

Glorifying God in the Church

by Alan Martin

This sermon emphasizes the purpose of God's grace in bringing glory to Him through the transformation of believers, highlighting the need to live in a way that reflects God's nature and produces His fruit. It explores the concept of God's power working within us to enable us to overcome weaknesses and live triumphantly, ultimately glorifying God in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations.

Scripture: Ephesians 3:20, Isaiah 55:8, 1 John 5:14, John 15:7, Hebrews 2:17, Philippians 2:12, Romans 8:1, Revelation 2:7, Galatians 5:22

Topics: "Transformation through Grace", "Living to Glorify God"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the purpose of God's grace in bringing glory to Him through the transformation of believers, highlighting the need to live in a way that reflects God's nature and produces His fruit. It explores the concept of God's power working within us to enable us to overcome weaknesses and live triumphantly, ultimately glorifying God in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations.

Transcript

Ephesians chapter 2 verses 20 and 21. Let's read them together. Ephesians 2 20 and 21.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more. It's a difficult Greek word to translate. It means to him who's able to do beyond exceeding.

That's the idea. Beyond what exceeds the normal. To him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.

According to the power of his that works within us. To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever amen. Now let me say make sure that we understand what Paul is not saying.

Paul is not saying that what God will do even more than everything we ask him. He's not saying that because God is not at our direction. We're not the one to direct God what to do by our prayers.

That's not what he means. We seek to understand the will of God and we seek for God to have his will done because we should know what the scripture says that his ways are not our ways and his thoughts are not our thoughts. As a matter of fact, let's read that together.

It's a long passage. I'll read it for you in Isaiah chapter 55 verses 6 to 11. Isaiah 55 6 to 11.

Seek the Lord while he may be found. Call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way.

You realize that's the gospel of repentance. Even then the Old Testament, the gospel of repentance was there. The wicked forsaking his way has changed the way you live.

Change your mind and turn to me. Let the wicked forsake his way and unrighteous their thoughts. Let them turn to the Lord and he will have mercy on them and to our God for he will freely pardon.

Verse 8, for my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways declares the Lord. Can you see why he doesn't just let us ask anything we want? That's not, that's not what Paul is saying. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts and your thoughts.

And as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out of my mouth. It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for what I send it. You know, everyone who hears God's word will be healed by it.

And everyone who hardens their, hardens themselves against God's word will be hardened by it. It's going to accomplish the task. If you receive it and hear it, it will heal you.

And if you resist it and refuse it, it will harden you. But it's going to accomplish its work. Like I said, God's power is not ours to command at our will.

God's power will always accomplish His will. He protects what He directs. What He presides over, He provides for.

He doesn't give us a blank check and just say, just tell me whatever you want me to do and I'll do it. We are taught to pray, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And this must be the foundation for whatever we ask.

And John, I'm going to have Tom, if you'll read that for us, John 15, verse 7 and 8. John 15, 7 and 8. If you remain in me, in this, if you bear my truth, and so you will be my disciple. Okay, now here's a key. If we are living in Jesus and His words are living in us, then we are taught and guided in how we ask.

And remember what Jesus said, apart from me you can do nothing. Jesus said, I only do what my Father shows me to do. And I only say what my Father shows me to say.

And this is why we are to pray in the Spirit. Being led by the Spirit, seeking for the will of God to be done. Because if we ask for the will of God to be done, we can be assured that God hears us.

Sam, Sir, can you read 1 John chapter 5, verses 14 and 15. 1 John chapter 5, 14 and 15. And this states clearly that if we ask according to His will, God will hear us.

Okay, so you see the connection? How do you know that He hears us? Well, if you know you're asking according to His will. And then if you know that, then you know He's going to act, because that's His will. And His power is always there to supply His will.

Now, that's another thing that Paul is not saying. God is not saying that His power is going to make us all miracle workers. Now, there are those, there are a few people who've tried to teach that in the past, that every, every single believer should be like an apostle.

