

Divine Surgery

by Luis Palau

The normal Christian life is a life of triumph, victory, and overflowing joy, but it requires us to be ruthless with the flesh and bring our lives under the control of the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 30:47

Scripture: Galatians 5:24

Topics: "Personal Revival", "Spiritual Sanctification"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living a victorious, holy, and Spirit-filled Christian life, addressing the reasons why many Christians may not be experiencing the fullness of God. It highlights the need for personal revival through confession, forsaking sin, and crucifying the flesh, especially in areas like bitterness, gossip, unbelief, and sexuality. The speaker urges individuals to take a serious and honest approach in dealing with sin, seeking mercy and cleansing from God to walk in triumph and holiness.

Transcript

Jesus is alive. If we have eternal life, if we're indwelt by God, why is it that so many who claim to be Christians aren't enjoying it to the hilt? There's got to be a reason. When my wife came down with cancer six and a half years ago, I remember when the doctor said, okay, we're going to come back in five days.

And all those five days we prayed, we wondered, but we had high hopes that it would be a benign tumor. When we went to the doctor's office, we realized that it wasn't benign the moment he walked into the room. He was not smiling.

He was not flippant. He was very solemn with his file. He put it on the desk.

He shuffled it. And we knew right away, this is not going to be fun. And sure enough, he said, Thursday it was, Sunday to the hospital, Monday morning, surgery.

Immediately we called the elders of the church. Please come over. Anoint her with oil, like James says.

Lay hands. Pray. Let's confess if there's anything that we need to confess.

Not that we knew of anything, but the scripture says that. And then she went under the knife. And none of it pleasant, none of it agreeable, but the Lord chose to heal her.

And six and a half years later, there she is traveling around more than ever. I got to hold her back. She wants to hit the road.

Yes, I gave her a bad example, you know, and she's as healthy as could be, more powerful spiritually than she'd ever been. But she went under the knife and that was no fun. Tonight, when you go home, you may not feel like you like me very much, maybe.

Because I don't like Luis. He talks about nasty stuff. But before you can be healed, the cancer has to be zipped out.

Amen? It has to be. Without that surgery, there will never be total spiritual healing and the total fullness of the Holy Spirit. The first step towards revival is a great sense of brokenness, confession, sometimes tears, sometimes divine surgery.

And surgery is never fun. Psalm 23, 5. You remember what it says? You anoint my head with oil, my cup runneth over. The old King James.

Would you like to say it out loud with me? Yes? I didn't plan to do this, but I think it might be nice. Okay? You anoint. You anoint my head with oil, my cup runneth over.

Let's say it again. You anoint my head with oil, my cup runneth over. Let me ask each one of you solemnly.

Is your cup running over tonight? Has it been running over in the last week? Now, it doesn't mean that there aren't moments when we all grieve the Spirit. No, no, no. Don't go around beating your breasts in that sense.

But just normally, are you so anointed? Because you know when it says, you anoint my head with oil, you know who he's talking about, right? The Holy Spirit. You anoint my head with oil, my cup runneth over. That is the normal Christian life.

So the first thing that the Lord has laid on my heart to remind you, the Christian life is first of all, a life that is triumphant and victorious and an overflowing life. Triumphant, victorious, overflowing. What does it say? You anoint my head with oil, my cup runneth over.

Brothers and sisters, this is the normal expectation of a Christian. This is what we all know in our hearts that we should be like, that we are victorious. Not perfect, but victorious.

Now, we all have our different temperaments. Yes, some are melancholic, some are choleric, some are sanguine, some are whatever. Yes, we have our temperaments.

But that doesn't mean that we can therefore have excuses for not being victorious, Spirit-filled, and joyful Christians. The Scripture says in 2 Corinthians 2.14 like this, Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Him everywhere. Listen to that.

Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph. Now, triumph and victory speak of warfare. The fact that a Christian is led by the Holy Spirit in victory doesn't mean that he has it easy.

When the Scripture says, Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph, in triumph over what? Obviously, there's some enemy out there that we are fighting against, and warfare is never pleasant. Now you say, what are you talking about? Where's the war? First of all, we have victory over the world. Or do we? We'll analyze it in a minute.

The world, the Bible says, love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. There's war between the Christian and the world's lifestyle, and we've got to overcome.

And by the power of Jesus, we can overcome the world. You have overcome the world because greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world. Secondly, victory over the flesh.

You may say to me as a young fellow, Hey, Luis, you've gotten old. Of course, you've got victory. At your age, you should.

But you know, I'm 24. I'm a young man. I've got blood in my veins, and I've got temptations, and the flesh drags me down.

Listen, I'll encourage you. The temptations go on all your life. And don't you think that only teenagers and college kids have temptations of the flesh? We've all got them.

