it to me He made known to me the mystery as I have briefly written already.

Paul calls it a mystery. Not that it is necessarily hidden but a mystery in that it is hidden from those who are not spiritually minded. It is hidden from those who are not indwelt by the Spirit of God.

It is a mystery. Now notice he uses the word revelation. The same thing we read in Galatians in chapter 2. How I came up to share the revelation that God had given me.

Let's continue on. Verse 4. By which when you read it that is this mystery you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men. God never revealed this even to His Old Testament saints.

The Old Testament saints did not understand this mystery. By the way, it was never revealed to the disciples when Jesus Christ walked with them. He taught them of the coming Holy Spirit.

He taught them that the Spirit would live in them. But He never explained to them the mystery of you in Christ and Christ in you. ...of the same body and partakers of His promise in Christ through the Gospel.

That all mankind could come together in sweet fellowship and sweet communion in Christ, in the Spirit. Now, verse 7. Of which I became a minister. That is, of this mystery, of this message, according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective power of His working.

He begins to share here that this revelation and this mystery has to do with Christ in us and us in Christ and the power of Christ. You see, the law could not strengthen us, we've been learning. But now we're in Christ.

All the power of Christ can strengthen us. Go to the book of Colossians. If you would.

Ephesians, Colossians. Probably the most simple and the definition that we cling to often of this mystery. Colossians in chapter 1. Let's pick up in verse 25.

Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God, which was given to me for you to fulfill the Word of God. The mystery which has been hidden from ages. He's speaking about this same mystery and from generations.

But now has been revealed to His saints. See, we can understand this. To them God willed to make known.

Isn't that wonderful? To them, to you and I, to every saint, to everyone who is the body of Christ, God has willed to make known. What has He willed to make known? What are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is, and here's His definition, Christ in you, the hope of glory. You in Christ, Christ in you, the hope of glory.

I want to say to you, we won't read it, but in 2 Corinthians in chapter 12, Paul speaks of a man. This apparently, the full understanding of this Christ in you and you in Christ, such a precious truth, that Jesus Christ never revealed it to His disciples fully. But Paul says, and he speaks of a man and many scholars agree that he was trying to be humble in what he is sharing in 2 Corinthians in chapter 12, but he probably was speaking of himself.

He speaks of a man who he says, whether in the body or out of the body, I do not know. But a man that was taken from the earth, in the body or out, he doesn't know, and taken into the third heaven, into the throne room of God. And there in the throne room of God, face to face, Jesus Christ taught this mystery.

Christ in you, the hope of glory. Now, Colossians says that God has willed that through, to all of His church, through all of the ages, that He would give them the ability and the capacity to understand the simplicity and yet the depths of this mystery. I want to say to you that I believe it's an eternal process of learning.

I come to, for the first comprehension or the first knowledge of this mystery about 15 years ago, been studying and been learning and walking in its power, that is the power of Christ, the power of His Spirit. And I am seeing a greater consistency of victorious Christian living. But I have come to realize that I'll spend the rest of my lifetime here learning to understand my position in Christ.

So first, to walk in consistent, victorious, Christian living, you must understand this mystery. That is, you in Christ and Christ in you, the hope of glory. Now I want to say to you, husband, in this is the secret to loving your wife like Christ loves the church.

In this is the power, wives, to submit unto your husband as the church submits unto Christ. In this, mom and dad, is the power to love your children, to discipline them rightly, to raise them rightly. In this power is the power to win souls, the power to have abiding fruit, the power to see remaining fruit, the power to carry out the work of God, the power to see His kingdom built in Christ Jesus.

In Christ. Not in some charismatic movement, not in some explosion of something mystical, but yet something that is mystical and something that is spiritual and that is Christ Jesus in you, for the hope of glory. You in Christ.

Now, I wanted you to go back to Galatians, his personal testimony, and I want to give you the second truth. I just want to give it to you and we're going to look at it in a moment. First of all, we must understand our position, and I didn't put in Christ because that position has a lot to do with the things we listed under there, our freedoms, the things we've been freed from, that we're under grace and that we're in Christ.

Secondly, in a simple statement, if you're going to walk the victorious Christian life, you must live by faith. You must live by faith. Why so simple, brother? Because everything in the Christian life is by grace and faith.

Amen? Ephesians in chapter 2, are you saved through what? Through faith. That was the way you were justified and that's Paul's testimony right here of his sanctification. Look, if you would, in verse 20 and see if we don't find 20 and 21, grace and faith.

