

God's Provision for Victory

by Alan Redpath

God has made a complete provision for victory, and it is always possible for a Christian not to sin with the power of God.

Duration: 43:56

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Romans 6:13, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 6:10-11, James 4:7, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Victory"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of taking a step of faith to yield oneself to the Holy Spirit's control in order to receive deliverance from sin. The preacher uses the analogy of a judge and a prisoner to illustrate how God waits for His children to pass the sentence of death upon their temptations and hand them over to Jesus for victory. The preacher explains that through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, believers can experience constant crucifixion of their old self as they yield to Christ daily. The sermon also highlights that when a person becomes a Christian, the Holy Spirit imparts a new nature to their life, making them partakers of the divine nature and enabling them to put on the new man created in righteousness and holiness.

Transcript

In what is perhaps the slightly more informal atmosphere of an afternoon meeting, and unless we're very careful could be a more sleepier atmosphere of an afternoon meeting, may I just be allowed to say what a joy it is to be back in Keswick this year and to have the privilege of little share in the ministry at this convention, and of course to be back in the home country again. Remember when I was first in Chicago nearly 10 years ago now, somebody came up to me after a meeting which I'd been speaking and said to me, you know, you don't speak bad English for a foreigner. Well you know that's enough to keep any Englishman humble, but having spent a lot of my life in England and then in America, now in Scotland, I wonder what sort of accent will be by the end.

I trust however that you won't have any problem that Americans here might recognize just some little things that they will understand, at least from their own country. It's a joy to see many of you here today who I am sure are visiting this convention from different parts of this land as well as from overseas, and especially our missionary friends. I'm sure that all of us desire to be very sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit these days, not least of us those who have the responsibility of ministry, which is no light thing.

In the opening meeting on Saturday night, Mr. Duncan said that he trusted that this convention would be disturbing, and maybe already we have found it to be just that, and some of us have been really disturbed and really shaken. And as we move on through the ministry and teaching of the week, we are indeed concerned that the Lord may truly come to grips with us, that this may not just be a vague time of blessing when we are able to go away and say, well it was a good convention, another Keswick has gone into history, but that it has been for hundreds of us a true transaction with God that may mark the turning point in our Christian experience. I acknowledge to you a deep sense of concern for this afternoon's gathering and for the message, for in seeking to be sensitive to what the Lord would say to us, I felt directed toward a word which I had not intended to give today when I came here on Saturday, but my heart was deeply moved as I listened to God's servants both last evening and this morning at the Bible study hour.

I'm sure that God is making us tender to his word, that's what needs to happen in a convention. I once heard a man pray rather an unusual prayer in the United States when he said, Lord, tenderize us. That's perhaps a strange word in this country, but you know what he meant, and I think that's what we need, just to be made tender, tender and sensitive to the voice of God's spirit.

And so in seeking to be this in my own heart, I was redirected even this morning to this passage of scripture, because we have been facing the ugliness of sin, the awfulness of it and the tragedy of it in the Christian church, in the life of a child of God. I said on Sunday evening, that which I would just repeat for a moment here, I am sure that the only answer to all the pressures of evil that come upon the Christian church today, the only answer to it is the power of God the Holy Ghost liberated through a repentant church, a repentant heart, and that can begin with you and me this week. Just to know a new freedom and a new liberty, and a new sense of the authority of the blessing of God upon our hearts, my, what a transformation that would be.

And I want to take as a basis for our message today, God's provision for victory, because God has made a complete provision for victory. It is never impossible for a Christian to sin, but bless the Lord, it's always possible for him not to sin. For God's provision for victory is perfect.

May I just say one word by way of introduction to this theme this afternoon, which I trust may speak to your heart and to mine. Temptation is part of God's plan for your life. Let me repeat that.

Temptation is part of God's plan for your life. This word temptation in the Bible actually has two different meanings to it. In the first place, it means to be tested, to be proved.

You have it used in that sense both in the Old and New Testament. For instance, in Genesis chapter 22 and verse 1, we read, and God did tempt Abraham. And that word really means tested him.

In this sense, the word is being tempted, not with any suggestion of being enticed into evil. But God did test Abraham. You have the same word in the 8th chapter of Luke and the 13th verse, where our Lord is giving to the disciples his interpretation of the parable of the sower, and he speaks about those who received the seed on rocky ground.

And these are they who received the word with gladness and endured for a while. But in time of temptation, fell away. In time of testing, when things got a bit tough, they fell away.