You should be able to lay hands on anybody and they should get well and you should be able to do signs and wonders and miracles. And they take some scriptures from the New Testament. But listen to what a question that Paul asked to the, to the Church of Corinth, when he was trying to instruct them about the differing gifts that God gives as He desires the different ones.

Paul asked this question, do all work miracles? And obviously the answer is no, because God doesn't choose for everyone to work a miracle. So, this power that works within us is not, is not to make us miracle workers. Now, so let's look again at Ephesians 320.

Joe Hernandez, can you read that for us again? I want us to read Ephesians 320 then I'm going to ask you a question. Okay, so see with me from this verse, if we can detect where God's power will always work miracles. There is a place that God's power will always work miracles.

Where is that? From this verse. Am I throwing you off? It's in here. He will always work in this place, in us, within us.

God will always work a miracle in your eye. And that's what Paul is saying here. To him who's able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think, according to His power that is dynamically at work in us.

To Him who's glory in the church. See, Paul knew that God makes His power available to do everything He desires to accomplish in our lives. In other words, His power works in us to enable us to live in a way that pleases Him.

To walk in righteousness, to walk in holiness, to obey Him joyfully as a loving son and daughter. Now, understand this. Every single one of us here lacks a perfect will.

Your will is not perfect. You don't always want to do what you should want to do. Every single one of us lacks a perfect ability.

None of us here have perfect ability. We're not able to do what we ought to do on our own. We got that.

That's why God works in us. Because what we lack in ourselves, God supplies from Himself. Do you hear that? What we lack in ourselves, God supplies from Himself.

His own divine nature through His Spirit working in us allows us to be equipped for everything. And Paul learned from his own experience. He learned this from his own experience.

Something that he was able to say with complete confidence that whatever it is we are dealing with, God's grace is sufficient for us. And where do we see that? In 2 Corinthians. Let's look with me.

2 Corinthians chapter 12 verses 7 through 10. It's a little bit lengthy, so I'll read it for us. 2 Corinthians 12, 7 through 10, where Paul learns this lesson about the sufficiency of the grace of Christ.

Because of these surpassingly great revelations, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Or buffet me, some of your translations say. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.

But He said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties.

For when I am weak, what? Then I'm strong. OK, now notice what He did not say. For when I am weak, then I am wrong.

Because that's what we say. Oh, I did that wrong. I knew that was wrong, but I was weak.

I know that was a wrong way to react, but I was weak. That's not the purpose of your weakness. We all face things.

We all have either a trauma we carry with us from our past, something someone's done to us that we're still dealing with. Or we're in a physically, or emotionally, or mentally, or circumstantially, we're in a very difficult situation that's hard to endure. That's common to all of us.

But God's promise in the midst of everything that we face with every bit of our own natural weaknesses is that He tailor makes His grace to be perfect for what you need in the moment. And that's why Paul learned to say, I can even delight in the things that manifest my weakness. And here's where I want us to understand.

While we have time together, while I have breath, and while I have this opportunity with you, I want us to understand that God's grace is more than forgiveness for our sins. It is forgiveness for our sins. That is part of it.

But it's more than that. God's grace is power specifically designed to strengthen us in the area we are weak on our own. That's what His grace is.

So that you're never left alone to deal with temptation. God never allows us to be tempted beyond what we're able to bear. But along with the temptation, He provides a way of escape.

He provides His own spirit to guide you in how to respond so that we're able to bear up under it. He tailor makes His power specifically for whatever weakness you or I have. So, we need to stop comforting ourselves with this lame, it's a lame saying, nobody's perfect.

Stop it! What kind of confession is that? The people in the bar can say that. Come on, what is that? Well, nobody's perfect. How about this lame thing? Well, everybody does it.

Everybody does it. Oh, that's lame. Christ didn't do it.

Next time you say everybody does it, you say, no, no, you stop yourself. The Lord Jesus never spoke an untrue word with His mouth. The Lord Jesus never complained.