Are you back with me? Galatians 2. Now, let's listen to his personal testimony. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.

Now, Christ is living in me. Now, Christ is living in all of us, but we're still up and down, aren't we, many of us? So, Paul says, it's just not enough for me to know my position is in Christ and that Christ is in me. Now, the life that I now live, this victorious Christian life, this experience that I'm now living, notice, how do I do it? And the life which I now live in this body, in this flesh, I live by what? Say it loudly.

By faith in the Son of God. By faith. Now, we're going to be spending some weeks on this one.

We've spent 12 weeks getting to number one so that when I said it, you'd have some comprehension of what I was saying. Now, we're going to spend some weeks on by faith. Now, I want to say to you that this is not a new teaching in the Bible.

Back in chapter 2 and verse 4, it said, the just shall live by faith. Romans in chapter 1 and verse 17 says, those that are justified shall live by what? By faith. Hebrews in chapter 10 and verse 38 says, and the just shall live by faith.

So, we that are justified are going to be sanctified by what? By faith. Amen. Thank you to this amen crowd over here.

Get me preaching in a minute. Amen. Thank you, James.

Brothers and sisters, it's not complex. It's simple. Now, why did I put number one? We must understand our position.

Why did we put that number one? Because when we understand our position and are assured of it, then we can have faith in Christ. And faith in Christ. Christ can take any challenge.

Christ can meet any mountain. Christ can meet any temptation. Christ can love your wife.

Christ can submit to your husband no matter how bad an ogre he is. Christ can win souls. Christ can pray.

Christ can be a good member of the church. Christ can be a good member of the community. Christ can tithe.

Christ can do all of these things. I am simply to have faith in Christ. That's what the Bible is saying.

That's what the Scriptures are saying. Notice if you would go with me. You need to see this.

Go to 1 John with me if you would. 1 John. 1 John, you've got to see this.

This is just not one simple teaching in the Bible. I'm going to begin to draw things together for you in the Scriptures. 1 John, in chapter 5. Would you say that living the victorious Christian life is living as an overcomer? If you would say amen.

Do you believe that? Now listen to verse John 5 in chapter 4 here. For whatever is born of God, that's saved. Amen.

For whoever is saved overcomes the world. Now that's victory. And this is the victory that overcomes the world.

What is it? Our what? Oh, there it is. Oh, if we're going to live the victorious Christian life and be overcomers, we're going to do it by what? By faith in ourselves? No. By faith in the law? No.

By faith in our works? No. By faith in Christ who is in us and we are in Him. Now this is the glory of this dispensation in this age.

This is the glory of God's grace that I am in Christ and He is in me and my work. By the way Christians, this is your work. This is your labor.

Here is your work. The work of faith. And this is the work that pleases God.

Jesus when He walked upon the earth said, Even our faith. Only believe, Jesus said. Only believe.

This is all that God demands of us and requires of us as His saints. Only believe. Hebrews in chapter 4 says this, And they could not enter into their rest.

That's the victorious Christian living because of their lack of faith or their unbelief. He goes on and He says, And the word of God did not profit them because it was not mingled with what? Faith. And He says, Now you need to cease from your own labors.

That is your working and trying and struggling to be sanctified and to please God. But then you need to enter into your labor. What is your labor? The labor of faith.

The trust in Christ. And His finished work on Calvary. Not only His justifying work but His sanctifying work.

That's the reason why Paul says, In the Scriptures, in Corinthians, He says, We walk by faith and not by sight. Faith. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world.

Let me, before we close this out this morning, let me make this practical. I'm going to show you how fine line things can be. I'm going to take one teaching of Scripture.

I'm going to show you how fine line it can be to where you're actually carrying it out in works and not in faith. I want to take one of the most critical issues in the Christian's life and show you how it can be law and not grace. And I want to take the importance and the significance, and we'll pick back up on this, of the Word of God.

Now, all of us know that we're to study to show ourselves approved, right? A workman that needeth not to be ashamed. In our teaching often on the victorious Christian life, here's what we were taught, what I was taught. Here I am.

I need to study the Word of God and read the Word because it's food that strengthens me, right? And the Bible says that. It's food that strengthens me. And as I read and study the Word, and if I get strong enough, I'll get enough strength to say no to the old man, and I'll get enough strength to say yes to the new man.

