

# Gaining Perspective on How God Works

by Michael Catt

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*Michael Catt emphasizes the importance of understanding God's work through the Old Testament and living in the fullness of His promises.*

**Duration:** 48:28

**Scripture:** Joshua 1:3

**Topics:** "Character Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the common pattern of Christians experiencing a spiritual high after a conference or event, only to quickly fall back into old habits and sins. The speaker then presents a lifestyle test based on Scripture to evaluate one's spiritual progress. The tests include walking in peace, having joy, living in the blessings of God, and recognizing Christ as the hope of glory. The speaker emphasizes that victory in the Christian life is not based on one's own abilities, but on God's promises and strength.

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## Transcript

I hope that one of the things that we are always thankful for is the gifted and talented people that he has put in our midst, who play and who sing and who use their gifts and their abilities for the Lord, because it is a blessing to us that they do that. And God inhabits praise, and God loves to be in the presence of praising people. And when we praise God, whether it is through instruments or through vocalizing that or listening and just absorbing, it is a wonderful moment, because we are going to be singing praises to God in all eternity, so we ought to get used to it while we are here.

I want you to take your Bibles and turn to Joshua chapter 1. We are continuing in this study of pressing on, coming out of our Refresh Conference, how do we continue to press on, and tonight is on gaining perspective on how God works. Gaining perspective on how God works. I think one of the sad things that happens in many Christians' lives is that once we are saved, we kind of begin to focus on the New Testament, and we forget a lot of what the Old Testament has to say to us.

The Old Testament is rich in teaching and in perspective and in guidance and direction, and the New Testament is the completion of that picture. You really don't understand the New Testament until you've gained some understanding of the Old Testament, because so much of the Old Testament is fulfilled in the New Testament. Oftentimes you read, and the Scripture said, or it was said of old, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

The Old Testament teachings gain new meanings and new understandings as we study the Scriptures and see them fulfilled in the New Testament passages. Now there are two things in your notes that you need to see. First of all, is the resurrection fulfilled all the Old Testament prophecies? Now obviously I'm not talking about the Second Coming prophecies, but every prophecy related to Messiah has been fulfilled in one person.

It was not fulfilled in Mohammed, it's not been fulfilled in Joseph Smith or in Buddha or in anyone else. Only one person has fulfilled all the prophecies. Many will come saying that they are Messiahs, many will come proclaiming that they have the truth, but only one fulfilled the promises of God, and that was Jesus Christ.

Secondly, the resurrection released all the promises of God. The resurrection released the promises of God. So we can stand on the promises of God because God was faithful to fulfill the promise of resurrection.

He is also faithful to fulfill every other promise, and everything in the Bible, whether a promise or a warning, is there for a reason. It is there to remind us, it is there to teach us, to warn us, to assure us, to equip us. God's Word is given to us so that we can learn and we can know how it is that God wants us to walk.

Now why is it that we need times like refresh? Why do we need times when we get alone and prioritize our lives and re-examine our schedules and refocus our lives? It's two reasons. One is sometimes we have periods in our lives that we don't heed the warnings of God. Sometimes it's like, you know, when you're trying to teach your children something, they ignore you until you either get to that certain level where they know you're serious, or you use their full name when you call them.

And they know when you use their full name, that means stopping your tracks, dad's serious. Now sometimes we don't heed the warnings, and so God needs to give us times when we come back and adjust our lives based on the warnings that He's given us. But another reason is sometimes we don't take God at His Word.

We don't really believe His promises. We may say we believe them, but we don't act on them. Now here's something you kind of need to hang your hat on tonight, all right? You can believe that the Bible is inerrant, but not live as if it is sufficient.

You can believe that the Bible is inerrant, the Word of God without apology, no mistakes, no errors, but not live as if the Bible is sufficient. In other words, you'll begin to act on your own sufficiency rather than on God's sufficiency. And the great disparity comes in our lives between what the promises of God say and the poverty of most Christians.