That kind of temptation, or better, that kind of testing comes to us from heaven. And God designs it in order that we might learn how utterly weak we are, and learn therefore to be driven back upon him. Have

you read Hebrews chapter 11 lately? That wonderful picture gallery of the heroes of faith, have you said to yourself in reading it, my what mighty men these were, how strong they were? You are wrong.

They were the weakest men who have ever lived. It was out of weakness, says the scripture, that they were made strong. God's first work with a Christian is to teach him to be weak.

And testing is brought to us for that very purpose, to show us our weakness. But of course the word is also used in the Bible, in the suggestion of being tempted with a view to falling into sin. And in this sense, that kind of testing and that kind of temptation comes from the devil.

God tests us for our good. Satan tempts us for our downfall. And that's the battlefield for every one of us here today.

What a comfort it is, isn't it, in the moment of temptation to remember that there is one, the name that is high over all, before whom devils fear and fly. There is one whose name is Jesus, who has been tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. And he, at the moment of our new birth, has come to live in us.

And friend, if you've never tasted the victory yet, bless the Lord, you have the victor in your heart, and therefore there is never any need to go down. No matter how severe the attack may be, defeat needn't happen. Do you believe that? Jesus' power is boundless, boundless as the sea.

Jesus is always able, able to help me. There is provision, therefore, for the Christian for victory. And I want, I want the sense of that, the knowledge of that, the thought of that, even now at this moment, to grip your heart.

For if you have been living in defeat as a Christian, as well you may, for years. For remember, it is possible to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but to be mastered by the flesh. It is possible to be out of Egypt, but not in Canaan.

It is possible to have our sins forgiven, but to know nothing of deliverance from the principle of sin. This can go on in the Christian life. But let the thought grip your heart today, that if it has been going on, it need not continue one minute longer.

Now, of course, this is a subject which causes us all to meet on common ground. When you talk about a theme like this, you're bound to touch everybody. There is no temptation that has taken you, but that is common to man.

But God, who is faithful, will never suffer you to be tempted beyond that you are able to bear, but will, with the temptation, not before it, nor after it, but with it, at the right moment, for God is never late or never early with his supplies to his harassed people. He will, with the temptation, provide the way of escape that you may be able to run away, no, that you may be able to stand your ground, that you might be able to bear it. 1 Corinthians 10, 13, that is.

Let me illustrate what I mean. He is an engineer, and he's testing a new machine, which is a very expensive machine, very costly, and he's subjecting it to severe pressures of heat. And as this machine is going through intense pressure of heat, he is watching a dial which is registering the amount of the pressure.

And as he watches the machine and watches its reactions to the pressures of heat, suddenly he sees that dial go up to the danger point. And when he sees it there, at a point where the machine would be damaged if the pressure continues, he releases a safety valve that the machine might be able to bear it. The way of escape that God provides is not for me, but bless the Lord, it's for the devil.

It's not for me to run away, but he knows, he knows the moment when the pressure has gone on long enough and the time has come for him to release the safety valve. He will never suffer you to be tempted beyond that you're able to bear. Oh dear, that's only the introduction.

Now, let me consider with you one or two things this afternoon, quickly, in shorthand nearly, because we'll need to get through. But some important principles on this whole matter. Oh, may the Spirit of God just wing these things to your heart.

First of all, this. When you become a Christian, the Holy Spirit imparts a new nature to your life. He imparts a new nature to your life.

2 Peter, chapter 1, verse 4. There are given to you exceeding great and precious promises whereby you are made partakers of the divine nature. Colossians 1, 27, Christ in you, the hope of glory. Ephesians 4, 24, put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

The new man is not the old man regenerate. We receive this new nature at the moment of our new birth. It is at that moment that the Holy Spirit comes to take up his permanent residence in the life of the child of God.

At that moment you are baptized by the Spirit into the body of Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 12, 13. And that new nature, or shall I put it this way, the Holy Spirit has then become your second nature.

And he cannot sin. It is impossible for the Holy Spirit to sin. Therefore, you have received within you a new life to whom sin is anathema.

He cannot sin. And given freedom of action in your heart and in your life, he will produce nothing but good fruit. Recognizing that at this point I'm about to tread on somewhat thin ice and on something of a controversial character, let me nevertheless look at 1 John chapter 3 verse 9 and suggest to you that this is what this verse is saying.

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him. And he cannot sin because he is born of God. Now many people interpret that verse to say, now of course what it really means is that when a man is born of God, he does not continue in the practice of sin.

He'll sin occasionally, sometimes, but he won't continue doing it habitually. But you see, the verse doesn't say that. The verse says that he that is born of God doth not commit sin.

