

Personal Victory for the New Year

by A.W. Tozer

To achieve personal victory, one must be watchful, steadfast in the faith, and prioritize love, gratitude, and spiritual growth.

Duration: 42:16

Scripture: 1 Samuel 3:4-10, Matthew 6:33, Mark 13:37, 1 Corinthians 16:13, Ephesians 6:18, Colossians 4:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:6, 1 Peter 5:8

Topics: "Victory"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on a verse written by Paul, emphasizing the importance of being watchful as Christians. He highlights that we cannot simply muddle through the year and expect victory, but rather we must be alert and attentive. The preacher compares the idea of loafing and dreaming to watching, stating that the Bible portrays men as watchers. He emphasizes that we cannot expect an easy journey, but rather we must be prepared for all kinds of weather and challenges. The sermon encourages listeners to be proactive in taking care of themselves, their families, and their testimonies, reminding them that they must stay vigilant throughout the year.

Transcript

Now, I suppose that you know that anniversaries are a mental hallucination, or at least there's not much to them, really. I've often smiled to myself to see the world go mad with the introduction of a new year, when I remember that the calendar has been changed quite a number of times, and nobody knows exactly when the year goes in, when it goes out. It doesn't make much difference, really.

And yet, being here as we are in this society where we find ourselves, it is not possible today to speak without remembering that a new year of our Lord, as we call it, 1961, comes to an end today, and the new year, 1962, which follows it, begins at midnight tonight. So I want to talk to you about, not about the past, because that is gone, but about today and tomorrow, one being with us and the other one soon to be with us. Now, yesterday is beyond recall, and we could all do ourselves a wonderful world of good, we'd remember that, starting now.

Lord, yesterday is beyond recall. The sun went down, Lord, and when it went down, it destroyed all possibility that I can do anything to correct what was done last year. And we should remember yesterday our mistakes, for instance, not to repeat them ever, and not to spend a lot of time lamenting them, but we should remember them only that we might never repeat them again.

And then our sins of yesterday, they may be forgiven. There's no reason why at all we should carry one minute of today any sin which we have upon us. If we have any sin upon us, it would be the ideal thing that we all arrived here this morning, pure inside and outside.

But being human, the chances are that there are fragments of sin just as you hang a coat or any garment away a while, it does get linty and it must be cleaned, it must be brushed. So the human spirit is like that. In more biblical language, I think I might say that having traveled during these 364 1/2 days of 1961 over the dust of the world, we need our feet washed today.

So that we can do, our Lord can wash our feet and wash the dust of the journey from us, and we must see that this is so. We must have all these sins beaten out of existence by the blood of the everlasting covenant. But now, with our mistakes and sins gone and forgiven and cleansed away, with our determination they shall be repeated no more, what about tomorrow, what about the year that lies just ahead of us? How can we face it and be sure that we shall have Christian victory for the coming year? Well, I've chosen a text here, this written by Paul.

The man Paul was an amazing man, and he could condense into a few words what the average man would take a book to say. I've written eight or ten or twelve books, but I have never been able to say in a whole book what the man of God Paul could condense into one sentence. And he put it here into this highly condensed sentence.

Watch you, that is, you watch, stand fast in the faith, put you like men, be strong, let all your things be done in love. Now let's look this over and see what we can get out of it for ourselves in order that we might a new year, cheerfully, hopefully, expectantly, and live it victoriously. Now he first says watch ye, that is, turned around, you know, the subject put after the verb, it's the old way of doing it, in parenthesis.

You watch, he said, now you people watch, which reminds us of the words of Jesus when he said that we were to watch. Everybody was to watch, what I say unto you I say unto all, watch. And so the Christian must be alert.

Now if you imagine that you're going to get through this 1962, just muddle it through and be victorious in it, you're going to have to think again and think correctly the second time, because the Bible says that we've got to watch. The poets picture men as loafing and dreaming, but the Bible pictures men as watching. Now if this were heaven, or if this world were inhabited by a heavenly race of beings, I would say that loafing and dreaming would be a pretty good luxury, and we could all get down to the hard work of loafing, always the hardest work, loafing and dreaming.

