

A Call for Repentance and Victory Over Sin

by Randy Krahn

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God, highlighting the struggles individuals face, the need to trust in God's promises, and the power of repentance and forgiveness. It encourages believers to focus on Jesus, walk in the Spirit, and allow God to cleanse and transform their hearts, leading to a life filled with faith, endurance, and love.

Scripture: Psalm 100:4, Psalm 118:24, 1 Samuel 16:13, 1 Samuel 17:45, Psalm 51:10, Hebrews 12:1, 1 John 1:9, 2 Corinthians 6:17, John 3:16, 2 Peter 1:4

Topics: "Surrender to God", "Trust in His Promises"

Description

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Transcript

Scripture says, let's enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise, Brother Dan shared. And say one thing, this is the day the Lord's made. You want to rejoice and be glad in it.

I said, well, I don't have anything to be glad about. I don't have anything to rejoice in. I've got depression, I got discouragement, it seems hopeless.

But like we shared on Wednesday, those of you who heard Wednesday's message, David came to a place in his life. He was anointed by Samuel, called to be the next king. And Samuel seemingly was exalted, or Saul was exalted king right away.

But David had to go through things. I can imagine when he went and fought that Goliath, and he had no intention, I don't think, of fighting a Goliath. He was bringing cheese.

Dad told him just bring some cheese and some provisions for your brothers. He's going over there to do what his father said. But Dad talked about doing the little things.

He went to go and bring his brothers some provisions. And when he went to bring his brothers some provisions, then he sees this big giant, this superhero of the Philistines, this champion, he's mocking his God, and he gets stirred up in his heart. You know, and sometimes I hear people mocking our God.

I say, you know what, that bothers me. You mock my God. You might not understand whom you believe, but we know who we believe in.

And he said, who is this uncircumcised Philistine? Who's this unclean guy who's going to talk about our God like that? And his brothers started picking on him. You know, sometimes in the church, what we can do is we get someone who's zealous for the Lord, younger brother, and we say, oh, we just try and put some wet blanket on them and cool them off a bit, or just put them in their place a little bit. You ever had somebody do that in the church? Just come up to you and say, oh, I know you're really zealous about certain things, but you know, you'll see one day that you'll become just like us.

You know, lukewarm, full of fear, and loving money and everything else. David was younger than the Lord. He was obedient to what his father said, and then he hears this Philistine mocking his God.

And his brother said, hey, what are you even doing here? You were taking care of a few sheep over there for dad. Who did you leave those sheep with? Shouldn't you be getting back? Like, who do you think you are? But that didn't discourage him. You know what, when you go decide you're going to follow the Lord, and you might be young in your faith, you might not know much, but you have a love for God, and then someone comes to try to discourage you or try to slow you down, don't listen to those voices.

Listen to the Holy Spirit. Listen to what the Word of God says. Follow the Lord and love God.

David was not deterred by that. And you know what, it ended up that all those people were terrified. Even Saul was terrified, hiding in his tent of this of this champion.

And he went and put on all this armor that Saul gave him to protect him against the giant. You know, people will give you all kinds of advice about how you're going to be able to overcome anger, how you're going to be able to overcome bitterness, or how you overcome alcohol, or how you overcome drugs. And they give you all this armor, but you know, it's just all that stuff.

All that knowledge sometimes can just weigh you down because it's not the knowledge from God. And David says, you know, I haven't tested this stuff. It might be good.

I don't know, but it's bogging me down. I just want to share testimony, Saul. Like, there was a bear that came out of the woods and went after one of these sheep that my dad entrusted me with.

And you know what, I just got so upset with that bear. I grabbed him, right, and I just killed him with my bare hands. And there was another time this lion came out of out of from behind this rock.

And he grabbed another one of those lambs and he took off and I just tore after him and I grabbed him by the beard and I snapped his neck. And you know what, I'm fully convinced in my spirit that God will give me victory over this uncircumcised Philistine. Just let me out.

He said, okay, you go ahead. None of us are interested in having any part of this giant. And this giant had a shield and a sword and he had an armor bear that was there that was would deflect things in case anything got through.

And he was just from head to toe metal, like protected. And there was a little part I guess in the forehead, there part of his face, I guess that was exposed. And David had trained, you know, you think, oh, he just got lucky.