The Lord Jesus was never wrong in a single thing He did. So, not everybody does it. And we're not supposed to compare ourselves with everybody.

We've not been told to live like Pastor Al. We've been told to live like the Lord Jesus and to live in Him and draw our strength from Him. So, let's say this, personal failure, when we fail personally in some way, it's not because of our weakness.

It's not weakness of our disposition. It's not weakness of our emotions. It's not weakness of our mind.

It is a weakness. What is it a weakness of? If we fail, we fail because we are weak in faith. Exactly.

O ye of little faith. Jesus wasn't saying you guys don't have a reason to be afraid. He could see the waves.

He could see the wind. He knew that if He didn't do something, the boat would sink and they would drown. That's not why they were weak.

What they were weak in is they forgot who was with them in the boat. They forgot who commands the wind and the waves. And you and I need to stop looking at the circumstances around us and say, oh, it's because of these circumstances that I feel so weak.

Remember what David learned in Psalm 23. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil because thou art with me. That's it.

You're with me. So whatever evil is around me, you're greater. You're with me.

I'm not going to fear. That needs to become our testimony. Let's look at and what's beautiful about this is sometimes we think that well Jesus is so mighty.

This is true. Jesus is so full of God's power, but He was also so full of God's power, completely a man like we are. Well, you'd say, well, if I was like Jesus, yeah, I could get it, Pastor.

No, no, no, that's not it. Jesus was made like us in every single way. And still without sin.

Let's look at it. Ben Serter, will you read Hebrews 2, 17 and 18? Hebrews 2, 17 and 18. Nice and loud, please.

You're there in the back. So does Jesus know what you're going through when you're under pressure? He sure does. Does He know what it's like to feel weak? Yes, He does.

And we are to follow His example. What He did when He was tempted, He cried out to the one who could save Him from life and death with loud cries and tears. And He was heard because of His reverence and mission.

Every time He was tempted, He looked to the Father and the Father with Him kept Him pure, kept Him safe, made Him an overcomer. So we're not to excuse personal failure because of some natural weakness or because of the world we live in or because of the difficult circumstances we're facing. And when we learn to trust that Jesus is with us, in us, and that His power is exceedingly, is able to do exceedingly abundant whatever we ask or need.

And it's at work within us. When we learn to trust in that, we'll start to live in triumph over situations rather than having circumstances triumph over us. And if we triumph over situations, if we have the victory over the circumstances we face, because we can't control circumstances, that's not the question, but can you overcome circumstances? Isn't there a promise in the scripture? A promise with a condition? A promise that actually Jesus made to every single church in the book of Revelations.

In Revelations chapter 2 and 3, there are seven churches that He had John write to. And this is a promise that Jesus repeated to every single church. So I'm assuming every single believer in every single church

received this promise with this condition.

What did Jesus say? What did He say? You can tell me what He said to every single church. That's exactly right, Rudy. To Him that overcometh, and He would give a promise.

I will. He will be allowed. He'll have access to the tree of life.

To Him who overcomes, I will never blot His name out of the book of life. To Him who overcomes, I'll give Him a stone with a new name which no man... So many promises, but one condition. You be an overcomer.

Stop saying the reason you fail was because of some natural weakness. And start confessing the reason you're able to do what's right is because of Jesus living in you. And faith is the key to that.

1 John chapter 5 verse 4. Larry, can you read 1 John chapter 5 verse 4? The key to being an overcomer is living with genuine faith. Verse 5 and 1. Who is it that overcomes the world? So John is saying, this is the victory. Not being a preacher, not being a missionary, not having thousands of scriptures memorized.

Being a believer. Having genuine faith in the power of God. That God specifically tailors His grace to be every single thing you need for whatever you face.

It takes that faith to be an overcomer. And overcomers receive the fullness of God's promises. You know, you've probably heard me say this.

I'll never tire of saying this. Too many Christians confess Romans chapter 7. Do you know what the confession of Romans chapter 7 is? The things that I want to do, I don't do. And the things that I do want to do, I don't do.