Why? Because his seed remaineth in him. And he cannot sin because he is born of God. The seed of heaven, the very life of Jesus, cannot sin because that life is born of God.

So you have received, as a Christian, a new nature that cannot sin. The second thing that I would say to you this afternoon is this, that the old nature remains in the regenerate life. The Christian will always keep to the very end of his journey what the Bible calls, in Romans chapter 8, among other places, the flesh.

In this chapter, which everybody regards as the great charter of victory for the Christian, the victory chapter in the word of God, the theme is the conflict between the flesh and the spirit. In the first 13 verses of Romans 8, no less than 13 times have you the word flesh. Similarly, in Galatians 5, 16, and 17, Paul says, Walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that you cannot do the things that ye would. Now, what is the flesh? The flesh is not simply what you and I think is bad about ourselves. The flesh is not simply this body in which we live.

It's much more than that. The flesh is all that we are. Spelt backwards, and with the H left off, it spells self.

This is the flesh, all that I am, when I am not in Christ. You remember that Paul said in Romans 7, verse 18, I know that in me, that is in my flesh, that is his definition, in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. So you see, the new man is Christ in us by the spirit, and the old man is self without Jesus, and the flesh, says the scripture, is sold unto sin.

And that is a condition which is incurable, and the grace of God does not set out to cure it. And the gospel of Jesus Christ and his redemption does not refine, or polish up, or Christianize, or make religious the flesh. It is unchanged in the life of the Christian.

And all through your life, the flesh will always offer unyielding opposition to the spirit. It cannot be improved, it cannot be sanctified, God can only do one thing with the flesh, to free us from its power, and that is crucify it, slay it, and put it to death. How he does that, we shall see in a moment.

But I am persuaded that the vast majority of Christians, especially in the early years after conversion, spend most of their time trying to polish up the flesh. Having received forgiveness of sins, we then say, now you watch what a good Christian I am going to be. And we set about our daily quiet time, and our daily reading of the Bible, and our attendance of church, and we substitute in our diaries, for a whole round of social entertainment, another round of religious activity, and the flesh looks really wonderful.

Suddenly the whole thing has got religious. And then having received forgiveness of sin, we decide now, with God's help, and by reading my Bible, and saying my prayers, and going to church, as God helps me this way, I am going to make myself, my flesh, really live a Christian life. And that ends up with the psychiatrist, and coffee, and tranquilizers.

It ends up over and over again with a Christian disillusioned, and shattered, and bewildered, and often saying to himself, this Christian life is absolutely useless, it's not for me. Of course it isn't for you, it's for Jesus in you, by his name. Remember therefore, it is possible for a Christian to live after the flesh.

Romans 8, 5, they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh. They that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. And it would just be well, perhaps, for us to take a moment and ask yourself today, what are you minding? Are you minding the things of the flesh, or are you minding the things of the spirit? What do you mind? Those who willingly and knowingly continue to live after the flesh, betray the falsity of their profession of faith in Christ.

The old nature continues to exist in the regenerate life. The third thing I would say to you today is this, that the Holy Spirit who has come to impart his nature within you, has power at every moment to overcome the flesh. Romans 8, 2, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

2 Corinthians chapter 3 and verse 17, where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Yes, the spirit of God within has the power to overcome the flesh. And the basis for that victory was laid for us at Calvary.

Let me remind you, dear friend, that the Holy Spirit only comes to fulfill and make real in you what Jesus did for you at the cross. It is Dr. Schofield who says, we need the Holy Spirit to make actual in life what Christ did for us at Calvary. And at the cross, the Lord Jesus not only bore away our sins and forgave them, but he also took away this self-life and condemned it and crucified it.

How did he do that? Because every moment of his life, without exception, he was dying to the whole principle of sin. He never lived to please himself, he lived to please God. He never lived to serve himself, he lived to serve others.

He lived entirely for the glory of his Father. And in so doing, here is a man who is dying all the time to the sin principle. Living on the principle of submission, living on the principle of obedience to God.

And this life which had died to sin, he took to the cross and there condemned sin in the flesh, as Romans 8 verse 3 says. For by his obedience and by his holy life, he has triumphed over all the activity of the flesh, over that root principle of sin which before your conversion has driven your body into evil action. And Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into heaven and received of his Father the promise of the Spirit and baptized every poor, beaten, bankrupt, hopeless life that came to him in repentance and faith with this new principle of life, his own life, by his Spirit to live within you.

So that now, by the power of that new life, the old principle which drove your body into sin should be put to death. And the new principle in your life should drive your body into holiness. Now there's the very root of Christian experience.