No, he didn't get lucky. God had put it on his heart to become a man of war. He was a man of war.

He had a job to do to protect sheep and it was in his heart to protect them. And now what was happening is he'd been anointed king and God's raising him up to protect Israel. He doesn't even realize it.

Because the thing was, send a man to fight against me. And if he wins, we'll become your slaves. But if we win, you will become our servants and you'll come into bondage to us.

It was an important fight. And David went there with a sling and he needed some stones and he went to the brook and he went through the brook and he searched for the right stones. And he put five smooth stones from the brook in his shepherd's bag.

And then when the Goliath charged at him, he said, God will deliver you into my hands, David said, and David charged at him. The giant charged at him and David ran even faster at him. And he took one of those stones out of his shepherd's bag and he put it in his sling.

And it's not like a slingshot like we have today. You've seen sometimes that when Israel and Palestine, they're fighting and they have these kind of leather things with a pouch and they whip these things, they get real good at it. And David was accurate with the shot.

And he flinged that thing at the Philistine with all his armor and all of his protection, everything he had and how big he was. It's not how big you are. It's how big your God is.

It's how big your God is. It doesn't matter how big your problem is. Might look hopeless.

But if you forget about how big your God is, you can find yourself in a bad way. Israel was hiding in their tents. They found themselves in a bad way because they forgot about how big God was.

And that stone hit that giant in the forehead. And I'm telling you, he fell down and David ran up to him, took that giant's own sword and cut his head off. And he went into the city with that guy's head.

And they made a song about him that Saul is slain his thousands and David is ten thousands. And God turned Israel's heart toward David that day. But you know, Saul became bitter towards him.

A lot of other stories there. And he hunted him like a dog. He hunted him like you would chase a fly in the house when it's buzzing around everybody's head and chased him into the wilderness and tried to kill him.

He went after him with thousands of men, three thousand men one time. And God delivered him into his hands. And while he went to relieve himself in a cave, he cut the edge of his robe.

But his men were saying, this is God. He's put him in your hands. Take him out.

It's time to take him out. Look at God put him right there. And he cut the edge of his robe.

And it says that David's conscience bothered him. His heart bothered him. And he's thinking, man, I'm not supposed to touch God's anointed.

I have to let God do it. And a lot of times we get an opportunity and someone's been picking on us, some some big guy, some nasty person is picking on you. And God has put him there for a reason.

Not that you would cower and be afraid, but you would trust in your God and you would use the word of God to quench all those fiery darts. You would walk in the spirit. But instead, what happens is we end up running in fear and hiding.

And then we think, okay, this is my opportunity to take him out. And then we go and we do something in the flesh and our conscience bothers us. I say, Lord, you have to do it.

I say all these things, but because circumstances can get us discouraged sometimes. Men of God can get discouraged. And David wrote in the scriptures, why are you downcast, O my soul? Why are you discouraged? Put your hope in God, for I shall yet praise him.

The opposite of being discouraged. The way to get out of prison is to praise God. Way to get out of a place of discouragement is to thank the Lord, give thanks and everything.

You know, when brother texted me this week, he said, man, I've been so discouraged. I says, I know it's hard, but look, give thanks for a cup. That's one 10th full.

Something to be thankful. Hey, you've got a roof over your head and food to eat. You know, it's something to be thankful for.

There were times when we had no roof over our head and we were, we were on the streets and we had nobody that we could call. Nobody would answer the phone. So we can be thankful.

Say, Hey Lord, you know, I'm in a safe place today. You know, I'm not where I want to be, but I'm grateful that you have me where I am. Because you know what? God can do exceedingly abundantly more if you continue to follow him, but you have to make him Lord.

You can't make him all, I'll make him savior or whatever. I'll add him to the package. And if he can do anything for me, that's good.

No, if you can believe all things are possible to the one who believes. You say, well, I tried. Jesus didn't do nothing for me.

Sean said that when he was a teenager, he went and he got baptized and seemed to work for others, but didn't work for him. And he ended up going further and further into darkness, which led to him eventually getting shot and left for dead, his face all busted up. And that's where God met him in the hospital.