And in the end of that, once he realizes that, man, oh, wait a minute. There's this law. I discovered that there's this law living in me.

A law of sin making me a prisoner. Oh, woe is me. Wretched man as I am.

And that's the confession of a lot of Christians. They've got that. Woe is me.

The reason I do what I don't want to do is because of that old law of sin in me. And the reason I don't do what I know I should do, it's still that old law of sin in me. That's your confession.

And you never make it to Romans chapter 8. That's not where Paul stopped. Paul, in Romans chapter 8, he said, there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. What did he mean by no condemnation? It's a pretty sorry state.

It's a pretty condemned state. If you're a prisoner of the law of sin and you can't do what you should do and you keep doing what you don't want to do, that's a state of condemnation. But if you're in Christ, you're not in that state of condemnation.

Because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set us free from the law of sin and death. So we can say now, because Christ Jesus lives in us, I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. I don't live in Romans 7. I live in Romans 8. I walk by the Spirit and not by the flesh.

And so Christ in me has set me free from that old state of condemnation. And I live it by His power. So believers are the ones that are abiding in Christ.

And you know what this is to? This is to the Father's glory. This is the ability to do what God says brings Him glory. You know how I know that? I listen to what Jesus said brings God glory.

I'm going to compare it to what too many men think brings God glory. Here's what Jesus said brought the Father glory. I have brought you glory upon the earth by, can you finish it? I have brought you glory on the earth by doing what you asked me to do.

That's what brings God glory. Doing what God asked us to do. You know what does not bring glory to God? What too many men think brings glory to God.

Oh, we're just all broken. None of us are any good in ourselves. We're just all of us a mess.

But Jesus is so wonderful. When you see how rotten we are and how wonderful He is. Doesn't that bring Him glory? And they genuinely think that's what brings Him glory.

What brings Him glory is that He can take a rotten, broken mess and make a new creation out of it. Take a sinner and make a saint. Take someone who has lived a life the wrong way and suddenly so give him a new heart and a new spirit that he lives in an entirely new way.

And men see this transformation into a new creation. And you know what they do? God is real. That's what brings glory.

And that is what is in Paul's mind. That's how we glorify the Father. God's own divine nature in us producing His own characteristics.

His own attributes in us. And when people see these, God is glorified. God is showing Himself what He's like to others through us.

Philippians chapter 2. I'm going to have someone read it. David Knepper. Philippians 2, 12-16.

Okay, let's see if we can put this together. All of us, and I agree with Paul, every single one of us here needs to work on our salvation in fear and trembling. You know why? Because if you're a genuine believer in Christ, God is at work in you.

He does. He dwells in you and He's at work in you. And you know what He's at work in you to do? He provides the right will.

He inspires you to want what He wants. And He also inspires you to do what's right. And you know what that does? That makes you stop murmuring and complaining.

And you know what that does? That makes you different from just about everybody. You're surrounded just like a star. You're surrounded by a bunch of wimps.

People who murmur and complain when things don't go their way. And we're to do everything without that. And you know what it makes us? It makes us shine like stars in the universe.

As we hold forth the Word of Life. How do you think we hold forth the Word of Life? By saying we're a Baptist? By claiming I'm a Christian? By claiming I believe the Bible? How do you think you really hold

forth the Word of Life? It's how you walk it out. It's how you live.

You hold forth the Word of Life when you live by every word that comes forth of the mouth of God. That's how you hold it forth. And when you live that way, it's like a star.

You shine like a star. And what that does is that brings God glory. Because literally what's happening is God's power in you is kind of creating like a spiritual nuclear reaction.

Spontaneously generating light. Light. Goodness.

Kindness. The fruit of His Spirit is suddenly being seen shining through you. And men are encountering the life of God through you and I. And that brings Him.

And that's why I always want us to remember this. That the purpose of grace. And I hope you'll never forget it.

It's not new with me. But I just want to make sure none of us ever forget it. That the purpose of God's grace is to bring God glory.

