

Standing in the Victory

by Hoseah Wu

Hoseah Wu's sermon emphasizes the importance of standing firm in faith and community during spiritual battles, highlighting the victory found in Christ.

Duration: 45:20

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 10:3

Topics: "Victory"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of learning from negative experiences in order to understand what is right. He shares an example from his time as a student teacher, where his supervisor would play a correct tune and then intentionally provide incorrect notation to test the student's ability to recognize the mistake. The speaker then applies this concept to the challenges faced in South Jersey, where their Bible study time had become stagnant and lacking in excitement. However, through God's sovereignty, a person was sent to challenge them and bring about a positive change. The speaker emphasizes the importance of not becoming complacent in our meetings and encourages a deeper commitment to prayer and study of the Word.

Transcript

It is a joy to be here in Richmond with Bodmin Sisters, when we meet together in the presence of the Lord, indeed we are at home with each other. When Stu was sharing that brief word at the opening time, it was so wonderful, it was so precious, and I thought, well, that short words, really, that's all we need for today. There's no further sharing from my part, and if Stu has part two of that, that he can continue, I think he should continue.

But we are thankful to the Lord to be here together this morning. What I would like to share this morning is just a few thoughts about what the Lord's been doing in our fellowship in South Jersey. The Lord in recent months has brought us into some real intense spiritual conflict.

Conflict that we never faced before, and it's wonderful to see how the Lord brought us through. So I also want to share a little bit what we went through this last few months with Bodmin Sisters in Richmond. Maybe we can be mutually encouraged, and to praise on, and to go on with the Lord.

So shall we turn to God's words, and read a few portions. Let's first turn to 2 Corinthians 10. Pause, if it's so, to 2 Corinthians 10.

We'll read just two verses, verse 3 and verse 4. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not walk according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God for the pulling down of strongholds, casting down arguments in every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Verse 3, Paul says that even though we walk in the flesh, we live in this physical body.

In Phillip's translation he says even though we live a normal human life, but when it comes to warfare, we do not fight normal way. That's man's way. So Paul says that our weapons are not carnal.

That means our weapons are spiritual, mighty in God for the pulling down of strongholds. Shall we turn to Ephesians 6, verse 10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Shall we turn to two short passages in 1 John, 1 John chapter 4, verse 4. You are of God, living and living children, and have overcome them, because he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

And chapter 5 of the first epistle of John, verse 4 and verse 5. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world, and this is the victory that has overcome the world, our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. And just one verse from John 16, the Gospel of John 16, the very last verse, verse 33.

Gospel of John 16, verse 33. These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace, in the world you will have tribulation. And take note of the last phrase, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world. Now brothers and sisters, God's word tells us, what is real is spiritual. What is spiritual is real.

Paul says to us, what is visible are but temporal. The invisible are the real. This morning when we worship, we say that God we don't see, we love, is very real to us, through the eyes of faith.

We know he is with us. We don't see, yet it's real. He is now God real to us.

He is real to us. We can love him, we can worship him. So through the scripture, we notice one thing.

What is unseen is real. What we can see, we can feel is very deceptive, unreliable. For example, our new birth in John 3, we are all born of the spirit.

People can't see it, we can't see it, but we know it's real. From your fellowship we know we are all born of the spirit. We are certain.

We don't see, but it's very real. John 6, the Lord say, it's the spirit that gives life, that we know our life is in the spirit. We are quickened by the Holy Spirit, we are alive before God, and we know it's real.

Externally, when you walk down the street in Richmond, we are no different from the rest of the people of the world, but there is something real in us. We have the love of God. They don't see, but we know it's real.

And the Lord said, the word I speak to you, it is spirit, it is life. And for instance, this book to us is a different book altogether from the unregenerated. When we read this book, it's God's word to us.

It's God's breath. When we read this, we touch life, we touch spirit. So we have a spiritual life, cannot be seen, it's very real.