Maybe not the first time, but the second time he had a visitation from God. You know what? We need to have a visitation from God, but why do we have to come to a place where all busted up in the hospital? We sang a song that in the good times, we're going to praise him. I remember a time when I was with a buddy of mine and none of us had work.

NDP got in those days, they were against business and they just destroyed business in 1998, 1999 in BC. We had to go to Alberta to work. And we got on our knees and we had breakfast together.

It was early. And we said, you know, Lord, we have no work. We need work.

Have mercy on us and help us. And we'll remember you that when we get work in good times, we will still meet in prayer and give thanks and pray to you and trust in you. You know what? That was the last time we did that at that time.

The next day, my friend got work and I went to Alberta to work. And you know what? We forgot our promises to God. We make all kinds of promises to God when we get into a difficult situation.

Oh God, if you get me out of this or oh God, please help me with this and I'll get more serious. And you know what? We've made all kinds of alters and promises to God and they've all been broken down because we break our promises. But let God be true and every man a liar.

He's still faithful when we're faithless. You know what? He can't deny himself and he keeps beckoning us, hey, restore the old alters, repair those walls that have been broken down, right? And he calls men of God to become repairers of the breach and start telling the men to rise up and start to remember their promises that they made to God and start to be men of their word, women of their word. God's word means everything to him.

He says it's impossible for him to lie. He keeps his word, even if we don't keep ours. And it's important that we understand and we come to know that God is sovereign and he's able to work all these things together for our good if we love God and are called according to his purpose.

We don't understand his ways, but we know that he's still on the throne. No matter what everything going on around us, he's still on the throne. He's not confused.

We might be confused, but he's not confused. He's not the author of confusion. So David comes to a place where finally he's not allowed to kill Saul and God's not doing anything and God is shaping his character, but he becomes disillusioned with it all.

And he says in 1 Samuel 27, he says, now I know, he says this to himself, one day, Saul's going to take me down. He's going to catch me and he's going to kill me. But he forgot what God said.

You know what God said? Hey, don't you have any more sons? And he said, I have one more son. He's out in the field and he's taking care of a few sheep. He says, bring him here because all the other sons were not chosen of God because God didn't look at Eliab who was head and shoulders above the rest.

As man, he's saying, oh, he'll be a fantastic king. Look at him. He's fit.

He's got an extra 20 pounds of muscle on him. He's looking real good, right? God looks at the heart. And then here comes David.

He was small in stature. He was ready and good looking, right? He didn't have the extra weight on him. He didn't have the extra height on him, but God saw his heart and he anointed him.

And he said, this one's going to be king over my people, Israel. He didn't say in one year from now or in 10 years from now or 20 years from now, he said, this one will be. And somehow we can forget what God says, or we can come to doubt what God says.

The promises of God are yes and amen. If we walk in covenant with him, but if we become unbelieving, then we end up with an evil heart. And you know what, David, he got an evil heart.

He said, you know what? It's time for me to get out of here. I'm done hiding in these caves. I've done all this with all my 600 men or however many men he had 400, 600.

I'm out of here. And he said, this is what I'm going to do. I'm going to the land of Philistines.

I know I killed their champion, but I think they'll accept me because I could probably do some good things for them. And he went over there and met with the king of Gath and he said, listen, yeah, you know, I'm done supporting this Saul. All he does is it causes me grief.

I've been loyal to him. It's time for me to be loyal to you. And he said, well, that's fantastic.

And he said, listen, I've got a perfect spot for you and your men. I have a city. It's all built and everything.

I'll just get rid of some of the stragglers. I'll put them somewhere else and give them other houses. And you can have the city of Ziklag.

You can go live there and all your people and all your wives. I mean, you'll be safe there. And you know what? Nobody's going to bother you.

You just go out and make your money and do your raiding and just get ahead and everything. It's like, ah, it's a fantastic idea. And God will be with me in all this.

And so they went and did all their thing. And even then all of a sudden found out that Israel was going to go into battle. Saul and Jonathan and all of Israel was going against the Philistines.

David said, you know what? I'm going to go help the Philistines against this guy. Somehow he become disillusioned about the purpose and call of God in his life. He probably thought maybe, you know, if the Philistines defeat the guy, then maybe I'll get my shot or who knows what he was thinking.