But the scriptures teach us that we are living in times of emergency, and that there is a civil revolt on in the moral world, and that we're caught in the middle of it, and that therefore we positively cannot afford to loaf and dream, particularly followers of the slain lamb. We dare not loaf and dream, but we've got to keep watching. And there are reasons that we should watch, I say.

There's an enemy abroad, that's another one, the enemy, the devil, who walks about seeking whom he may devour. This enemy, the devil, is a real enemy. He's a real enemy, and he goes about seeking whom he may devour, and you look good to him.

He would love to have you as a good spiritual morsel, this coming year. He'd like to destroy your usefulness, he'd like to injure your testimony, he would like to shill your love, he would like to harm your

faith, he would like to make you less useful, he would like to get you caught somewhere where you couldn't get loose, so that you couldn't do much for God during the coming year. He'd like to do that.

Some people don't believe in the devil, they don't believe he exists. But I remember a criminal once who was busy robbing banks and doing all kinds of other criminal acts, and they were beating down his neck pretty close, and he knew he couldn't stand it very much longer, couldn't keep ahead of the police much longer, so he got a public relations man to help him. I don't know how he got him, but he got him.

And this PR man got it started that this criminal had been found dead. So they buried a fellow, and they said, well, public enemy number one or two or three, wherever he was, is dead and gone, and the police relaxed their vigilance. And as soon as the police relaxed their vigilance, he went to work again, and he managed to get himself a sack full of somebody else's money, while the police nodded with their feet on the desk, saying, thank God that criminal's dead.

He wasn't dead, he only had himself reported dead. Now there are lots of liberal preachers in Toronto this morning, that if they ever mention the devil at all, except when they're mad at their wife, if they ever mention the devil, they do it apologetically and with a superior smile, and say that he's dead, the enemy's dead, the devil, ha ha, the devil is dead. No, the devil's only got himself reported dead, my friend, in order that you may relax your vigilance.

And while you're relaxed, then you'll get busy, get busy on your family, on you, on your body, on your nervous system, on your business, on your testimony. You'll get busy on you, because you think he's dead. He's not.

You've got to be watchful this year. How I'd love to tell you that you could just lie down comfortably on a cloud and float effortlessly onward during these years, but that isn't so. And there isn't any teaching anywhere in the New Testament or the Old that allows us to believe that we're going to float off to heaven this year on a pink cloud.

We are not. We're going to have to be watchful Christians, because these are not only times of emergency with an enemy abroad, but there are dangers in the way. Like where I grew up in the mountain state of Pennsylvania, they had one railroad running through a mile or two from our place, but distances were small then.

You could stand on a hill and look across and almost touch over the hill, so it would seem in the clear air. And the Pennsylvania Railroad ran through, and I was, of course, interested as a boy in railroads. They had no airplanes then, but they did have trains.

And I was interested because of two things. They divide their tracks up into sections, and they put a section boss over that section, and he has a certain number of men under him. And their business is to keep the track up all during the year.

Every kind of weather, rain and storm and blizzard and heat and cold, that track has to be kept up. And the section boss of any given section, I don't know how long the sections were, it was, say, five miles, just a rough guess, and he kept that up. He had that to do.

And then another man took where he left off. But how did he know where to put his track? On Thursday morning, we say, when he met the boys at six o'clock with the sun just up, and said to them, Now, boys, we go to such and such a place. I had them numbered.

In order to work this morning, was a piece of track there, and he said, How did he know about that? Well, they had another fellow. They called him the track walker. And I was interested.

I don't think that I was ever ambitious to be a track walker. I think I had ambition to raise chickens, fight Indians, and to be a section boss. But I don't think that I ever had ambition to be a track walker.

But I was interested in it. Now, the business of the track walker was, he had to have, he didn't have flat feet. He had to have good feet and a good sharp eye.

And so they started him here at where the section began, and his business was to walk to where the section ended. I said five miles, that would be quite a journey. And back, and that was his job all the time.