One of my favorite quotes is by Stuart Briscoe who compared the average Christian to an old iron bed frame, and he said, we're firm on both ends, but sagging in the middle. Got saved over here, I know I'm saved, I know when I die I'm going to heaven, but in the middle I'm kind of sagging. Did you ever sleep on one of those beds at your grandmother's house, where you kind of, wherever, whatever the weight was, it all kind of rolled to a spot, and you kind of, you needed a winch to get out of it.

Any of you ever sleep in a bed? I mean, you just, you just had to tie a rope and hold on to try to get out, because that, that old bed frame, it was iron and it was solid, but those springs, man, they were sagging,

and you just kind of go, and you just kind of end up in the middle of the bed, and you felt like you were being surrounded by the mattress. Well, that's a lot of Christian lives. We know we're saved, we know when we die we're going to heaven, but we're kind of sagging in the middle.

The Bible talks about fullness, but when you look at our iron bed frame, we're kind of empty in the middle, and while the Bible admits defeat, it never assumes it. The Bible does not assume that you will live defeated. It will admit that you can live defeated, but the Bible assumes that we understand what we have in Christ, and that we live up to that level, and so God's given us a word here, and what he wants us to see, I think, is that what we have walked through in recent months is not to be special, it is to be the norm, and how do we live with an outpouring of God, and full altars, and people being saved, and people being baptized, and lives being changed? How do we live with that as the norm? Well, I think Joshua's got some secrets, and we're going to go back and forth in the Old Testament a good bit tonight, but first of all, God's plan is for perpetual revival.

God's plan is for perpetual revival. In fact, the word revival should be unnecessary in our Christian vocabulary, because we should be living a lived life. We shouldn't have to be revived.

Doctors and emergency rooms have to revive people. We shouldn't have to be revived. We should live.

I'm not talking about on an emotional high, but we should live on a level of spirituality that maintains a consistent walk with God. Now, there's several things about this. One is that God has saved us from something to something.

God saved us from hell to heaven. God saved us from being dead in trespasses and sin to being alive to God. God saved us from living for ourselves to living for His glory.

That's the first thing He did. God saved us from something to something, but secondly, God sanctifies us to bring us out of bondage and into victory. God's sanctifying process, God's process of making us like Christ and making us holy as He is holy, is to take us out of the bondage of our past, because we can be saved from the penalty of sin, but sometimes we're still struggling with the power of sin.

Out of bondage and into our heritage in Christ, and then God revives us so that we can renew our walk, because we've gotten off the path, we've gotten out of the light, we've gotten out of the truth, we're not walking in the fullness of the Spirit, and so revival time comes into our lives to remind us where we're supposed to be and how we were supposed to be there. Now, I want you to hold your place in Joshua, and I want you to turn to Deuteronomy chapter 6, and then after Deuteronomy chapter 6, we're going to go to Exodus chapter 6. Deuteronomy 6 and Exodus 6. You see, God wasn't just interested in getting His people out of Egypt. He was trying to get them into Canaan, and so Deuteronomy chapter 6 and verse 23, He said, He brought us out from there in order to bring us in.

That is a crucial verse in understanding God's purpose with people. He brought us out to bring us in. He didn't bring us out to just get us out.

He brought us out to get us into something else. He brought us out to bring us in and to give us the land which He swore to our fathers. What we have to remember there is that after verse 23, you could put a note, a whole generation got out and never got in.

A whole generation, because of unbelief, because they would not act on the promises of God, they got out, but they never got in. Now, you see, that can easily happen, to get out and to not get in. Now, look at

verse 24.

So the Lord commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the Lord your God for our good always and for our survival as it is today. It will be righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all this commandment before the Lord our God, just as He commanded us. Now, I want you to see that you would think people would get out and get in, based on one little phrase in verse 24, for our good and for our survival.

You would think that that would be enough. Oh, let's see, if I get out and if I get in to where He wants me to be, that'll be for my good and for my survival. But they stopped short of it.

Apparently, they weren't interested in their good and their survival. They were just interested in just living for the moment. And so they missed the blessing and died in the wilderness.