And we have spiritual food, we partake, which is just as real, because the light is Christ, the food is also Christ. People cannot see, it's very real. We walk by the spirit, we do not walk according to the flesh.

Our whole life is governed by a new law, a spiritual law, the law of life of the spirit in Christ Jesus. Everything we do, we exist spiritually, because it's real. Individually as well as corporately.

For example, we meet together, we are the spiritual house. Indwell by God, by the Holy Spirit. Together we are the holy priesthood.

We can offer sacrifices acceptable to God in Christ Jesus. You know, when we meet this way, people wonder what we're doing here. They couldn't figure us out.

We are a mystery to the world. And yet what we do is 100% real, because in the spirit. It's real.

On the other side, the spirit of this world, the evil spirit, is also just as real. So Paul said that when we fight this spiritual warfare, it is not flesh and blood. Our adversary has no flesh for us to wound.

Our adversary has no blood for us to spill. I'm seeing it as very real. When we meet people that live an unclean life, we know behind that person there's an unclean spirit.

There's something behind it. What we see is simply a manifestation of the unseen. Rebellion is a spirit.

Pride is a spirit. Lying is a spirit. The spirit of Antichrist is everywhere.

Apostle John warned us in his days. There is a spirit in this world that will discredit the work and the person of the Lord Jesus. That is everywhere.

That is the spirit of Antichrist. And when Paul wrote his Epistle to the Ephesians, he shared his whole heart. He shared what was in his heart.

God's eternal purpose. The greatness of Christ. The unsearchable riches of Christ.

And how church fits in, into God's purpose. And Paul at the end of the Epistle, he said, be prepared. Wherever there's a group of people that will take the ground of Jesus Christ, and take that ground for the Lord Jesus, on this earth, Paul said, you'll be assaulted.

You'll be attacked. And Paul said, therefore, be strong in the Lord, in the power of his might. And put on the whole armor, so that you can stand.

Now, brothers and sisters, wherever the Lord is building his church, wherever two or three that are gathered together, in the name of our risen Lord, and determined in their heart to give that place of preeminence to God's Son. To be built up together, and to take that ground of the Epistle to the Lord Jesus. You know, not just a loose fellowship here and there, but we'll take the ground of the Lord Jesus, his headship.

Immediately, that signals the attack of the enemy. Because Satan knows that the spiritual church, the true church, the invisible church, the true spiritual church, exists for the bringing in of God's King. For the purpose of displaying God's King in their midst.

For the purpose of bringing everything that's due to him, that's rightful he is, at his feet. That speaks for the undoing of the adversary. And he will not stand for that.

He has lost his ground. And he wants to regain that ground in us. And that's why Paul says, stand.

Stand on your ground. You don't have to look for fights. Fights will come to you.

And when it comes, Paul says, stand and take your ground. And after you've won the victory, he says, you still take your ground and stand still. And we stand.

Brothers and sisters, if we have something here that's of the Lord himself, you don't need to go out and look for fights. Fights will come to you. And the word of the Lord to us is, take that stand.

Take that ground for the Lord. And defend it. And won the victory.

And after you've won the victory, you still hold on to that ground. You know the Lord Jesus on Matthew 16, he said, I will build my church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. When the Lord is building his church, when we are being built together as living stones by the Holy Spirit, brothers and sisters, you can be sure, the threat of death is always there.

The power of darkness is always there. But thank God, his life overcomes death. And the light that we receive, his light, and that light will swallow up, will overcome the darkness.

So brothers and sisters, the death is always, the threat of death is always there. But thank God, his life overcomes death. The power of darkness is always there.

But light overcomes darkness. Darkness cannot overcome light. And death cannot overcome his life.

This is the experience the Lord allows us to go through in recent months in South Jersey. Because it's so easy to take our meetings casually. You know, we are so used to meeting on the Lord's Day, so we just come.

That's not a threat to the enemy. Our prayer meeting, because Wednesday, we just come casually. We are all prepared to fight.