In Jesus Christ, the sin principle, say, Christ in you by his Spirit to keep it dead. Christ in you by his Spirit to reproduce his life of holiness and victory. It is therefore through the Spirit, says Paul, that we keep in subjection the work of the flesh.

But listen, if you and I are not on our guard constantly, that old nature which is so lively in every one of us will always seek to regain control. You are dead to sin in Christ, but sin is never dead to you. There are some people who think and even teach that the old self has ceased to exist, that somehow every root of sin has been plucked out and eradicated forever.

Well that would make life so easy. Wouldn't that be easy? But I find no scriptural authority for that statement. If that was true, Romans 8 wouldn't be in your Bible.

Dead to sin in Jesus, but sin never dead to me. And day by day, if we are left to ourselves without the power of the Spirit of God, we shall go down. But as we yield to Holy Spirit control, he will deal with that old self of ours and keep it in the place of death.

Let me illustrate what I mean. Here's a judge and a jury, and before them there's a prisoner. And this prisoner is arraigned for murder.

And the jury, having heard all the evidence, finds him guilty of murder. So the judge immediately passes sentence upon the prisoner of death. But listen, the judge does no more.

He doesn't take a gun out of his pocket and shoot him. If he did, he himself would be guilty of murder. What the judge does is to pronounce the sentence of death upon the prisoner and then hand him over to the executioner, who alone has the authority to put him to death.

Listen, when you and I are in the thick of the battle, and the heat is on, and we're being tested and tempted almost to the point where you begin to say, I can't take this anymore, God watches in all his enabling power, and he waits to listen for his child passing the sentence of death upon that temptation and saying, Lord, this is the self-life, not the Christ-life. Lord, Lord, I want this to die. And Lord Jesus, I come to you and I hand this temptation over to you and I ask you now to say it.

And when I yield to Christ, though that old self remains unchanged and sin has the same hold upon it, and if left to myself, sin would irresistibly attract me, by the power of his Spirit he takes possession and he ensures the constant crucifixion of that self-life as day by day I yield to him. I do trust today that that truth has gripped your heart. There are several ways in which a man may kill himself.

He may shoot himself. He may drown himself. He may poison himself.

He may even hang himself, but he can't crucify himself. Jesus has done it for you. See? And all he asks is that every moment of your life as a moral, free agent, that you, in facing temptation from the enemy, as it comes to attack, pronounce in your will a sentence of death and say no, and look up to him and trust him for the power to put it to death.

Let me just therefore conclude by one further word. What is our part in this life of victory? The provision in the Holy Spirit is there. The fact that the self-life remains and is just the same and is unchangeable, that is there.

Yet the Holy Spirit in us has power to overcome. Then, then, what is my part in this situation? First, the moment by moment surrender of my will into the hands of the Lord Jesus. Romans 6, 13, yield your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

God can set me free. I know he can, for my Bible tells me so. And for that purpose to give me victory, he has come to live in my heart.

As long as I cease to resist him, he will fill my life and he'll go on delivering me from the enemy. But if I cease to submit to Jesus, he ceases to work in my heart. The moment I cease submitting, at that moment he ceases working.

And that halt in the operation of God the Holy Spirit is not brought about often by open rebellion, but far more often by our desire, strange desire to try and fight the battle ourselves. And the moment I take it out of his hands and seek to try and fight the battle with God's help, at that moment I go down. God expects nothing from your self-life except total failure.

He has written it off, he's sentenced it to death, he's judged it at the cross, he's finished with you altogether. He expects nothing of that but failure. But he has given you the Holy Spirit that you need never fail.

Oh, but you may say, well I somehow feel I haven't got enough strength of will to maintain a constant surrender. How many people come to us at Keswick and say, look I tried this before and it didn't work. I've yielded to Christ and it didn't work.

I've gone on yielding to Christ and somehow it didn't work. I haven't been able to keep it up, I haven't been able to maintain my surrender, I withdrew it. Listen, have no fear.

For the Lord only asks for a will today that is sincere, regardless of how weak it may be. For listen, to make your will strong is God's business not yours. Philippians 2.13 It is God who worketh in you to will and to do His good pleasure.

It's not for you to try to make your will strong it's for you to hand over that will in all its weakness and let Him work in you to will and to do His good pleasure. The first, therefore, requirement is yieldedness. The second is a constant faith.

Romans 6.11 Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God. By faith you received forgiveness. By faith you received victory.

Not by your tears or your prayers or your striving or your labor or your struggle. All of this ends in failure. Just fix your gaze upon Jesus and count upon Him and in the same way as you received forgiveness in that way you'll receive victory.