Now, turn to Exodus chapter 6. Exodus chapter 6. God told them to leave Egypt. He told them to take the land. In Exodus chapter 6 and verse 6. Exodus chapter 6 and verse 6. Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage.

I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. Then I will take you for my people, and I will be your God. And you shall know that I am the Lord your God who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

And I will bring you to a land which I swore to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession. I am the Lord. In other words, He says, I'm telling you I'm going to do this, and the reason I can tell you, and the reason it's true is because I'm the Lord.

So Moses spoke thus to the sons of Israel. But look at what they did. God has said, I'm going to bring you out.

I'm going to deliver you from your burdens. I will bring you to the land. And Moses said, this is what God has said.

But they did not listen to Moses on account of their despondency and cruel bondage. In other words, they let their circumstances rule their faith, instead of their faith ruling their circumstances. They looked at their cruelties.

They looked at their despondency. They were depressed. They were discouraged.

And they said, yeah, God may have said that, but I don't think it's for me. And how many times have you and I heard a sermon, or sat in a Sunday school class, or listened to somebody on the radio, or on television, and we've heard a word from God, and we think immediately that's true for other people, but it could never be true for me. That's exactly what they did.

They wouldn't believe because their circumstances, they were under their circumstances, which you never have any business being under your circumstances. You should always live on top of your circumstances, not under them. And God said, I will, and I am.

Now, you don't need any more than that. I will, and I am. I will do this, and this is who I am.

But they didn't listen. They didn't listen in Egypt, and they didn't listen in the wilderness. They were hard of hearing.

That's why I know they were the first Baptist. They didn't get it. They didn't listen.

It didn't matter how many times God said it, how many ways God said it. You think of all the miracles. You think, now, if God could do what He did in just the plagues in Egypt, just to show Himself strong and to destroy all those Egyptian gods, whatever God said that He could do, I believe He could do it.

You know, if I'm standing at the Red Sea, and all of a sudden it parts, and I mean, and it just says the water's just divided. If I'm standing at the Red Sea, and the water parts, I've never seen water part in my life, and this sea parts, and I go through on dry ground, and then all of a sudden I'm on the other side, and here comes the Egyptian army. Ewell Brenner's leading them, and so I'm coming all the way down through.

Some of you got that. And I'm watching them come down, and all of a sudden the water comes in, and there's Moses. He looks just like Charlton Heston, and he's standing there, and he says, you know, we'll never see them again.

I would think whatever God tells us, we're going to do it, because that's a big God that can do that. But it wasn't a matter of days before they were complaining again, and despondent. You see, it's very easy, folks, no matter how many miracles you've seen, no matter how many blessings you've seen, no matter how many answered prayers you have, it's very easy to go back, and to slip back into your old ways, and your old patterns.

And that's exactly what Israel was doing. Now, the first five books of the Bible tell us about the history of God's people, and God trying to establish them as a nation, but then you add to that Psalms 106, 1st Corinthians 10, Hebrews chapter 3, and 2nd Peter chapter 1, and they all give us the account of this time in Israel's history. Apparently God wants us to learn a lesson about His provision for us.

These are truths that God wants us to learn, or He wouldn't have given it so much attention. He wouldn't have taken up so much space with this, because this wasn't truth just for the nation of Israel, this was truth for us today in 2003, for us to hear, and for us to learn from what happened to them, what do we need to learn? Now, God got them out, but boy, they did it the hard way. He got them in, but they took the hard path.

Turn to Deuteronomy chapter 1, Deuteronomy chapter 1, one of the most indicting two verses in all the scripture are found at the beginning of Deuteronomy chapter 1. Now, I am directionally dysfunctional, but this is the most directionally dysfunctional group of people I've ever seen in my life. Deuteronomy chapter 1 and verse 2, it is 11 days journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir to Kadesh Barnea. Pause.

In the 40th year, on the first day of the 11th month, Moses spoke to the children of Israel according to all that the Lord had commanded him to give to them. Now, you know that a committee must have planned this trip. They took an 11-day trip and turned it into a 40-year journey.