Looking for broken rails, looking for weak ties, looking for spikes that had got worked out by the rumbling vibrations of the trains, looking for any washout under any section, looking for something some bad boy, excuse me, but I used to be one of them, would put across the rails, wonder what would happen. Nothing ever did, fortunately. But we used to do those things as kids.

And they had to watch all that. Some bad boy, whose last name began with T, should pull a piece of metal off across the track, wondering what would happen. He found that and took it off before the train came through.

That was a track watch, a track walker. That was his business. It might have been said of him, Watch ye, all of the goods that passed over those lines, and all of the people more valuable than all the freight, more or less they were in the hands of the track walker.

He had to find any weak places in the lines. And that's exactly what our Lord says. Walk circumspectly, in another way.

You who waited laboriously through Latin back in your high school days, remember that circum means round and spectro means look. So we have a man walking, looking around. So many Christians just stumble ahead.

And of course at the end of the year they come up all bruised and battered, if they come up at all, because they haven't walked circumspectly, looking around. If there was any track, a rail loose or a tie broken, they didn't know it. They were stumbling along.

But Paul says you can't afford to do that. If you're going to have a spiritual victory for any day, and now we say for 1962, you're going to have to get the habit of walking, looking around, because there are dangers in the way. But also there are treasures likely to be overlooked if you're not very watchful.

I noticed one thing in my preaching, I've had to fight it down the years, and that is to overlook everything that was all right and attack that only which was wrong, or mention it. And that gives the impression sometimes that I only see what's wrong. Well, I don't.

But then if I were a doctor, I don't suppose I would have men so healthy that they were dangerous sitting in my waiting room out there? I'd have men who had something wrong with them, or who thought they had something wrong with them. Any doctor knows his business is to look after the sick, not to pet the healthy. And everybody knows that a business of a man of God, particularly if he has upon him anything of the spirit of the biblical prophet, is not to scratch the backs of the fat saints, but to watch over the weak and the

sick and the troubled and those who are in danger, and call their attention to the washed-out bridges and the broken rails, in order they might not run off the track.

The trouble is that in doing this, we're likely to cultivate a habit of overlooking the good things that God has done for us. You know, God has been good to us this last year. God was good to you to let you live at all.

I know you're nice. I understand all about that. You're nice, and all that.

But nevertheless, if you had your deserts, you wouldn't have lived this year. The fact that you're here and reasonably alive is all due to the good grace of God, who didn't judge us according to our sins, nor reward us to our iniquities. I take every day as a bonus from God.

I don't deserve another day, but God gives me a bonus. Every time the sun rises, God says, Give the boy another day. And I don't figure on too many days.

I don't know how many there'll be. People live to be 90, and I'm only in my early 60s. I could be around here yet when some of you are old and bent, that are now quite young.

I don't know that. I only know that every day is a new day from God, and I want to cultivate the habit of seeing God's provisions and looking for the answers to prayer. If we are properly thankful for the answers to prayer, we'll never have a lack of answers to be thankful for.

That's a quotation from somebody. Now the second thing he says is to stand fast in the faith. The Bible always approves steadfastness.

Steadfastness is a virtue when it's found in the saint and a vice when it's found in the sinner. The man who stubbornly refuses to change his ways is a sinner, and he's on his way to a sinner's future. But the saint's virtue is virtue in the faith.

It's a great sight to see an old man standing in the same place he stood as a boy. Let me explain what I mean by that. There was Samuel, and Samuel was just a little kid, I don't know how old, so young that they had to leave a candle burning for him.

That would be pretty young, I'd say maybe three or four years old. He heard a voice saying, Samuel, Samuel, and he woke and said, here I am, Lord. First he went, of course, to Eli and thought it was Eli.

Eli explained it was God. There was the young boy Samuel, a Christian. God whispered secrets for him when he was only a lad so small that they had to leave a candle burning because he was afraid to go to sleep in the dark.