And the question is, are you overcoming the battle with the flesh? The answer is yes, by the power of the Holy Spirit. And then we have victory over the devil. The devil is the enemy.

And I know that people today laugh, even in some Protestant circles, but you and I who know better, there's warfare. Sometimes you leave the house in the morning with every intention of being holy, and in five minutes Satan manages to plant thoughts and put things across your path. But the Scripture says, Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph.

How exciting that is. So let me ask you, are you living that kind of a life as a young man? Are you living that kind of a life as a young woman? You businessmen, are you able to say, Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph? It is possible. That's the first thing.

The second thing that the Scripture teaches is that the Christian life is a transparent life, a holy life. The Bible says, Be ye holy, for I am holy, says the Lord. The Bible says, Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord.

You remember the other passage in 1 John, where it says, If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ keeps on cleansing us from all sin. You remember that. The Christian life, brothers and sisters, is a life of holiness, of walking in the light.

What does it mean to be holy? To be holy, as I read the New Testament, means to live in the light with God. To be holy means that as far as I know, I don't have anything to hide from my heavenly Father, and that as far as I know, there is nothing, nothing between me and any brother that I haven't at least tried to settle from my side of things, even if the other one doesn't want it settled. And then thirdly, the Christian life is a total lifestyle.

There's a little verse in Ephesians that I wanted to give you, and it's this. It says, Paul is praying, and he says, Until you be filled unto all the fullness of God. Listen to that.

It's an amazing thing that you and I can live up to being filled with the fullness of God. It is possible, and it is yours. Now, here comes the big question, and this is the second thing that the Lord would have us do tonight, and it's this.

All right, if that is the essence of the spiritual side of the Christian life, then why are so many Christians not enjoying it? Why is it? I mean, now that's why I said this is between us, okay? Close the doors. This is not for the unbelievers to listen. This is not to be published in the local paper, and if there's a reporter from the paper, please don't publish it.

Not now, anyway. Between you and I, we know very well that there are tens of thousands of Christians all over the world who are not enjoying this kind of life. Why is it? What is it that stands in the way? If Jesus is alive, and we worship Him beautifully tonight, and He is, if the power of the Holy Spirit is real, and we know He is, if the possibilities are here, a victorious life, a holy life, a life filled with God Himself, then why are we not enjoying it? There are many excuses given.

You may say, Luis, it's impossible to walk in the light. Man, there's no way in this world to walk in the light, and to have victory. Gee, you know, I want to be victorious.

I want to be, but the atmosphere around is so crowded with corruption that how can one keep himself pure anymore? Or, other excuses are, if you knew my husband, you wouldn't talk about a victorious life. I invite you for a week to be in my house and see how victorious you are. And some people say that.

And it's all reasonable. Or, we've had to take in my mother-in-law, and until she goes home, believe me, there ain't no victory in our house. You know, or vice versa.

Mother-in-laws always get mad at me afterwards. But, you know, the rumor gets around. And so you say, you can give any excuse.

But brothers and sisters, I believe any one of us can say this with absolute reality. No one can rob you of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Amen? No one.

Not Satan, not your son-in-law, not your wife, not your husband, no matter how ugly they may be and such a pain they may be, and some are pains, but no matter how bad, no one can rob you of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. No one can rob you of a victorious Christian life. No one can rob you of holiness.

No one can rob you of the fullness of God. There's only one thing. It's your own sin.

No one else. If you are not enjoying the fullness of the Spirit tonight, don't bother blaming anyone but yourself. Now that's the ugly side of the message, and I want to deal with it because, brothers and sisters, if you want to enjoy the victory in Christ, you can.

If you want to walk in the light and holiness, brother, sister, you can. If you want to be filled with the fullness of God, you can, because it's a gift of God. And the only thing, the only thing that will ever make you bitter or sad or frustrated or defeated or ugly or dark or a pain in the church, pain in your family, is you and the attitude towards sin.

And that's an ugly subject. And I want to mention three broad areas. First, what needs to be broken on us is this, the lack of brokenness for sin.

Now let me talk about the little sins. Brothers and sisters, this is ugly stuff. And like a bitter against someone else because something they have, something they can do, or something they've done against you, is there bitterness in your soul? Any root of bitterness will kill the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

If you have bitterness against someone, you're going to have to go home tonight. Get on your knees by your bed or whatever style you want to use and confess the bitterness by name. Tell the whole story to the Lord.

You say, the Lord knows it. I know, but He still wants you to confess it. If we confess our sins, not if we play a tape of them, confess them to the Lord and tell Him about it.

Is there bitterness? Another thing that can kill is a sense of slander and gossip. Oh, you say, Luis, come on, move on. Brothers, it's got to be done.

What destroys congregations more than anything else? Christians who gossip and speak things that may be true, but that should not be repeated. It's not a question that gossip is a lie told about another one. That is slander.