Now that requires from you friend and from me a definite act of faith and commitment. It involves a new starting point in your Christian life. I'm not preaching a second blessing if you ask me if I believe in that I do because I believe in a million blessings.

One, two, three, four, right away through. And a day without a blessing would be a very unpleasant day and a very unhappy day. But I am quite sure that there are many Christians today who have taken the step of faith and received Christ for pardon.

But they have never taken a step of faith just as clear, just as definite to yield themselves to Holy Spirit control that they might receive by faith deliverance from sin. Would you take that step today? Salvation is by faith. Holiness is by faith.

Not by effort but by faith. And here in this tent today at about eight minutes to four on July the 16th 1963 there can come from some weary, beaten, struggling, defeated, disillusioned Christian a commitment, a step, a faith by which now they take the very gift of God, life and victory through Jesus Christ our Lord. Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory today through Jesus Christ our Lord.

But you must take the step of faith. You took it for forgiveness. You've never dared take it for victory.

You thought you had to work for that with a bit of help from heaven. You thought you had to sweat it out, fight your own battles with God's help. You haven't, my friend.

From right now at this moment you can enter into a new principle of life altogether. I tell you when a Christian does this it's like being born again all over again. It's getting out from under the burden and finding yourself on top of it in Jesus Christ our Lord.

How many Christians, and you ask them how they're getting on, they say not so bad and then the next word, under the circumstances. Isn't it tragic when a Christian is there under the circumstances? Under them! Not on top of them, but under them. But the Lord Jesus is calling I believe not only to this group at Keswick today but to the Christian church everywhere to recognize that his resurrection life indwelling the life of a child of God spells victory.

And that victory is for you to take by faith right now. I would ask you therefore as we close today I would ask you just to bring before your mind just to bring before your mind the impossible situation in your life. The thing that's got you down the thing that's kept you under, the thing that's taken away your testimony and the smile from your face and the joy of the Lord has gone and the thing that's just got you thoroughly bogged down.

I wonder what it is God knows about, the thing you're thinking about just now as I talk to you. Holy Spirit knows and you know.

And I tell you it's got you down for so long hasn't it bless your heart that you've stopped praying for victory you've assumed that you know you're the victim of temperament or heredity well your mother had that problem and therefore you must have it it's in the family or may it be missed the previous generation it's come out again in you the psychologist tells you therefore it's inevitable that you're made like this in the mold, just the same mold as everybody but a bit moldier than other people and there you are, you're stuck like that in the mess, defeated bless your heart there is no temptation that can ever come to you that God is faith would you dare today in the name of the Lord Jesus the name that's high above all to step by faith to the very throne in heaven and claim the victory

that Jesus won for you at the cross I was brought up as a child on a very strict principle my parents were not Christians but they used to come to me and my father would say to me many times this word my son there is no such word as can't and then he would administer that with the appropriate means on the part of my anatomy that was designed to take it and many and many a time it was more comfortable for me for a couple of days thereafter to walk than to sit while I tried to learn the lesson there is no such word as can't I am quite sure that he was utterly sincere utterly sincere in his conviction but I want to tell you that it was only when Jesus filled and flooded my heart and life that he changed the can't into the can and Christ can do that for you in any situation right now my

favorite life verse has always been since I became a child of God Philippians 4 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me and I just love it in Phillip's letters to young churches I am ready for anything by the power of the one who lives within me could you say that today are they ready for anything by the power of the one who lives within you take a good look at the impossibility take a good look right now at the thing that's got you down to the point of despair got it in your mind well before you come on now bring it right before your mind you know what it is a beastly temper a most unpleasant and critical tongue an awful heart that's full of jealousy and lack of love and coldness perhaps some secret sin which dominates your life and has driven you to tears and you fought

the battle alone hour after hour till almost now you've given up struggling with it yes I know bring it well before your mind got it now just look right off to Jesus and say to him Lord Jesus I long to be perfectly whole do you mean that you really want salvation more than you want sin very well tell him so and having told him so just say thank you Lord I take the victory that you won for me and I take it now not only here at Keswick I take it now in that situation at home in business in my own personal life when I'm alone with my thoughts Lord Jesus I take the victory let's bow together in prayer soldier soldier fighting in the world's great strife on thyself relying battling for thy life trust thyself no longer trust Christ he's stronger I can all things all things do through Christ who

strengthens me Lord make this wonderful truth real thy provision for moment by moment victory in the power of thy mighty conquering spirit may the grace of the Lord Jesus the love of God the fellowship and

communion of the spirit be our portion now and until our dear Lord shall come again and then forever more.

Amen.

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