But he wasn't thinking clear. When you get in unbelief, you don't think in clear. You get out of the word of God and you start listening to all these people talking.

You get in the news and everybody starts talking about this and that. You forget what truth is. We have to spend our time in the word of God to come and understand what God says.

Let God be true in every man and liar. David was going to be king over Israel and he was king over Israel at a certain point, but he found himself in a bad way. And so while they're out on raids one day when the king of Gath, he said, yeah, go and fight with these guys.

Then the Philistine ruler said, are you serious? You're going to bring this guy in to fight with us? Don't you remember what he did to our champion? You know, what's going to happen? We're going to go out there and all of a sudden he's going to have a change of heart. He's going to get convicted or something. Next thing you know, he's going to turn around.

He's going to kill us all. We're not fighting with that guy. If you're fighting with that guy, we're not going.

He said, okay, I'll tell him. I'll tell him. Sorry, David, you can't fight with our guys.

They won't fight with you. What do you mean? I want to fight against Saul. This guy deserves it.

He said, no, they won't fight with you. You just go back to Zaglag. Well, by the time they went back and they had done some more raiding or whatever, their wives and their children were there.

The Amalekites had come. It's another nasty group that came through. The enemy sent them and the Lord allowed it.

And they went and they lit all their houses on fire and burned them to the ground, took their wives, their livestock, everything they had that was any value and carried it off with them. And when they came back there, David was there with all his men and they cried when all their children were gone. They cried when all their houses were burned up and there was nothing left, no provisions.

There was no city for them to live. They just wanted to die. There was hopeless there.

And they cried until they had no more strength to weep. That's a place of hopelessness. I've been there a few times in my life.

God doesn't want us to cry until there's no more strength to weep. We can cry over sin. We can cry because we've sinned against God.

But you know what? We can't cry when we've gone out of God's will and find ourselves in a bad way with everything burnt around to the ground around us. It's what David says in Psalm 51, against thee and thee only have I sinned and done evil in thy sight. He had to get light on himself.

What are you doing here? Just like Elijah when he was in the cave running from the Jezebel and he said, Lord, they killed all your prophets and there's no one left and I'm the only one. And the Holy Spirit speaks to him. God speaks to him in the cave and he says, Elijah, what are you doing here? Why are you here? Well, they killed all your prophets and this and that.

Elijah, you just took out all those Baal worshippers, those false prophets, the false prophets of 450 of the other false prophets. You got a great victory in Israel. It started to rain.

God started pouring out His Spirit again. And then this one woman, Jezebel, comes and puts some good fear in you and you're running. Where's your faith? What are you doing here? Why are you doing this? It can happen to mighty men of God that unbelief can come and then you can get gripped with fear regarding your circumstances.

That's not God's will for your life. Fear is the opposite of faith. We need to put your hope in God for I shall yet what? Praise Him.

Why are you discouraged? Why are you downcast? Brother, sister, put your hope in God. Start to praise Him. That's where our help comes from.

It doesn't come from the hills and the mountains. Oh, if I get to know so-and-so and he has a man of influence or this is a woman of influence, if I can get to know them, they can do something good for me. No, if you can get to know God, He can do something good for you.

We put our trust in men. I've done it when I was young in the Lord. There's this guy that I respected who built high-rises.

He built most of the high-rises that are standing in Abbotsford. He died in the penthouse of his high-rise there when he was 49 years old. I wanted to be like him.

I built homes for him for a time. When he got remarried, I went and bought him a bottle of wine. I was seeking his favor and I was even walking with the Lord then.

We need light on these things. We trust in men and God allowed that man to die. It says, wicked men won't live out half their days.

I don't want to be one of those. David was there weeping until he had no strength and his men turned on him and wanted to kill him. Oh, man, what to do? You know what? Man, I got to get ahold of God on this one.

I mean, I'm done otherwise. If I don't hear from God, I'm finished because it's dark and darker. So he grabs the epaud from the priest and he says, I got to hear from God.

Only the priest was supposed to hear from God. David took the role of a priest there out of desperation and from faith. He just had whatever mustard seed of faith he had left there and he got desperate to hear from God.