Only God's people could do something that dumb. They had it all figured out. God said, I can get you there in 11 days.

They said, no, we'd just rather take 40 years. We'd just rather take the long way around. I remember when Ron Dunn drove here one time and he and I joked about this almost until the day he died.

I said, look, here's the way you need to come. You need to come across from Dallas and you need to go through Shreveport and through Jackson, through Meridian, and then you cut down across and you go through Selma. There's no good way to get across the state of Alabama.

There's just not. There is no straight line across the state of Alabama. You've got to go down and up and across and get to a two-lane and get to a smaller two-lane and get to a two-lane that's not really a two-lane and then you got to get around a tractor.

I mean, it's worse than South Georgia. I mean, it's terrible. It takes you forever to get there.

And I discovered that I can go down and hit I-10 and go up from Mobile on a four-lane and get there quicker than people that go straight across. But I told Ron, I said, you just go across this way. Well, about 10 o'clock that night, he called me from Selma.

He said, Michael, I'm in Selma. It's the first place I've been able to get a signal on my phone. I'll be there sometime in the middle of the night.

So when he got ready to leave, I said, now, which way are you going back? He said, I'm not telling you. I said, well, you know, you may want to go. He said, I'm not telling you and I don't want your directions.

I don't want to know the way you want me to go. I'm going to go my way. You know what he did? I know what he did.

He went to Columbus. He went up and hit the interstate. He went almost all the way to Atlanta and came back down just so he could drive on the interstate.

He said, I just won't be on four lane road. That's what these people just said. Hey, you know, I'm going to drive the way they turned an 11 day trip into a 40, 40 year journey.

That's incredible. God's plan was to bring them out and to take them in, but they rebelled and they whined. And most of all, they did not believe.

They didn't believe that what God had said was for them. God's redemptive plan was not to get them out of Egypt and into the wilderness. God's redemptive plan was to get them out of Egypt and into Canaan.

He was trying to get them into the promised land, but they settled for less than God's best. And their reaction to God's promises is their history. What do we think about when we think about this generation of people who were a people of God? They didn't believe God.

They didn't trust God. Their epitaph is they didn't believe God. Their epitaph is they died in the wilderness.

Their epitaph is, is they fell short of what God had planned for them. And you see, our spiritual biography is not so much what happens to us, is how we respond to what God says to us. Now you need to make a note of that.

Your spiritual heritage and your biography and your legacy is not so much what happens to you, but how you respond to what God says to you out of his word. Our character and our history is carved out in the

bedrock of our experiences. There was a land of milk and honey, but they accepted defeat as normal.

Now they did three things. First of all, they resisted God's warnings. They just resisted the warnings of God.

Don't do this, do that. Don't, you know, they just resisted God's warnings. Secondly, they ignored God's man.

I mean, Moses was God's man. And they said, we're not going to listen to Moses. You know, we want to get somebody else.

Where is Moses? I mean, here he is. He's gotten them through. He's delivered them.

He's taken them through the Red Sea. He goes up on a mountain. He's gone for a few days and he's on the mountain with God.

And they say, where is this Moses? Who is he? Let's go back to Egypt. Let's build a golden camp. You talk about a fickle and forgetful people.

They just ignored God's man. And thirdly, they insisted on their own way. They insisted on their own way.

Now let me read Psalm 78 and verse 41 and 42. Psalm 78 and verse 41 and 42. Time and again, they pushed him to the limit and provoked Israel's holy God.

How quickly they forgot what he had done, forgot their day of rescue from the enemy. You know why people are active in church and faithful in church and then they become unfaithful? They forget their day of rescue. They've forgotten the day they got saved.

They've forgotten the day that God answered that prayer. They've forgotten the day when God intervened and did what they wanted. They just forget.

They just forget. They forget the goodness of God. First Corinthians 10:10 says, now these things happened to them as examples and were written for our instruction.

Not for their instruction. They had already messed up. For our instruction.

God wrote all these things down for our instruction. What God has given us is black and white warnings about the consequences of not following through on our commitment and not following through with God. They remind us that we are not above failure.