Well, you know, I mean, the devil can relax, he can take his nap. When we come to our Bible study, we all come casually. We come casually, because the Lord really blessed us, you know, for so long, for so good, so we are just so used to, become so routine.

That's our great danger. We are just like Brother Johanna said, we are just programmed. Somehow on the Lord's Day, automatically we just come.

On Wednesday, automatically we come, without knowing why we are here. And the Lord sometimes, in his gracious way, he uses something to awaken us. And the way the Lord does is so different from what we expect.

He will send something, someone, that is totally beyond our expectation to wake us up and to stir us up. And that means, that way the Lord is always using our adversary to do it. You see, the enemy is also a created being.

And whatever he is doing to us, you know, God is using that for our good. We need to see that. We need to see that.

That's one of the reasons why sometimes it's hard for us to understand why it took 40 years for the Israelites to get out, when they came out of Egypt, why it took them 40 years to go into Canaan. There is a shorter way. You know, if you look at the map, they could have gone into Canaan 10 days, 11 days, very direct, very direct.

But somehow it took them 40 years. And one generation did not enter into. They perished in the wilderness.

But the Lord said he was using those 40 years to what? To test them, to try them, to prove them. So brother and sister, the bad times we go through are actually wonderful times for the Holy Spirit, in depositing something of Christ into us, educating us, training us, maturing us spiritually. Those he loved, he tested, he disobeyed.

So in South Jersey we went through and we are still going through some very tough times. But it's easy to see how the Lord turns things around for good. I'll just give you a few practical, tangible examples of the things we went through.

First is in our Bible study time. For several, how shall I put it, for many months, our Bible study time seems to be on an even key. Not much excitement.

You know, I mean, it's hard. No waves. Everybody came more or less unprepared.

And just share what they can at that moment, without any preparation. And the brother who is responsible more or less fit into the usual situation because there's nothing challenging. There's nothing that would upset anybody that we had to really do something.

But in God's sovereignty and his love, he sent a person to us. Every time he opened his mouth, it brings death. The spirit is very argumentative.

It's always challenging. So we detect that there is a spirit of anti-Christ there. What do you do? One brother says, if you don't take the ground of Christ, take that ground, take that stand, take that ground, you will not discern the spirit of the adversary.

It's when you take that ground for the Lord Jesus, then you discern. So a lot of brothers, they don't discern that spirit. Because they do not take that ground for the Lord, for the attention of the Lord.

So therefore they do not have that discernment. But few of us who really take the ground for the Lord, in that locality, we discern there's something wrong with this person. There's something wrong in that spirit.

It's always challenging. And the Bible is challenging the headship of the Lord. It was very obvious.

So for the first few months, the brother who is responsible for that time and his wife, they both came to me. He said, Brother Jose, I don't see how we can do with this. I don't see how my husband can take it

anymore.

Just can't see how he can take it anymore. But you know the amazing thing is that every time he came to me, his head shaking, saying no, no, no, despair, discourage. But somehow he kept sticking into this thing.

He cannot give it up. And you know, the more the challenge, the commitment of this brother and his wife, how shall I put it, there was more commitment to the things of the Lord than ever because of the challenge of the adversary. So their prayer time becomes a real time of spiritual battle.

A time to exercise their faith. A time to really claim the victory that's ours in Christ Jesus. And the Bible becomes a living book.

Becomes a life source to them individually as well when at last they come to face God and sisters. You know, I tell you, it's amazing how this sister and her husband, they both grow in the Lord in the last few months. When things look so dark, when life is threatened, the Lord's light came through and his light came through.

And it's very comforting to read Boris Spock's book. He says it's when Solomon's throne was challenged by Adonijah. When that throne was challenged, then Solomon was brought into view.

So the fellowship in South Jersey through this difficult time we face, we have a deeper appreciation of who the Lord Jesus Christ really is. We come to realize how we have to hold on to the centrality of Christ. There's a deeper appreciation of who he is and his work.

