

Denying God's Power for Revival and Victory

by Edgar Reich

The sermon emphasizes the importance of surrender and faith in Christ for experiencing a deeper life and victory over sin.

Duration: 27:18

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:21, John 1:12, Hebrews 13:8, 1 John 1:6

Topics: "Victory Over Sin"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Derrick Melton addresses the issue of finding pleasure and satisfaction in worldly things rather than in Christ. He emphasizes that sin gains power through the pleasure it brings, and until we find our ultimate pleasure in Christ, we will continue to be enslaved by sin. The pastor also highlights the danger of listening to false doctrines and warns against hypocrisy, using an example of a pastor who was caught looking at a woman with lust. He concludes by sharing the story of a woman who finally understood the secret to victory in the Christian life, which is allowing Jesus to live through us.

Transcript

The message for tonight is Denying God's Power for Revival and Victory. We continue to look at 2 Chronicles 7, verse 14. If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and heal their land.

In 2 Chronicles 7, verse 14, we are reminded by the Lord to turn from our wicked ways. One of the wicked ways we have as Christians is unbelief, and we deny the power of God in a number of different ways. We don't do it knowingly.

We don't do it on purpose. Tonight, I would like to address the power of God in overcoming sin. Hebrews 12, verse 1 says, Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

After we are born again and become a member of the family of God, we start the Christian life. The part of us that is born again is the inner man, or the inner person, and our eternal soul. The outward man, the old sinful body, the flesh, also remains with us until we physically die or are raptured.

This outward person, the old flesh, can never be saved and can never be improved. We can, with the help of the Lord, put to death the outward person daily, helping us to walk in the spirit that we might not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. There is a daily struggle to die to the old self and to die to any besetting sin.

In the late 1960s, I had accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior, I thought. I had gone forward in the church and said the sinner's prayer. I lived for the next 20 years as a hypocrite, never experiencing a victorious Christian life.

In 1982, I was in my office. I was being tempted terribly with a besetting sin. I prayed, I quoted Scripture, I read Scripture.

I knelt, I prayed again, I quoted Scripture again. I broke out in a terrible sweat and battled. I battled for six hours in that office that I might not sin.

Finally, I said to the Lord, I cannot go on being a hypocrite, Lord. Either you set me free or I cannot believe in you anymore. Lord, heal me from this besetting sin.

I plead, or I cannot follow you anymore. That evening, I sinned again and I left the church. I left the faith.

I had not been taught well. I did not realize I was free already, if indeed I was in the faith. I wanted a Savior that would do what I wanted to do.

I wanted a Savior that was external of me. I had never yet surrendered to the Son of God, asking him to live his life in me. I had never surrendered at all.

I did not understand that Jesus would live in me and exercise his victory if I asked him and surrendered to him. After I left the Lord, I went fully into sin. I left my family.

I left my daughters. I went through a divorce and I was living in sin for 22 years. My daughters prayed for 22 years and never gave up.

God saved me by his mercy. Twenty-two years later, I saw myself in a vision in an open grave six feet down. I was bound by all of my sins.

I was on my way to hell. Had I died, I would be in hell today. The Lord Jesus saved me.

I repented, and I understood that Jesus, the Son of God, had died for me and paid the penalty for all of my sins on that cruel cross. Then he rose from the dead, and because he lives, I can face tomorrow. Because he lives, my sins are gone.

Because he lives, and I surrendered and asked him to come into my life and take control. Praise God. I can now walk as a Christian.

Through the outward person, the old flesh, the world, and Satan, we have temptations. Scripture talks about a besetting sin. Every Christian has such a sin that presents difficulties in our Christian lives.

You might say, well, I'm not sinning. I'm a good Christian. Perhaps your besetting sin is less noticeable.

Perhaps your sin is unbelief. Or not loving enough. Perhaps it is being lukewarm.

Maybe you have lost your first love for Jesus. Maybe you have lost your first love for your spouse. Maybe you're having lusts.

Maybe you want to be recognized and famous. Being jealous or unforgiving. Perhaps you are a Christian who is proud of being a Christian.

You feel you are better than others. Perhaps you have anger. Perhaps you over control your family.

Perhaps you're not able to control your eating. Perhaps you insist on being right at everything. It might be video games or texting or your telephone and friends or the internet.

Perhaps your mercy has been replaced with a hardened heart. You're unforgiving and judgmental. Perhaps you have no more tears for the poor, for the persecuted, for the destitute, for the lost, for your neighbors, or for the unborn being killed.

Perhaps you take in pleasures apart from Jesus to relax. Maybe you must have television to relax. Maybe you need as the world turns.

Or maybe you have to watch Desperate Housewives. If you're a man, maybe you need to watch James Bond movies or sports to relax. Says Pastor Derek Melton, The power of sin is fueled by its pleasure.

Until Christ is the source of our pleasure, our addiction to sin will only surge. Perhaps you're listening to false doctrines. The pastor was standing next to me looking at a woman with lust.