Now Paul in first Corinthians 10 says, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. Paul, it is interesting to note, didn't say let you who think you stand. Paul doesn't exclude himself.

If you read first Corinthians chapter 10 and he says these things were written for our example, not your example. For our example. What Paul is saying is, hey, nobody's immune from this.

You never get to a point in your life where you've arrived and you can put it on automatic pilot and coast into the kingdom. Every one of us are in the middle of a battle. And if you think you've got it all figured out, if you think you're on top and you're in a position where you've arrived, then you're about to fall.

Don't get in that position. We're in a battle. And you know what we have? We have what one writer calls the drum major instinct.

We want to lead the band. And God says, I'm the one who's in charge. And you can call it what you want to.

You can call it the flesh. You can call it self. You can call it the will.

You could call it the old nature, but whatever you want to call it, you're in a battle. Paul calls it the flesh in Galatians 5 24. He calls itself in second Corinthians 5 15.

He calls it the old man in Romans 6 6 and in Colossians 3 9. David said in Psalms 51 5, I was brought forth in iniquity and in sin. My mother conceived me. How many of you, somebody had to teach you how to sin? Anybody have to teach you how to sin? Or did you just kind of come by it on your own? Every baby selfish, right? They don't consider that you need to sleep.

You've got to go to work. If they wake up and they're hungry in the middle of the night, they don't look over in their crib and go, hmm, dad's got to go to work at eight. I think I'll just be quiet tonight.

No, selfish, self-centered. I heard about an old preacher who somebody brought their baby to the man and woman brought their baby to the old preacher and said, what do you think about our baby? He said, well, it's cute. Baby said, well, which one do you think he looks like? He said, I think it looks like his father, the devil.

And that's what we all look like. We're all sinners. We're born in iniquity.

We are totally depraved. There's none righteous. No, not one.

We're all sinners and we're all fighting a battle. And just because we're saved doesn't mean that that sin nature and that desire just kind of goes away and disappears. We battle with it every day to pull us back and to pull us down.

And we may have been set free from Egypt, but I tell you, some of us are still trying to figure out how we're going to get to the promised land. And so there's this constant battle. Galatians 5, 16, that says, walk by the spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh for the flesh sets his desire against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh for these are in opposition to one another.

See to it that you may not do the things that you please. That word sets his desire is the word lust. It is the strongest word for lust in all the Greek language.

There's a conflict going on. There's a battle going on, but I want you to see something. Turn to Exodus chapter one, Exodus chapter one.

And you're probably wondering where we're going to get to Joshua. We're, we're just about there, but this is all introduction basically. Point one in introduction.

Exodus chapter one. Now, I don't want to build a theology on what I'm about to say. All right? This is just a thought.

As Ron would say, it's a profound thought and I'm going to tell you that because if I don't tell you if it's a profound thought, you might miss it. You'll get that sooner or later. Now, we typically in the Christian life refer to Egypt as I was over in Egypt, I was lost.

The wilderness is the carnal Christian life, carnality. And the promised land is the spirit-filled life. And that's what I believe is the primary teaching of scripture, but I want you to see another possibility.

All right? Exodus chapter one and verse six, Joseph died and all his brothers and all that generation. But the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly and multiplied and underline the next three words, became exceedingly mighty so that the land was filled with them. Now, a new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph.

And he said to his people, behold, the people of the sons of Israel are, next five words underline them, more and mightier than we. Do you see what the king is saying? The king of Egypt is saying Israel is now more in number and not only that, they are stronger than we are. Look at the next verse, come, let us deal wisely with them or else they will multiply and in the event of war, they will also join themselves to those who hate us and underline the last part of the verse, fight against us and depart from the land.

Now I've read that before, but when I was studying for this message, I realized something when I read that they had become exceedingly mighty. They were more and mightier than we, they had the potential and the possibility and the power at that point to fight and to depart from the land. Now here's the truth, they could have gotten out of bondage, they could have left Egypt, but they didn't know the power that they had.