So we thank God for the adversary. What is he trying to do? He means evil, but God means good. Because our God is good.

And more than that, at that moment when our brother and sister, they were discouraged and the Lord became more real. The words is now alive. It's really living.

It's powerful. And also the Lord brought in spiritual reinforcement through other brothers and sisters. At this very moment, the Lord brought in two families to us.

And these two families, they love the Lord. They're very pure. They just love the Lord.

And so when they came, even though initially they did not contribute much in the Bible study, but just their presence there, the Lord was there in a fuller way, in a bigger measure. And they overcame because of life, because of light. So the Lord knows what it is.

Isn't that in our experience, when you are down, down, down, somehow a brother or sister calls you, a word comes to you, something happens, that life came, reinforced, spiritual reinforcement reinforced you, and to make you stand firm in the Lord. So we experience, not only inwardly we get strengthened, but the Lord also strengthened us with our brothers and sisters. And it's so beautiful.

Now the other thing that we encounter at difficult times is our prayer time. The Lord really teaches us how to pray. In recent months, some of you call it executive prayer, praying with authority.

So for many of us, we had to pray for our prayer time. We had to take that prayer time by faith for God's purpose, for God's will to be done. Before we come just to pray, but now we have to pray for our prayer

time.

By faith we take the time for the Lord, because the presence of this person many times brought our prayer to a very low level. And sometimes during our prayer time we had to, by faith, recover that link with the throne. And the spirit that this person brought to the prayer meeting is so obvious, because even our brother Christian came from Taiwan.

First evening he was with our prayer time. He said, hey, that prayer from that person sounds very strange. He said, you are all singing one key, key of C, key of Christ.

And then all of a sudden he sang a different tune on a different key. Doesn't fit in? And all the visitors came to South Jersey, they all noticed something. It's not quite normal with this person.

Also in our prayer time we really face some real challenge. So we need to pray the Lord will really come through, and we had to pray for our prayer time. And brothers and sisters, what we learn is that if we bring Christ with us, and bring his life, we come with a purpose, and open our heart to the Lord.

And when we put Christ in the center, he is above all our needs. You know brothers, when we pray that way, this person cannot enter into our prayer. Life swallows death.

Light swallows up darkness. Brothers and sisters, the Lord allows some of these negative things to teach us the positive things. When I was teaching school, my student teaching in Minnesota, my supervisor was writing a thesis on learning, how we learn.

He said sometimes to learn what is right, we have to learn what is wrong first. So he will play a tune to the student, the right tune. And then he will ask the student to play that, he will play a tune on a record or on a tape the right way, the right tune.

Then the notation in front of the student for him to play the instrument, the notes will start off wrong, incorrect. And it's an amazing thing though, the student noticed right away, when he plays something wrong, it's not in line with what he heard, he knew right away. So the Lord oftentimes has to teach us the wrong things to appreciate the right thing, and to know the right thing.

And we have a deep appreciation of our prayer time. It becomes more and more meaningful, because it really didn't challenge, we had to take it back to the Lord, and become a very precious time for us. And we thank the Lord for the reinforcement he brought to us through these two new families.

Since they came to our fellowship, they've been with us every prayer time. So we learn, brothers and sisters, individually we cannot cope with the adversary. This matter of spiritual warfare is a corporate matter.

We learn to need to stand together. We need our brothers and sisters, we need them. Our worship time, it's oftentimes also a battle.

But we thank the Lord for hearts that really loved him, and want to worship him. We thank the Lord not only for the two families he brought to us, we also from Lord's Day to Lord's Day, we have a group of Chinese brothers and sisters visiting us from Delaware. And when they came, they brought the Lord to us.

And that strengthens our worship time. So every worship time, if the Lord is sinful, if worship is what we are here for, brothers and sisters, we experience the victory. There is no disruption.

There was a tremendous open heaven for us. There's a flow of praise and worship. We are very thankful.