He was surveying her top to bottom. When we walked on, I said to him, Friend, should you be doing this? Were you not looking at her with lust? I believe you're married, and even as a single man, you should not be doing this. He started laughing, saying, Oh, yes, I looked at her with lust, but don't you know yet? We are under grace.

Jesus has forgiven me already. God has forgiven me already. Are you still such an old stickler for the law? Beloved sisters and brothers, These are deceptions by a new doctrine from hell.

They are from Satan. Jesus had made it clear in Matthew 5 that it is a sin to look at a woman with lust. By just looking and thinking about it, that pastor had committed adultery.

God says the world and the unbelievers curse him when they see Christians sinning. Jesus told five of the seven churches in the book of Revelation that they needed to repent. Jesus says he will spit us out of his mouth if we are lukewarm.

First John 1-6 says, If we say we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. Jesus said in Matthew 7-21, Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father in heaven. So what did I do wrong that day in my office when I battled evil and temptations for six hours? I did not have Jesus living in me.

I had not surrendered all. I probably was not saved. I now believe repentance is necessary prior to accepting God's gift of salvation.

I had not understood that Jesus had not only set us free from the penalty of sin, but Jesus also sets us free from the power of sin. I was free and did not know it. I was denying the power of Jesus who has won the victory.

I was denying the power of God, for Jesus also is God. Scripture says in 1 Corinthians 15-57, But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. No, the victory is not through the I. The victory is through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians 2-20 says, I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2-20 says, But Christ liveth in me. 2 Corinthians 13-5 says, Examine yourself as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.

Do you not know yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you unless indeed you are disqualified? So here again this verse says, Do you not know yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you? Hebrews 13-5 says, Let your conduct be without covetousness. Be content with such things as you have. For he himself has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you.

That is Jesus who said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. Jesus is with us and in us. In John 17-23, Jesus said, I in them.

In Matthew 28-20, Jesus had said, And lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the age. In John 14-20, Jesus had said, And you in me, and I in you. He is in you, dear sister, dear brother.

In Mark 16-19, Scripture says, So then after the Lord had spoken to them, he was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. But then in Mark 16-20, the next verse it says, And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through accompanied signs. Jesus was both in heaven and with his disciples on earth, confirming the word through signs.

These verses tell us that Jesus lives in us. He wants to live his life through us. Scripture also says, Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

God as the triune God is present everywhere all the time. Likewise, Jesus is God and he is in heaven, but also at the same time he is in us, in true Christians here on earth. He said, I will never leave you nor forsake you.

Scripture says, Do you not know yourself that Jesus Christ is in you? That is true if you are a true Christian. As I wrestled with these truths, I read testimonies of others who had experienced victory, a deeper life, an exchange life. Here's part of Rosalind Goforth's testimony from China on how she found victory in Jesus.

She said in her writings, One day I can never forget it. As I sat inside the house in China by a paper window at dusk, two Chinese Christian women sat down on the other side. They began talking about me and I listened.

One said, Yes, she is a hard worker, a zealous preacher, and yes, she dearly loves us. But oh, what a temper she has, if she would only live more the way she preaches. I saw then how useless, how worse than useless it was for me to come to China to preach Christ and not to live Christ.

Later she had to return to the USA for a while, and she heard a preacher in Niagara on the lake. He asked, Is your Christian life like this? Sometimes on the mountaintop with visions of God, then again would come

the sagging and dimming of visions, coldness, discouragement, and perhaps definite disobedience in the time of downgrade experience. Then perhaps sorrow or even some special mercy would bring the wanderer back to the Lord.

The leader then went on to say that the life which he had described was not the life God planned or wished for his children. He described the higher life of peace and rest in the Lord, of power, of freedom from struggle, worry, and care. Early the next morning, soon after daybreak, went on her knees carefully and prayerfully, went over the passages on the victorious life that were given in a little yellow flyer the preacher distributed.

She did what she was asked to do. She quietly but definitely accepted Christ as her Savior from the power of sin, as she had so long before accepted him as her Savior from the penalty of sin. The day after she says, at last, she realized that Jesus Christ was actually and literally within her.

She said, Oh, how blind she had been. She saw, at last, the secret of victory. It was simply Jesus Christ himself.

Jesus' life lived out in the believer is the victory. She related how the proof of Christ and its victory were evident in her life after that. Another testimony, this one from John Bunyan.

John Bunyan found victory, which is described in his book, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. One day, a voice spoke to John Bunyan from heaven, saying, Thy righteousness is in heaven. He said, I thought with awe.

I saw with the eyes of my soul. Jesus Christ at God's right hand, there I say, was my righteousness. So, whatever I was or whatever I was doing, God could not say of me, he wants my righteousness.

For that was just before him. I also saw, moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my righteousness worse. For my righteousness was Jesus Christ himself.

The same yesterday, today, and forever. Hebrews 13, 8 says, He then relates what happened. Now did my chains fall off, my legs indeed.