They didn't realize the power that they had and they let the enemy deal with them wisely and subtly just like the devil deals with some of us to convince us we don't have the power and God doesn't have the authority and his promises aren't true and we begin to think, oh well this is good for somebody, but it's not good for me and you see they didn't appropriate the power that was available to them, so what happened? They lived in bondage and they got further and further and deeper and deeper into bondage because they didn't realize what the enemy realized. By the way, there are a lot of Christians that live that way, that don't realize what the devil knows, that greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world and yet many Christians live like they're dependent on welfare, they're not walking in the power and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And so God is saying to us in this passage, you know there are some people that just, I mean you're mighty and you're strong and you have authority and you have power through the Holy Spirit of God, but you've let the enemy deal wisely with you and cunningly with you, he's the father of lies and he's the deceiver of the brethren and he tries to accuse the brethren, he tries to deal in subtleties and all of a sudden you find yourself believing and listening to the devil and his lies more than you listen to the truth in God's Word.

And so you get in bondage and we become cowards and we let these things rule us and we believe the devil's lies and the tragedy is that people can have a season of revival and a season of rejoicing and they can come to the altar and God can just pour himself out on them and they go, man this is great, this is incredible, I cannot, I didn't know that the Christian life could be this way, this is wonderful and then before you know it they've gone out into the world and they've gotten off track and they begin to listen to those lies again and all of a sudden they're back in the same old rut they were in before, committing the same sins, defeated in the same areas. And so I want to give you a lifestyle test to see how you're doing now about two and a half months since the Refresh Conference. These are all on Scripture, I'll just give you the

Scripture verses and then you can see if you pass or fail.

Philippians 4, 7, lifestyle test number one, I am walking in the peace that passes all understanding. Philippians 4, 7. 1 Peter 1, 8, lifestyle test number two, I have joy unspeakable and full of glory. Lifestyle test number three, Ephesians 1, 3, I've been blessed with every spiritual blessing and live like it.

I've been blessed with every spiritual blessing and I live like it. And Romans chapter 8 and verse 37, I am an overwhelmingly conqueror through Jesus Christ. Romans 8, 37, I overwhelmingly conquer through Jesus Christ.

For most Christians those verses would not be true this past week. Somewhere, somehow we get off track and so we come back and we need seasons of revival. Now the longest point is the first one and you'll be happy with that.

Number two, God's promise of victory, Joshua chapter 1 verses 3 through 5. God's promise of victory, Joshua 1, 3 through 5. Joshua chapter 1 verse 3, every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you just as I spoke to Moses. No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you.

I will not fail or forsake you. He didn't say I might not. He said I will not.

Now there's a future assurance here. Every place that your sole treads. Joshua, you're about to go somewhere where you've never been before.

You're about to do something you've never done before. But every place that you go, I'm going to be with you. That's a future promise.

But there's a past assurance. I have given it to you. God says you're going to experience it for the first time, but I've already given it to you back here.

Before you've ever crossed over, before you've ever taken that first step into that river, I've already given you the victory. And so there's a future assurance and there's a past assurance. And I want you to see the key to all of this, because this is kind of one of those phrases that sneaks up on you.

He says every place on which the sole of your foot treads. Now what's interesting about that? Well, he didn't say every place that your tennis shoes or your patent leather shoes or your high heel shoes or your sandals. He said every place that the sole of your foot treads.

Now why is that significant? What did God say to Moses when he stood at the burning bush? Take off your shoes, you're on holy ground. What God is saying to Joshua is, Joshua, when you walk in holiness and when you walk in humility with me, then every promise is yours. The shoes off and the soles of the feet indicate holiness and humility.

And he says when you walk that way, when you live that way, then I'm going to be with you and I'm going to fulfill the promises and the victory is going to be yours. Why? Because you're walking in holiness and you're walking in humility. Now look, look at the promise.

Verse 3, it is for every place. And in verse 5, it's for every day. He says all the days of your life.

That kind of covers it. It covers it for me. Every place and every day.