So brothers and sisters, if the Lord has something here that's of himself, if he has something, I'm sure he does, we will face tough times together. But brothers and sisters, those tough times are for our good. They are for our spiritual education.

They are for our spiritual discipline. God is training us. He's maturing us.

Now let me just share a couple of words to encourage our hearts. You know what the end of his life, the second thing he said, is he fought the great battle of faith. To fight this spiritual battle, brothers and sisters, we need to have an adequate comprehension of what the Lord has accomplished for us on the cross Calvary.

Otherwise there's no ground, no way we can fight. That's absolutely essential. Because our battle is not physical, with flesh and blood, it's spiritual.

It's in the unseen. So it's a battle of faith. We have brethren in our fellowship.

When they look at the condition of our country, moral, economic, educational, they all become very depressed. I don't know about you. Is there hope in this world? Is there hope in our educational system? Is there hope in our economic system? In our governmental system? Where lies our hope? Now in a sense, I don't expect any good out of this world.

So when there's no good, I'm not disappointed. But if you expect something good out of this world system and you don't get it, you'll be disappointed. Our hope is in the Lord.

Our hope is a person. And this person that we hope for, he has done it all. So the ground for victory, brothers and sisters, we have to see, we have to have adequate understanding, comprehension of what the Lord Jesus has done for us on the cross Calvary.

That's absolutely essential. Not only save our souls and forgive our sins. Brothers and sisters, on the cross Calvary, the Lord Jesus, he has won for us a total and decisive victory over our adversaries.

Sin, self, world and Satan, he won a total victory. And Paul stood on that ground. He said, I fought that faith to the end.

And he knew something of the victory of the Lord Jesus. We need to see that. We need spiritually to see that.

That's why Paul, when he wrote the sixth chapter of Ephesians, he said, he talked about we have to be strong in the Lord, in the might of his power. We have to put on the armour, the whole armour, and put it on. And later on he said we can take it up and use it.

But you know, in verse 12 he said, I'll wrestle, we'll wrestle, not against the flesh blood, but against principalities, against power, against the rulers of this age. One brother said, they are not ordinary demons. They are the whos and whos of the underworld.

You and I, we have no way to cope with those principalities and power, but only in Christ Jesus. That's why Paul said, put on, put on Christ, put on the armour, full armour. But the interesting part when it comes to 12 verses of that chapter is that we wrestle.

You see, when you think about armour, it's a military term. You have all the armaments, you have all the shield, the sword, that's military. But when it comes to actually engaging in spiritual warfare, Paul said, it's wrestling.

It becomes a sport. Two people, hand in hand, wrestle each other. Paul said, that's what we're engaging.

Now when you wrestle with somebody, your intention is not to kill that person, because it's not warfare, it's a sport. The way you win in the wrestle is to make sure he falls down and you get on top of him, and that's it. He said, you won.

Isn't that the wrestle? You know, when they get down and say, one, two, three, that's it, you win. That's what Paul means. Let me go back just to what I just shared about the victory the Lord Jesus won for us on Calvary.

That was totally decisive, but it's spiritual. Because our adversary is spiritual. But brother and sister, take heart, the day will come, what is invisible will be visible when he comes.

He will display his total victory one day when he comes. But today is spiritual, invisible. And today Paul said that our wrestling is, in a sense, is a hand-to-hand struggle.

And Paul is saying that you are not going to slay your enemy. Your option is not to kill him, because God is using your enemy to get you stronger and stronger. But get him down and sit on top of him.

That's what you do. That's what we do individually, that's what we do as a church. You know, bother me in his book on the map, he said, you know, people wonder why the Lord allows devils to be around.

I mean, he wouldn't take care of him just like that if the Lord wants to. But he allows him so that we can experience the victories that are ours in Christ Jesus. Otherwise, how can we experience victory without engaging in some kind of fight? And so brother and sister, our wrestling is not to kill our adversary, but to sit on top of him.