It's not just to get you and I to heaven. We want to make it that. God declares that His grace is to recover and restore the honor and greatness of His name.

And the entire New Covenant is about God creating by His own power a dynamically new people that have been cleansed of their unfaithfulness. Been given a new heart. Sensitive heart.

He's put His Spirit in them and He literally inspires them to fear Him and to walk in His ways. And through that process, what happens? He is showing Himself. Through there, through that transformation, He is showing Himself as holy to the rest of the world.

We should be living confirmation of who God is. Not living contradiction. We're not supposed to contradict God's nature by our actions.

And actions, they do. They do. That's why men watch us a whole lot more than they hear us.

Now, with this idea of God's grace being for His glory, now let's put this verse Ephesians 3, 20 and 21 together. Alright? Verse 20 is, To Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think according to His power that is worked within us. And here comes verse 21.

Listen to His mindset. To Him be glory in the church. God's not expecting to be glorified by the people in the bar, or at the park, or on the lake, or in the scientists, or in the medical field.

Some of them may. But in the church, He intends to be glorified by us. To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations.

In other words, let the lives of those who are in the church bring glory to God by the way they live. Let them live in holiness to show He's holy. Let them walk in righteousness to show He is righteous.

Let them walk in self-control to show that God, His Spirit, is power and self-control and a sound mind. Like I said, the entire purpose of the New Covenant is this dynamic transformation that people should be able to see. When the Spirit of God is at work in us, the goodness of God begins to transform our nature.

We become more and more like Him, like Jesus, and less and less like Adam. Now all of us have already proven that we're related to Adam, right? We fall like Adam fell, we sin like Adam sinned, we do what Adam did. The rest of our life is supposed to manifest that now we are like Jesus.

And the Spirit of Jesus in us produces something Paul called fruit. He didn't say fruits, it's fruit, a fruit. And this is a fruit with God-like quality.

And what's the God-like quality that the Spirit in us produces? How did Paul describe it? What's the fruit of the Spirit? Love. God is love. And the fruit of His presence in us is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, meekness, gentleness, goodness, self-control.

When others encounter this fruit of God working in us, they experience the reality of God. And God is glorified in the church by our eyes. And that's what Paul sees.

And this is why with this purpose, to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think according to His work that is in us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus both now, not just in heaven, not when we get to heaven. Everyone thinks that when we get to heaven we'll be perfect. No.

Bring Him glory now. Here. In this life.

In these vessels. We have this treasure in earthen vessels to show that the excellency of the power is of God. And not us.

That's our mission. And this ties us in. Chapter 3. The last few verses of chapter 3 flow straight into the first few verses of chapter 4. Men are the ones who put these chapter breaks in there.

Remember this was just a letter. There weren't chapters and verses. Men did that so we could study and we could, to make us reference points so we could find them.

But let's put these two thoughts together. I'm going to read from verse 20 of chapter 3 to verse 1 and 2 of chapter 4. And I want you to see Paul's thoughts. It's continuous.

Here it is. And as a prisoner for the Lord, I urge you then to live a life worthy. What does living a life worthy mean? Bring God glory.

By the grace you received. And then he's going to describe to us. This is a, as a prisoner for the Lord, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you received.

Be completely humble, gentle, patient, bearing with one another in love. And he's going to go on and describe the way a believer should live in order that God will receive glory in the church. And we'll get back to where we're going to begin next week.

The Ephesians chapter 4. Where he doesn't just leave it for us to figure out what it looks like. He will describe what this living a life worthy looks like. And we are, in this sense, we are to police ourselves.

It's not for me to tell the people in the bar how to live. Or to tell the people in the lake how to live. Or to tell the people wherever they are in their neighborhoods how to live.

But all of us have instructions. Every one of us that have received grace, have received grace. So that God can be glorified by the lives of his people in the church.

That's why we receive grace. Okay? And that's where we'll go next week. Alright?

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/A267ilrkQtY.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/alan-martin/glorifying-god-in-the-church/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net