Many, many decades later, I don't know how many, this man Samuel, now old and ripe and matured and full of the grace of God and scarred with the long trip and covered with wounds of the battle, stands up before his God, anoints the right thing, gets him started, and then lies down. Very started, maybe seven or eight years before, Samuel was as an old man where he was as a boy, in the grace of God, in faith. We are steadfast, he said, steadfast in the faith.

Now someone says, but are we not to grow? Well, yes, we are to grow in grace, but there are some things you can't grow away from. There are some things you can only stay by steadfastly. For instance, a young artist, a very young artist, decides that he wants to paint pictures, so he goes down to the artist's supply and buys himself some brushes and a palette, and an easel, and a canvas, and frames, and lots of tubes

of paint, of every color.

Now there he starts, and you know if he goes on to be as famous as Rembrandt, he can't get beyond that. He can get beyond his technique, he can get beyond the knowledge he has now. He's supposed to grow in knowledge and in ability, but he can't get beyond the seven primary colors.

Those seven primary colors will appear in everything he paints from the hour he begins as a teenage lad until his hand is too old and shaky to paint anymore when he's in his eighties. He began with the seven primary colors, mixed and so mixed as to bring any color. Well, for instance, if he wants purple, he takes blue and red.

If he wants green, he takes blue and yellow. He mixes to get his colors, but he has to stay by those same colors. Somebody comes along and says, throw away those colors, aren't you going to make any advance? No, if he's going to remain an artist, he's not going to make any advance.

I admit, now, for the sake of the argument, that I have seen pictures, modernist pictures in the galleries of the continent that I figured that somebody threw something away, and I wasn't sure what it was. But there was one more thing that should have been thrown away, and that was the picture itself. But we're talking about sane people now, not about bootlegs and artistic nerd wells.

But he's going to stay by his seven primary colors. It's wonderful to see him have the sense to know where to begin and know where never to leave, and yet he can make progress within the framework of the seven primary colors. And so there are some things that nothing can ever invalidate.

For instance, love and faith and God and Christ and holiness and spiritual service. These things we'll begin with, and these things we'll end with when the sun goes down on our earthly life. We began with this when we gave our hearts to Jesus Christ the Lord, and we've had these.

They are the primary colors. Faith and love and hope and trust and confidence. These and others like them.

Everything we do, they're compounds of these primary colors, and we never can leave them. We can go demanded, we can lose interest, but we never can discover any truth that can invalidate them. For instance, Genesis 1.1. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

John 1, Paul 1 to 14. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and you know the rest of it. 1 Corinthians 15.

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. Now there we have some of the primary colors. God created the heaven and the earth.

The God who created the heaven and the earth became flesh to dwell among us. He died on a cross and rose again. These are some of the great truths of the Word, and you never can know enough to invalidate these.

You never can find out so much or make such intellectual or moral advances that these become old hat. Always they're relevant, always they're there. So the scripture says, stand fast in the faith.

I'd like to tell you that our faith is not on trial. Some of you no doubt read in the newspapers and read with a good deal of horror that gentleman that came up from Columbus, Ohio, and told a bunch of young people that in effect the scriptures were not inspired and they weren't to believe anything they didn't want to. Well, of course, he imagines that he is a very advanced thinker.

Friend, 50 years ago, 60 years ago, they were saying the same thing. Those boys haven't thought of a new thing in years, not a new thing. That's so old that it's turned brown with age, and here's a very brilliant young fellow telling these young people about it.

You know, high school people have a tough time of it, and they have a tougher time when they go to college. I just replied to a letter recently from a high school girl in New Jersey, and I smiled at it because it was funny, but I sympathized with the poor kid, too. She began, Dear Dr. Tozer, I have concluded that life is very confusing.

And then she went on to tell me that she was listening to people she called intelligence and men of prestige, and they're denying what I've been taught from my childhood to believe the Bible to be the word of God and so on. So she said, Life is very confusing. And I wrote her and said, You sure said it that time.

Life is confusing. And I tried to explain to her and give her scripture and help her out the best I could, but I smiled at the fact that she found it out. Oh, she'll find that it's worse than she thought it was.