You know what that means in Hebrew? Every place and every day. That means today and tomorrow and the next day and five years from now and 15 years from now and 20 years from now. Wherever you go, whatever you do, every day of your life, God says I'm going to be with you and I'm going to give you victory.

Ron Dunn said there's no reason why every Christian cannot live a life of victory because it is not attained by struggling and striving. It is part of your birthright as a child of God. Victory is assured and accomplished.

Every step that Joshua took was on conquered ground. Joshua, the land is yours. Act like it.

Paul said in Romans 8 29, we've been predestined to become conformed to the image of his son. In Ephesians 1 4, that we should be holy and blameless before him. Colossians 1, as Christ in you is the hope of glory.

Second Corinthians 2 14, thanks be to God who always leads us in his triumph. Listen folks, the victory is not based on my ability. It's based on God's promises.

I will fail. I will blow it. The victory is not based on my ability.

It's based on the promises of God. It is on his strength and my admission of need. As long as I think I can do it, I'll fail.

When I realize I can't but he can, I'll win. It's my admission of need. The land is yours.

Act like it. David Reynolds and I were talking this morning about, you know, some of these football players that just hot dog and run their mouths and they need to be quiet. Their coaches need to bench them.

He said, you know, my high school coach always said, when you score a touchdown, act like you've been there before. You know, don't hot dog. I mean, I love this guy, Larry Fitzgerald, that plays for Pittsburgh.

You know, he scores a touchdown. He could be a game winning to whatever it is. He walks over and he hands the ball to the ref. He doesn't spike it between his legs.

He doesn't slam dunk it on top of the goal. He doesn't do a juke and a jive and he just hands the ball to the ref. I mean, act like you belong. Act like you've been there.

What happens to us is we get one victory and we go, whoa, victory. That's good. Hey, high five everybody.

Victory. Hey, act like you live in victory. Quit acting like it's abnormal.

It ain't like it's normal because it's supposed to be normal. You're supposed to win. You're supposed to come out on top.

We're not supposed to be defeated. And every now and then, occasionally once or twice a year, we walk into Sunday school and praise God for an answer prayer. That's supposed to be our life.

It's supposed to be the way we walk, the way we live. Act like you belong. Listen, folks, act like you belong in the promised land.

And one day you'll figure out that you do just act on the promises and don't worry about it. They're feeling like acting on the promises. If you just act like it.

And then one day all of a sudden you'll find out you're living in the promises. Our problem is we're waiting on God to give us a feeling for the promises. Lord, could you just kind of give me the, give me the Holy Ghost jitters.

I just need, I just need some kind of feeling, Lord, to feel like I'm walking in victory. Listen, you walk in victory whether you feel like it or not. I mean, some of the most victorious people I've ever met in my life have had lousy lives as far as the world's perspective, but they just chose to walk in victory.

They just got up every morning and made a choice. Number three, God's plan for victory is in verse eight, Joshua one, eight, this book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have success.

The book of the law, that was the book of Moses. That's all the Bible Joshua had. So what Moses had written, it was God's plan built on God's promises.

God's plan for your life is always built on God's promises out of his word. And look at what we're supposed to do. We're supposed to meditate on it day and night.

Now the word meditate is used in Psalm 119 in seven verses and Psalm 119, you know, is a Psalm all about the word of God and it means to chew on, to ponder, to dwell on. We are to take time to chew on, to sit and think about it for a while and to ponder it and to dwell on it. And the key to meditation is found in the words, be careful to do.

In other words, meditate with a predisposition to do what God says. That's what meditating on the word of God is. Meditating on the word of God is not saying, well, I'm going to look at this and see if I want to do it or not.

Meditating on the word of God is doing it with a predisposition to do what God says. My favorite show growing up was the Andy Griffith show. I love the Andy Griffith show.

Don't call me Tuesday night when the Andy Griffith reunion is on, I'm going to be watching it. Okay. One of my favorite scenes is on Sunday afternoon.

Of course, you know, on Sunday afternoon at the Andy Taylor house, they always just sat out on the front porch. You remember that? How many of you watched the Andy Griffith show besides me? All right. Amen.