And that is the battle of faith. The Lord Jesus on the cross has already thrown him down to the ground, and he's telling the church, he said, sit on top of him. That's your testimony.

You know, when we say, he's Lord, what does it mean? It means he's on top of the situation. That's what it means. We cannot say he's Lord and then somehow we feel we're under something.

That's not only to him. It's a battle of faith. He's Lord, means he's on top of the situation.

You know, the formation of the man-child we find in Revelation 12. It's very interesting. It's when the red dragon is standing in front of the woman.

Then we notice there's a man-child in that woman being formed. I take great comfort in reading this. It's when we face that dragon.

Overcomers are formed in the church to overcome the adversary. And later on in that chapter it says, they overcame him because of the testimony of their word. What is the testimony of their word? It's that Jesus Christ is Lord.

He's on top of the situation. That should be the correction of our individual life as well as the church. Last night when we were sitting and just had a cup of tea and Percy told me that two of our sisters went to visit the Mike Manns and Carol Manns.

I was told, if I'm not correct please correct me. I was told that when the naval officer came to give the news about the death of our young brother, the thought was that he died accidentally. And I was told that our brother invited the naval officer to come in and to pray.

And I think our brother assured that Chip did not die accidentally. The Lord knows about it. He knew about it.

Now brother and sister, that's on top of the situation. Nothing can be real when death is threatened and something is accidental. No, the Lord knows about it.

All in his good hand. Now I know some of you are facing job situation, employment situation. Brothers and sisters, who is in charge of our life? When I was teaching in school, I tried to stay neutral because I don't want to get involved with politics and all kinds of things.

And every few years they have to sign renew your contract and always fight for more pay. Am I more pay? And when it comes to that, when they come to me and ask me to vote, I always try to be neutral. Not to discourage, not to vote, but I try to say, well if you feel you have to vote, I'm okay.

And they couldn't understand. Because I feel that my livelihood is not in the hand of the Board of Education. They do not determine how I live.

But thank God we belong to him. And he is the Lord of all. And brothers and sisters, whatever you face, our testimony is another that he is Lord.

Because he is on top of every situation. And the Lord at the end of chapter 16 of John, he said, in the world you have tribulation, but in me you have peace. And he said, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

Because of God, they overcome the world. How they overcome? By faith. By that faith.

Faith that Jesus Christ is what? Lord of all. That gets us through. And as we approach the end time, brothers and sisters, it will get darker and darker.

Our conflicts will get more intense. But should we be fearful? No. As we go into this final age, getting darker and darker, but I tell you what, those who are watchful, you will see the morning sun, the morning star rises on the door.

That's our hope. And may the Lord help us. Brothers and sisters, we are in this thing together.

I always thank the Lord for the brothers and sisters in Richmond and how you have supported us in South Jersey all this year in prayer. And now Harvey's Theatre retreat, Northeast Retreat, how we are really a few, one. And brothers and sisters, we are in this struggle together.

What you face, we all face together. And we need to be faithful. We need to fight this battle of faith.

Whatever we face, brothers and sisters, our declaration must be loud and clear that Jesus Christ is what? Lord. To the glory of God. When that is declared and believed, then God is indeed what? Glorified.

So may the Lord help us. Shall we bow our heads? Lord, we confess we are people of little faith, but you are our great God. We worship you.

We just commit these feeble words into our hands, that the Holy Spirit will make it real in our hearts, in our lives. Lord, that our confession before ever serve, even within ourselves, that our Lord Jesus Christ is Lord of all. And he is our Lord.

And he is the head of the church. He is in control. We worship you.

We pray again for this afternoon, the memorial service. We just look to you that you will get glory. You will get what you are after.

And Lord, we just commit our time to you this afternoon. Use our brother to speak that word from the throne. The word of the kingdom of the gospel.

Lord, to deliver men and women from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of your beloved son, the Lord Jesus. And we worship you for what you will do this afternoon. We give praise and give glory to you.

We ask an appreciation for Lord Jesus.

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