But I told her to look to Jesus, the author and finisher of her faith, and he'd take care of the confusion. So that you needn't worry about anybody coming up with anything this next year that will invalidate the faith or in any wise change the truth of it. No, somebody's going to put a man on the moon one of these days.

What anybody would want to do it for, I can't imagine. It's a dusty place. You'd sink to your waist in cosmic dust if you went there.

There's no atmosphere there, so you'd have to wear one of those Buck Rogers space helmets. You couldn't walk around because the gravitational pull is so light that you'd go floating away, and the whole thing's messed up. There's no reason for anybody to go there.

Look at all you've got out here in western Canada. Look what all they've got out here in the western United States. Look what we could do with what we've got.

We've got to go floating away to the moon. I don't know why, but either Russia or the U.S. will put a man up there probably in 1962. Maybe they'll miss the first shot or two, and we'll have the terrible spectacle of a man they can't bury, and can't find, and can't locate, and can't stop, and can't do anything with.

Floating around until the Judgment Day in an aluminum capsule. It'll be a terrible thing. I don't know who'll go up, but oh boy, I know who won't.

I know who won't. I can't tell you who they'll send, but I know who they won't send. Unless, of course, they put me in irons for something, and chuck me in and say, see you later, because I just wouldn't go.

I'm satisfied with the earth. I don't say that I'm pleased with it altogether, because there's sin here, and I know a better land far, far away, but I also like the earth better than the moon, because I'm an earth man, and I'm not a man in the moon, or plan ever to be. So they'll never be able to find anything anywhere.

I see in the telegram yesterday that once one man wrote saying that there was more than a possibility, I think it was there, that they would have a man on Mars within this year, or very shortly. There's another place I'm not interested in, not at all. He counteth the stars, he knoweth them by name, and he telleth all their number in the planets, too.

That's all I want to know about the stars until I rise above them and look down. But remember this, when they get their man up there, living or dead, it won't change one truth of the scriptures. It won't mean one thing will be changed.

God will still be God, God will still be the Creator, he'll still be the sovereign God running his world. Sin will still be sin, and righteousness will still be righteousness, and heaven will still be heaven, and hell will still be hell. So stand fast in the faith, I say to you.

Don't let any people of so-called intelligence frighten you out of your Christian faith. You began in the right place, now keep right on until the Lord returns. Then it says, put yourselves like men, and he's talking to women as well as men, and that, of course, means courage.

Courage is a first manly quality. No matter what qualities a man has, he's not a good man if he's a coward. Women can put up with an awful lot from their men, and I guess you do.

I suppose you do put up with an awful lot from your men, and vice versa. But there's one thing you won't put up with. If he's a simpering coward, you've turned your stomach.

You can't endure a cowardly man, because God says, equip yourself like a man, and one of the first manly virtues is courage. We've got to have this this coming year. Don't look for any place to hide.

I heard a little song on the radio. I listen to the news, and sometimes waiting for the news to come on, I have to listen to a few other things, which I don't particularly like. There's a new one out, have you heard it? A grown man, now mind you, a grown man, I suppose he's grown.

He has a baby, and I suppose he's mature, and he sings a little song, and the song says this, something about when I am tempted to be dishonest or to tell a lie or something, I run right straight to my baby's arms, and the little boy, baby, makes me strong again. Now, I'd just like to see this. In the light of all that's here in the world and the courageous men that have lived and the Saints and markers, I'd just like to see that I wouldn't turn away and be sick.

But I'd just like to see a man who is tempted to do something wrong, breaking down and running home to an 18-month-old baby and crawling right into his arms for refuge. I don't know, does God make a fellow like that? I don't suppose so. But the people that listen to that and like it, what kind of brains have they got, if any? Courage, we thought.

Now, would you want to be married to a simpering coward like that that comes whimpering home to you, licking his wounds? No. We demand that a man has some courage, that he faces up to life and takes it on the nose and comes back for more. That's the kind of man, if I were a woman, I'd want to be married to.