There's some witnesses there. And I love the show where Andy and Barney are sitting in the rocking chair on the front porch and Barney says, I think I'll go downtown. Yeah, Barney, what are you going to do? Get a bottle of pop.

I think I'm going to go get me a bottle of pop. Yeah. Yeah.

I got to go get me a bottle of pop downtown. And I mean, this scene goes on for about five minutes in a 22 minute show. And you know, it's like, would you just get up and go get the bottle of pop? You know, Barney was quick to do the wrong things and slow to do the right things.

I mean, it just, he's like a lot of us, but you know what he's doing, he's meditating, he's thinking about it. Now, in a time when we have such a convenience to go get a bottle of pop, I mean, they're everywhere. You can find a Coke machine everywhere.

But I can remember growing up where you, you had to go find a Coke. It wasn't just like it was on every corner. And most of the times you'd just get a fountain Coke.

And they didn't sell it in two liter bottles that you could carry. You got those little six ounce glass bottles. I, man, when, when Coke quit making those, went to that new Coke, when those demon possessed people got ahold of Coca Cola and tried to make it in a new Coke, which was nothing but bad Pepsi.

I was living in, I was living in, Jim's dying. I was living in Fort Worth and Joe T. Garcia's, which is the greatest Mexican restaurant I've ever eaten in my life. They cook their beans, their refried beans in a big thing about this big.

And there's about a 500 pound woman that sits there and stirs those things and sweats over them. I mean, they're the greatest things you've ever eaten in your life. But Joe T. Garcia's went to the Coca Cola plant in Fort Worth and bought every six ounce Coke in the entire city and stocked them.

And I mean, I was, you know, I was thinking I'm never going to get a Coke again. This is terrible. And I went to Joe T. Garcia's and I found out they had those six ounce bottle of Coke.

I drank 10 of them at one meal. But when I got the first one, I just looked at that bottle and I meditated on it. I pondered it.

My taste buds and my brain and my stomach and everything worked together saying, oh, remember what this is like. This is the sweetness of victory. This is power from on high.

This is what you need. 16 tablespoons of sugar and six ounces of Coke. I can't wait.

I was so wired. I think I was up for a lock in by the time I got through with it. God says you meditate, you dwell on it, you set the Word of God before you and you look at it and you think of how sweet it is.

The scripture says to taste and see that the Lord is good. And you meditate on all that God's got for you. Now listen, meditation leads you to the door, but obedience opens it.

He says, meditate and be careful to do. Meditation leads you to the door, but obedience opens it. And finally, God's power for victory, verses six and seven, be strong and courageous for you shall give this people possession of the land, which I swore to their fathers to give them only be strong and very courageous.

Be careful to do according to all the law, which Moses, my servant commanded you, do not turn from it to the right or to the left so that you may have success wherever you go. Four times in Joshua one, 26 times in the Old Testament, you see the phrase be strong and courageous. So that what, for what reason? So that in every place and every day you can have victory.

Ron Dunn said it best. We don't go out to victory, we go out from victory. Victory isn't doing our best for Jesus.

It is Jesus doing his best for you. Victory is not doing my best for Jesus. Listen, folks, I've given my best to Jesus sometimes and I've made a mess of things.

It is Jesus doing his best for me, giving me his best. I can't ask for any more than that. It's not to victory, it's from victory, a victory that has already been won for us in Christ, a victory that has power to it because of the cross and the resurrection and because of the Holy Spirit, the power.

So how do we walk and press on? By being strong and very courageous. Some of us are going to face some things this week and it's going to cause you to be timid. It's going to cause you to shake and quiver and wonder if God can come through for you.

There'll be some temptations that come your way, there'll be some obstacles, there'll be some obstinate people that get in your path and it'll be tempting to try to react the way you want to Remember that in every place and every day, God calls you to be strong and courageous so that he can give you victory. The victory is not yours, it's his from beginning to end. It's all about him.

Let's stand together with heads bowed and eyes closed.

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