I was loosed from my afflictions and irons. Charles Finney, in his sermon on how to overcome sin, relates that we cannot control our desires by force of resolution. He says, all such efforts to overcome sin are utterly futile and as unscriptural as they are futile.

The Bible expressly teaches us that sin is overcome by faith in Christ. He's made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. He is the way, the truth, and the life.

Christians are said to purify their hearts by faith, as said in Acts 59. And in Acts 26, 18, it is affirmed that the saints are sanctified by faith in Christ. In Romans 9, 31, 32, it is affirmed that the Jews attained not unto righteousness, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.

The doctrine of the Bible is that Christ saves his people from sin through faith, that Christ's spirit is received by faith to dwell in the heart. Later on, he wrote, Every victory over sin is by faith in Christ. And whenever the mind is diverted from Christ by resolving and fighting against sin, whether we are aware of it or not, we are acting in our own strength.

Rejecting the help of Christ is under specious delusion. Nothing but the life and the energy of the spirit of Christ within us can save us from sin. How deeply rooted in the heart of man is self-righteousness and self-dependence, so deeply that one of the hardest lessons for the human heart to learn is to renounce self-dependence and trust wholly in Christ.

We open the door to Christ by implicit trust. Hudson Taylor in *The Exchanged Life* wrote, As I thought of the vine and the branches, what light the blessed spirit poured directly into my soul. I saw not only that Jesus will never leave me, but that I am a member of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

The vine is not the root merely, but all roots, stem, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers, and fruit. And Jesus is not that alone. He is soil and sunshine, air and showers, and ten thousand times more than we have ever dreamed, wished for, or needed.

Oh, the joy of seeing this truth. It is a wonderful thing to be really one with a risen and exalted Savior, to be a member of Christ. The sweetest part is the rest which full identification with Christ brings.

I am no longer anxious about anything as I realize this, for he I know is able to carry out his will, and his will is mine. It makes no matter where he places me or how. Beloved sisters and brothers, I once ran a major corporation and I thought I could do anything.

I was proud, self-conceited, and I was deceived by Satan. His lie was victory is a behavior and you can do it. I can do it.

I can work it out with self-help. I can rely on myself. I can work it out with Scripture, and then if it doesn't work, I can work it out with Christ's help.

I worked very hard and consistently shouted for Christ's help. There was no victory because my old self ruled. I had to fully surrender to Jesus.

The truth is that the victory is Jesus Christ as a person in me who will change my behavior and give the victory. Christ in me is the hope of glory. It must be his life.

It must be my death. It must be his victory. It must be my surrender.

It must be his will. It must be my obedience. It must be his power.

It must be my dependence. It must be his love. It must be my availability.

I worked very hard to be Christ-like. Now Jesus lives in me and lives his life through me. I close with this short story.

I grew up as a refugee in a hayloft on a farm in Germany. There were chickens on the farm that had many little chickens. My joy as a child was to come near the mother hen and all the little chickens around her.

Then I stomped my foot in the dust. I watched in amazement how the mother hen opened up her wings and all the little chickens ran for their lives to take refuge under her wings to find security and safety. Psalm 91.4 says in part, He shall cover you with his feathers and under his wings you shall take refuge.

When Satan, the world, and my old flesh bring temptations and sin, I am one of the little chickens now running to the wings of my Savior. I no longer battle. The battle is his.

Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Under his wings I find refuge. To be able to come to this point, I had to confess and repent to my Lord that I had used my power to try to overcome sin and I had denied his power.

I opened the door of my heart and invited Jesus in. I invited Jesus to stay in me and exercise his victory. I surrendered all.

I had to believe by faith that Jesus would live in me and exercise his victory. I have to walk in full dependence and reliance upon Jesus daily. I daily die to self-understanding.

I am helpless without him. 1 Corinthians 15:57 says, But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us pray.

Father, I come to you in Jesus' name. Thank you for having had mercy on me, Lord. I confess that as a human being and without the Lord Jesus indwelling me, I was powerless.

I cannot resist with the old self, the passions of the flesh, the pleasures of the world, and the lies and devices of Satan. Lord, when someone puts me down, when anger comes, when I'm lonely, when someone does not acknowledge me or my opinions, when I'm not recognized, when I'm not appreciated, I'm so easily hurt, and then temptation comes, sin comes knocking on the door to try to make me feel better. Father, I thank you for sending your Son that we might have life without these hurts and with safety from such sins and have life more abundantly.

Your Son Jesus said to me, Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and dine with him and he with me. Lord, I have asked your Son to come into me.

Father, I opened the door wide and welcomed him. I believe by faith that Jesus has come into me. My righteousness is only through your Son.

Forgive me for denying the power of your Son. Forgive me for denying your power, the power of God. I am no longer anxious about anything.

As I realize this, your Son is able to keep me from falling. He's able to carry out your will, and your will is my will. It makes no matter where you place me now or where I will go in the future.

Please make fountains of living waters flow from me. Please start revival in me. I ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen and amen.

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