He could be lonely and have a Roman nose and have four-clock shadow and all that, and I could still put up with him. But the moment he came running home to the baby's arms for a place to hide, I'd want rid of him right then. I think that'd be one good excuse for divorce, if there was any excuse.

Get rid of that sissy. Courage, God says, acquit yourself like men. Be strong.

He means you women, too. Strong. Strong in courage.

Be strong. Now, there are two sets of virtues, two sets of human virtues, the masculine and the feminine. He said elsewhere, my son, be strong.

Be strong as a soldier. That's the masculine virtue, as I've said. As a soldier, as a wrestler, as an explorer, as a worker, as a businessman.

Be strong. Moral strength. Then there's the feminine set of virtues, and the odd thing about it is they're supposed to be so tender that actually it takes as much strength to have them as it does to have the other kind.

Listen to this. Here I don't mind telling you is the chapter that disturbs me more than any chapter in the Bible. Not the 23rd of Matthew.

No. Not the 19th of Revelation. No.

The chapter that disturbs me the most is this one. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love, I am become a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy and, you know, all the rest, I am nothing.

Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor and give my body to be burned and have not love, nothing. Charity suffers long in his kind. Love envieth not.

Love vaunteth not itself, never boasts. Love is not puffed up. Love does not behave itself unseemly.

Love seeketh not her own. Love is not easily irritated. Love thinketh no evil.

Love rejoices not in iniquity. Love rejoices in the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

That disturbs me, because without that love you might better never have been born. Yet it is possible to be some kind of Christian, speak with tongues, have the gift of prophecy, understand all mysteries and have all knowledge and be a great Bible teacher and a great preacher and a good pastor and be a member of the board and have a reputation of feeding the poor and giving even the body as a martyr and have not love and still find at the end that it's nothing at all. It takes as much strength to have the feminine virtues of love as it does to have the masculine virtue of courage.

And there both should be present in every Christian. But, you know, God has not commanded impossibilities, and there's where I take comfort. God has never commanded impossibilities.

If he commands me to be strong, strong in courage, strong in love, strong in the masculine virtues, strong in the tender feminine virtues, if he's commanded me, he also has provided fully for this. And I give you three things here. I want to talk about the Holy Spirit to the young people Thursday night, incidentally.

And I'd like all my young people friends to be present Thursday night. Now, two things I want to give you that he can make us strong. One, the Spirit's infilling.

You will have no strength, I have no strength, but the Holy Ghost being God has all the strength there is, and he offers himself to us to fill us as the air offers itself to our lungs. The second is the Lord's indwelling. Once he's in, he dwells within.

And the other is prayer and the scriptures. Now, these can make any man strong, any woman strong, and keep them strong through all the years. And he's provided the Spirit's infilling, the Lord's indwelling, and prayer and the sacred scriptures.

Weakness is not to be excused because God has provided means to make us strong. Be strong, he says. And finally, do all in love.

Love is by all consensus of all saints, the queen of the virtues. Whatever else we have, love is the queen of the virtues. Paul uses a beautiful expression.

I read a book not too long ago by some literary critic on the figures of speech of Shakespeare. He went through all his works to discover the amazing and beautiful and vivid figures of speech. Well, there was another man who knew how to do that, too.

His name was Paul. Paul, in one of his epistles, I'm not sure what occurs in two of them, tells a lot of virtues that we have. And then he says, above these things put on love.

And because it says, above these things put on love, we say, well, Paul meant that love was above all that. But Paul said, over these things. Paul was telling us how to dress.

And he said, now, over all this, as the bridal ground, put on love. Love is the shining raiment of the Saints. No matter what you have underneath, do not dress for the public until you have on the shining raiment of love.

I say love is the queen of the virtues, yet it's the rarest thing in the Church of Christ. And this ought to drive us to our knees in terrible penitence. Nothing concerning this Church, whatever, and this does not refer to this Church, and nothing that ever happened here has led me to say this.

This is something I've gathered out of the past, but I've thought of this. I'd rather fall into the hands of the police than to fall into the hands of carnal Church members. I would.