I think gossip is when you know something about someone that you repeat and you shouldn't. If you are in the habit, and we all have it in us, I'm not pointing the finger, you notice, I'm just lifting hands or going like this, because we all have it in us, and people love to pull it out from us, and don't we love to pull it out from somebody else? And then, of course, there is the sin which I think is the worst of all the sins, the sin of unbelief. You know that there are many in Protestant circles, and I say Protestant because I know those circles better.

They're probably elsewhere, too, but I speak of what I know, who are so cynical that when they hear a message, even like tonight, and there could be some even in this audience who are sitting back there and say, yeah, sure, sure, victorious life, holy life, filled with God, I'd like to travel with you for a year to see how holy you are. That is the most devastating sin of all. When the Scripture clearly says, thanks be to God, doing Christ always leads us in triumph.

When the Scripture says, if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Christ keeps on cleansing us from all sin. When the Scripture actually says, you can be filled unto all the fullness of God, and you cynically lay back and say, sure, sure, yeah, you go ahead, preacher boy, go ahead, talk about holiness, but I know better how devastating, how dishonoring to the Lord. Is there that cynicism in your soul? Is there in your soul a note of contempt for the promises of Scripture? Spend time in the presence of God, alone or with a family or whatever is your style or need, and say, dear God, I want to be holy.

Is there anything in my life, in this spiritual area that needs dealing with? But then there's another area, and this is more delicate, and again I say it with great pain and wanting to get it over, but it's got to be faced. Brothers and sisters, what about our sexual life? We've got to deal with sexuality. If we don't deal with the area of sexuality, it can destroy you for good, not for eternity necessarily, but for your usefulness and blessing down here.

Let's begin with the young fellows. Fellows, young teenagers, college kids, young married men, full of life, there is a special temptation in youth, first because you don't have the experience on how to deal with it as well, but it's there. And you know, fellows, girls, young women, if you want to be filled with the fullness of

God, you can, but you must deal with sexuality to the root, to the root.

If you want to walk in holiness, men and women, we can, but we must deal a blow properly to the area of sexuality. If you want to have a victorious life, you can. It is possible, but sexuality is one of those forces that has to be brought to the cross.

There comes a point, brothers and sisters, where you have to come to the cross and say, Lord Jesus, I spend too much time coveting. Lord Jesus, I spend too much time drooling about people I shouldn't be drooling about. Lord Jesus, my mind, I'm allowing it to play games.

You remember when David finally fell with the wife of one of his generals and then had the general killed and destroyed the rest of his life? It all started way back when he was young. When you study the life of David, you know what you find? That David used to pray about everything he did, but not once in all of the history of David did he ever pray about whom he married and his relationship with the opposite sex. Never once have I found in Scripture.

He prayed about going to war. He prayed about not going to war. He prayed about hiding in the mountains and coming down from the mountains.

He prayed about going to Judah and going to Bethlehem and going here and going there. He prayed about everything, but the one area that the Scripture never points out he really dealt with was the area that finally destroyed the kingdom, and he ended up an old man when he should have ended up a victorious old man. He ended up an embarrassing old man, such a man that he had been.

But today there's a multiplicity. You know it. I'm sure it's true in this area too.

Even professing Christians are falling into adultery, into fornication, even homosexuality. And it all has to start here, brothers and sisters. I hate to talk about it.

I hate it with a passion, but we've got to deal with it. There comes a day in your life, as a woman or as a man, when you have to bring this thing and say, Dear God, I am crucified with Christ in the area of sexuality. Nevertheless, I live, but it's not I. It's Christ living in me.

Have you done that? Don't answer me, but answer before the Lord. Men, men, I think men have it just an inch rougher than most women. Young men, if you're tempted when you go to an airport to buy one of those magazines with porno photos and drooling articles, you've got to bring it to the cross.

If you're tempted to sit alone in the basement and watch HBO or rent yourself a video and just sit there and your mind goes wild, I'm talking now about church people. That's why I wanted the doors closed. This is in-house stuff.

They started out well. They were good boys, good mother, good father. They started in Sunday school.

They promised at some camp at the firs or somebody else, Jesus, I want to be holy. Jesus, I want to live for you. Lord, I want to be a missionary.

Lord, use me for your glory. But one day they got careless in this area which has destroyed so many people. And brothers and sisters, take it to heart.

If you in your heart know that you're playing games for God's sake, for your sake, don't let tonight go by. You don't have to tell anybody just the Lord, unless somebody else knows and you have to deal with it. But go and say, Lord Jesus, oh wow, thanks for dealing with me.

Lord, I will never, so help me the Holy Spirit, never look at a foul magazine. How foolish. But brothers and sisters, let none of us point the finger.