How many of you have been taught that? All right, get them out. You've been taught that. Yeah, you have.

You've preached it. You've ever preached before? I have. You've preached that.

I want to tell you how wrong that can be. There's a rightness in that, but how wrong it is. Because this is critical to you beginning to understand this matter of grace and faith.

Now, let's take the right picture. That's a wrong picture. Let's take the right picture.

Now, here I am in Christ. Now, let's take the Word of God. The Word of God is a food for me.

It strengthens me. The Bible says that. I Peter 2. Like newborn babes desiring the sincere milk of the Word of God.

Eating the Word of God. But you see, I in Christ, I partake of the Word of God not to strengthen me to say no to the old man because that is works. That is law.

But rather, I read the Bible. And I study the Bible because the Bible strengthens me not to say no to the old man but it strengthens my what? Faith. Oh, you got it.

Say it again. It strengthens my what? My faith. Why does it strengthen my faith? Romans 10, 17.

Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. So yes, the Word of God is a food but it strengthens my ability to exercise faith. So here is victorious Christian living.

I get up in the morning. I get me some delicious Word of God like Psalm 37. Or I read a Bible passage and I'm reading that and I'm not sitting there.

Oh man, I got to get enough strength. Oh God, help me. If I just don't get enough strength, I'm going to fall today.

But I'm reading that and I'm resting and I'm saying, Lord, strengthen my faith. Strengthen my faith, Lord, Your Word. It strengthens my faith.

I read about You an exalted King and I get strengthened. I read about Your promises to provide all my needs and I get strengthened. I read about Your refuge.

I read this morning about Your comforter. Or I read of this and I read of that and I get all strengthened about it. I read this morning out of Revelations and I read You in the midst of the church and I got strengthened.

Lord, I read about Your coming in. That strengthens me. And now, Lord, I'm in a place.

My faith has been strengthened. And now what has my faith strengthened me to do? To say no to the old man. No.

To say yes to Christ. So here I am in Christ. Christ is in me.

And now I have faith and I get down on my knees and I say, Lord, this morning I praise You that I'm free from the reign of sin. I praise You that I'm free from the dominion of the law. I praise You that I've been set free from the old man, dear God.

And I thank You this morning that I am in Christ and I visualize myself in Him and Him in me. Now, God, by faith, I release Christ. By faith, I release the Holy Spirit to control my life, my mind, my thoughts, my attitudes.

And I give over absolutely to the Holy Spirit by faith. Then I get up. I walk out the door.

I don't get very far in the world that morning and I am tempted. And the temptation comes and I look at the temptation and I say, Ah, you're going to have to deal with Christ this morning. I don't have to say no to You.

Christ is. And I am Christ and Christ is in me. Go back to Galatians 2. Is that not what Paul is saying here? Let's look at it again.

Galatians 2. Now, brother, we're going to pick right back up on that one next week. I have been crucified with Christ. That's talking about the freedom of His position.

Because He died with Christ, He's free from the reign of sin. He's free from the old man and He is free from the law. Even though I have died to something, it is no longer I who lives.

It's not I'm living. I'm not going out and facing the temptation alone. But it's Christ who lives in me.

And the life which I now live in this body, I live by faith in the Son of God. How is my faith strengthened? It's strengthened through the Word of God. It's strengthened through fellowship with my brothers.

It's strengthened through sitting under the preaching of the Word of God at church. It's strengthened through ministry and serving. All of these things strengthen my faith and encourage my faith.

But it is the Son of God that gives me victory, not my works. Do you see that? Now, that simple statement, there's a difference of living under grace and under law. It's not I who lives, but Christ who lives in me.

It's not I who overcomes sin, but it's Christ who does it. I simply trust Him. I trust what He's told me.

I trust what He's taught me. I trust this mystery of Christ in me. I live in the flesh.

I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. Verse 21, I want all of you to know, I do not set aside, and that's what that word frustrate means, I do not set aside the grace of God. See, it was grace that put you in Christ.

It is grace that reigns over you. I remember Brother Bill Vining several Sunday nights said, Brother Al, what does it really mean to be under grace? The best way to see yourself under grace is the two thoughts. To see yourself in Christ and all that He is available to all that you need.

Secondly, to understand that He's always dealing with you according to His what? His grace. I don't set it aside. For if I set it aside, for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.