I'd rather have a big, tough cop lay his hand on my shoulder and say, come with me, than to have a big, tough deacon lay his hand on me and say, come with me. Because I'd get treated all right at the station. And I have been treated marvelously well by the Saints.

God bless them. I guess God knew I was treated. He just let everybody treat me nice.

I haven't been kicked out anywhere, haven't had anything failed, haven't split anything, haven't failed on anything that I know of. So I've never had anybody come to me and say, you've been around long enough. But if they did, I suppose I'd have to endure it.

But I have seen it happen. And I have seen God's people, supposed people, do things so cruel that no cop would do it. No tough cop would do it on the beat.

So I say, love is the queen of the virtues, and yet it is one of the rarest things in the Church of Christ. Oh, sing about it, love divine, all loves excelling. Joy of heaven to earth, come down, fixing us thy humble

dwelling.

Sing about it, close the book, and act contrary to it. For this coming year, my brethren, let's do all in love. It doesn't mean we sit around like a koala bear, you know, pretty little soft thing.

We can be tough, and we have to be strong, and we have to stand for the things of God, and we have to be bold, and we have to have courage, but we can do the whole thing in love. Just as a surgeon, a surgeon that has his amethyst, knocks somebody out, there they lie, white and bleeding evenly, and the surgeon puts up his scalpel and operates. He doesn't do it because he's mad, and he doesn't do it because he doesn't love.

He does it rather because he's got something of humanitarianism in him. I don't think anybody could ever be a doctor that didn't have an amazing amount of love for people in him. Do you think so? It's amazing you've got to love people in order to be a doctor.

Any surgeon who operates does it. He may have a number of motives, but one of his motives has been, or he wouldn't be there, that he likes people and likes to make them well. So a surgeon may cut deep, but he does it in love.

I believe that we as God's people have to be bold and courageous and stand out there and witness for Christ under all circumstances and dare to stand for righteousness no matter what it costs us, but do it in love. If we have to use a scalpel sometimes, do it in love. I've never been able to figure out why somebody doesn't kill me, because I go around these Bible conferences and places, I tear them up one side and down the other, poke fun at their nonsense and their religious claptrap they've dragged in, and instead of their getting angry and chasing me out of the camp, they invite me back for the next year.

God's been very good to me. Maybe it's because I've never been mad at anybody. I may talk awfully tough, but I'm never mad at anybody.

I like people and I like to see them grow in grace, and if I have to use a scalpel occasionally to correct some of their faults, I'll use it, but as soon as they've come out of the ether, they'll see me smiling. I wasn't mad. I just wanted to help them.

So let's vow for this coming year to have the victory by watching, always watching around about us, by standing fast and not allowing anybody to jar our fate, to put ourselves courageously like men and be strong and finally do everything in love. Shall we not vow this year these two vows? There will be pain, but I will never inflict it. I expect to receive pain, but I will never give any.

To quote that great citizen of the world again that I quoted two weeks ago, Lincoln. He was an old man, and a little while before the assassin's bullet brought him down, he said, not to boast, but humbly as he could say humble things, he said, as far as I know, I have never consciously added an unnecessary ounce of suffering to the weight of suffering borne by mankind. It's wonderful to live and die like that.

Never an unnecessary ounce of suffering to the suffering of mankind. God knows they suffer enough. My poor little old mother was so sympathetic, she would always pluck her tongue, pluck, pluck, pluck about this and that.

She lived and died in tender sympathy for her fellow man. I guess I got a little of it. Maybe God added a little, because I find it hard to read the newspapers these days.

The widows, the orphans, the families burned up in little homes. Death comes to a man on the highway and leaves four or five little tiny babies behind, and a wife who's frantic and doesn't know where to look. Suffering, grief, everywhere.

You can be sure, there's a lot of it in Toronto, but would you do this? By God's grace, be sure you don't add anything. Don't add anything. Do all that you do in love.

That'll be a victorious year. God will see that you have it, and you will have it. Amen.

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