All of us have the temptation. That's why I can talk because I know because it's in here. And brothers and sisters, we want revival here, of course.

We want to see thousands saved, of course. But it's got to start in Louise, in you, and you, and you. And the only way, brothers and sisters, and I'm coming to the close of tonight's first message, is be ruthless with the flesh.

Whatever area of the flesh, bring it to the cross and say, Lord Jesus, I want to be crucified with Christ because I want to be able to say in honesty, beginning tomorrow night, you anoint my head with oil, my cup runneth over. Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Him everywhere. If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.

I am filled with all the fullness of God. Now this is a solemn ending, but that was the intention. I don't even want to send you home with a promise that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, which He is.

I would prefer that we close with a prayer and we solemnly file out of here and go home. Pastors, you go home. Deacons, go home.

Elders, go home. Sunday school teachers, go home. Choir, go home.

And quickly, as much as you can, spend time alone with God tonight. Don't let tonight go past and say, Dear God, speak to me. Let's bow our heads for a moment before the Lord.

One day, the Lord Jesus, when He was on earth, had His best friend die, you remember, Lazarus. He came to the town, and His sisters Mary and Martha, one went running out to see Jesus, and then the other one came back and said these words to her sister, The Master is here, and He is calling for you. And the sister immediately got up, ran out to the village, outside the village where Jesus was, and met the Savior.

But I love that phrase, and my brothers and sisters, young men and women, boys and girls, listen to it again. The Master is here, and He is calling you. Now I want to talk to you personally.

Proverbs chapter 28 says, He who covers his sin will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find mercy. Do you want a personal revival? Do you want to enjoy a victorious, normal Christian life? Do you want to know what it is to have a transparent conscience? Do you want to enjoy the very fullness of God in your daily life? It's available, you know. It's yours today and for the rest of all your life.

But what we want to do is this. You have a sheet of paper in your hand. You've got to take that sheet of paper and very honestly, in the presence of God, begin to write down all those sins, all those memories, all those things that people have done to you that embitter you, and all those things that you've done to other people that you cannot shake from your conscience, because the Holy Spirit won't let you shake it.

You've got to write all that down. And in the presence of God, what you're really doing is not covering up your sin, but rather bringing it up, confessing it, putting it down on a sheet of paper. And then in the next session, we're going to tell you what to do with that sheet of paper, because it's the first step towards personal revival, a victorious life, a holy life, a life of usefulness to God.

Now, the Bible says in Galatians 5:24, those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. That's what's got to happen to you. A tremendous crisis of crucifixion.

The main thing is this. You have a choice. You can choose to cover up your sin, and you'll never prosper, and you'll never know the victorious Christian life.

Or you can choose to confess your sin, after which God will give you mercy and do a work in your soul, and you can begin to have success in the spiritual life. Secondly, don't blame other people. You must point the finger inward to yourself.

Nobody can rob you of your joy. Nobody can rob you of your love. Nobody can rob you of your peace by the Holy Spirit.

Not family, not workmates, not the economy, not the national situation, not international wars. You could be in a jail anywhere in the world and be enjoying a victorious Christian life if you walk by these principles. Now, what we want you to do is to do business with God.

Don't play games. Don't treat it lightly. It is something that could redirect the whole course of your life.

But if you do it as in the presence of God, there is no limit to what God could do with your life. Do business with God. Now, this is a crisis and a process.

The crisis could start for you right now, this very day, without further delay. You could have a personal crisis in the presence of God, where you confess every known and remembered sin that the Holy Spirit brings to your mind. You don't have to dredge up all sins that have already been forgiven and buried in the presence of the Lord.

But anything that the Holy Spirit brings to your mind, write it down as in the presence of God. Nobody else should see this, not even relatives, in my opinion, not even the most intimate friends or family, just you and the Lord. Then, after the crisis, after the forgiveness, after the rededication, then you begin to live out for the rest of your life a process, a process of constant confession, a process of constant cleansing, a process of the fullness of the living Christ by the Holy Spirit.

But you must start now. Are you willing to do it? Are you ready to do it? I hope you are. And then, once you've written down all those sins, once you've confessed your sin, you can say in the presence of the Lord, I am crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless, I live, yet it's not I, it's Christ living in me. That is the beginning of the new process in your spiritual life. Then, once you've written it down, you bring it back to the next session in this series on how to have a revival and how to walk a victorious Christian life.

And I will show you from Scripture, both in the audience and in a personal conversation just like this one, how to be forgiven and cleansed, how to have your conscience cleaned before the Lord, and how to begin to live from now to the end of your life that victorious life. So, don't throw the sheet away. Bring it back.

Keep it secret between you and the Lord. The Lord bless you. Do it now.

Holiness means walking in the light with God. Holiness means a transparent conscience. Holiness means there is nothing that you know of between you and your heavenly Father.

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