If I could have been made righteous by the law, if I could have been justified by the law, if I could have been sanctified by the law, there was no need for Christ to die. Why was it a necessity that Christ die? Not only was He my substitute for justification, it was also necessary for Him to die because through the power of the cross and the power of His death, I was set free from sin, self, and the law, its dominion. And I was brought into Christ and His life under grace.

Believers, that's what you're called. That's what you've been called for hundreds and hundreds of years. Not doubters, but believers.

That word has been given to you because that is the labor of the saints, to be believers, not doubters. And in your own heart, you can go this morning and you can say this, I can walk the victorious Christian life. I can live consistently.

I can please God. But it is not I, but Christ in me. And the life that I now live, I live this victorious Christian life that I'm now living and experiencing, I live it by faith in the Son of God.

Faith. Faith. To trust Him.

Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey. This last evening, you know, I've been given by God a pastor's heart. I pray for that, and I really do have one.

I'm a human being, just like you are. But like God in His Spirit has given you unique desires, unique passions. I am not an evangelist.

I am a pastor. I love to see souls saved. But I love to see God's people.

My deepest heart is to see God's people living happy Christian lives, and enjoying God. To see those that God brings, their marriages able to come together, and those who've gone through broken homes and broken marriages, their lives restored. And if their homes are in a place they can never be restored, at least their lives can be restored.

And then go on. And then children who can grow up and know God and walk with God and love God. I'm absolutely convinced that the reason why that there's so little evangelism out there is because we have not learned to live the victorious Christian life.

So we're defeated and in doubt and unbelief, and we really wonder if we have any good news out there to share. Let me tell you what happens. People get saved.

When they get saved, they're experiencing peace with God and joy with the Lord. And then they want to go tell everybody because they've got something to share. But then after they get saved a few months, they begin to falter and fall because they've not been taught what you've heard this morning.

They begin to falter and fall in their Christian life, and they begin to doubt and worry, and they lose their peace and they lose the joy of their salvation. And little by little, they don't have anything to share. Then even the Christian, we talk a lot about revival.

And I've seen revival. I've been in revival. I've seen the consequences of revival.

I've seen that when someone meets God in revival and is renewed again with Christ, I've seen a church experience that and a church grow and blossom around that. But I tell you, I found out that that wasn't the answer either. You know why? Not that we don't need evangelism and not that we don't need revival.

You know I'm in favor of those all the time. But you know what happens? That person comes again afresh anew, gets all their sins taken care of. They get into a right relationship with Christ again and fellowship with Christ.

And they're revived, and so they go out and start sharing. So the whole church is alive again. But you know the problem with that revived Christian? In a few months, they're faltering again.

Find themselves in the same rut, up and down. So again, they have nothing to share. So you have a revival every year for the first two or three years.

They're excited because they remember what they had. They come back and they get revived every year. But after three or four years, they experience a revival lasting three or four months and then gone.

They begin to doubt and worry about all of that and say, Well, I'm just going to go through that again for a couple of months and get excited and go, Is it really real? Is it really genuine? And I want to tell you, their salvation was genuine and their revival was genuine. But I'm going to tell you, brothers and sisters, the message this morning is the key. God wants a person walking victoriously every day of their life.

And I want to tell you, you will and can experience that when you understand your position in Christ and you come assured that it's there and as you begin to comprehend that and you seek God and begin to know and understand that, you'll have the ability to exercise faith in Christ and your position. And as you do, you'll experience daily the joy and the victory of God. Then you become a warrior in the hands of God.

You become a soldier that God can use at a great level. You become a deep servant of God and a deep soldier of the Lord. God can use you to fight demons and demonic powers and God can use you to war and prayer over the souls of mankind.

And God can use you to see a community through prayer come to Christ. God can see you revive a church just your prayers because you're walking victoriously in a right position and right relationship with God. God.

This is what God intended, beloved, that every saint of His could walk daily in joy and victory, not the up and down. It's you who must believe. But faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.

Until you understand that position, you're going to struggle in your faith. Even if you want to believe, you're going to struggle until you know and understand. Now, Father, I pray You do Your work in our hearts and

our lives, dear God.

Lord, we've preached long this morning. Fervent. We desire so much, God, for Your people to hear and understand.

Lord, there are some saints here this morning that their Christian life could be exemplified with words like struggle, rollercoaster, a desert. Lord, and even though the Christian life in victory has its trials and its temptations, in the midst of trials there are victories. In the midst of, oh God, of fires there are victories.

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