Shall I pursue the Amalekites? Shall I not? What shall I do? Are you going to be with me? Yes or no? And he hears from God. Surely you shall recover all. Pursue your enemy, put him to chase.

God will give you the victory. He got up out of there and he encouraged his brothers. Hey, God spoke to me.

God told me we're going to get the victory. And they said, okay. And he built the faith and he strengthened the faith of the guys around him.

And he said, we're going after it now. And God will show us the way. And they found some Ethiopian or some guy, Egyptian guy that was, he was half sick and half dead, probably had COVID.

And then he was sitting there and he said, well, where did they go? And they took care of him. He said, well, they went that way. He said, oh, thank you, Lord.

You know what? Then there were some guys who were so tired. They were too weak. They couldn't fight of the 600 men.

So 200 of them stayed with the provisions and 400 went to fight. You know what? And they went and they went and they won the battle and they took all the spoils back. They got all their family, their wives back.

And not only that, these Amalekites had raided all kinds of other cities and all kinds of other stuff. They took all that stuff back. And when they came back, then some of the men that had done the fighting who had been strong enough for the battle said, hey, you know what? We're not sharing with these guys.

They didn't do nothing. They sat here, got all tired. You know what? David says we're not like that.

This is not how we roll. We share with everyone. Sometimes people are weak and discouraged and are not able to go all the way in their fight.

But you know what? We're going to bless them and we're going to treat them just the same. Because when everyone is in the church and everyone's part of a body, we're all one. We don't say, well, you know what? You didn't clean up any chairs last week, so there's only half a sandwich for you or no soup for you.

We don't say stuff like that. We bless everyone because the love of God is in us. And that's the kind of heart David had.

And you know what ended up happening? The Philistines battled the Israelites and Saul ended up dying in the battle and his son Jonathan. And then the men of Judah came and they said, hey, David, you know, can you rule over us? We remember. We remember God is with you.

And they came and they made him king of Judah and then eventually king of Israel and the nation was restored in that. God restored peace in Israel through David and through Solomon. It's important to remember that when we get discouraged, quite often it's our own decisions and our own unbelief and our own sin that brought us into this place.

And a lot of times what happens is we blame others. You know what? It was my dad's fault because of this and that. It was my mom's fault.

It was my uncle's fault. It was that person's fault that ripped me off. It was this person's fault, that person's fault.

You know what David said in Psalm 51? Against thee and thee only am I sinned and done evil in thy sight, O God, and have repented. Repentance means owning our own response to other people's actions, owning our own response to how we've grieved God, how we've broken his word, how we've walked in our own selfish ways and done our own things. And you know what? When we repent, God will forgive.

But like Brother Dan shared, we have to release others. 100% along the way, people have done things that they shouldn't have done to you and hurt you and discourage you. Maybe you got bitterness, unforgiveness, resentments, hate.

You have to repent of that and give them to God. Say, God, you deal with it. And it might come to you over and over again, 10 times.

I remember I struggled with some things and that bitterness would come. Sean labored along with me. You know I labored along with Sean, but Sean labored along with me.

Because when the brothers took off and we were going through a hard time in our life, you know, I had bitterness come in my heart. You get a root of bitterness. It's like that knotweed.

It's like that bramble. You think you got it and it's deep. It's in there and it just comes back again in another season.

And God wants to deal with the root of bitterness in us. This root of unforgiveness. We can't say we love God and hate a brother or hate someone.

It doesn't work. With our tongue, we can't bless God and curse men. It doesn't work.

Can salt water and fresh come from the same opening? Neither can we say we love God and hate people or speak evil of people. So we need God to deal with the root. He says, make the tree good and the fruit will be good.

A tree is known by its fruit. And when you start with a tree, you have the tree planted in roots, just like a foundation. You have to have a good foundation.

You have to have a good root. And if you get a bitter root, you're going to defile everybody. I was doing that and I just couldn't stop.

You know what you say? Well, I'm done with my cigarettes. I'm going to deal with them. Or I'm done with drugs.

I'm going to put them away. And you're going to have a wrestle and a battle and you can overcome. You can say you're done with bitterness.

Where are you going to go to dig a root out of your heart if you got bitterness there from something your old man did? You can't get it out. You can only confess it and cry out to the Lord to remove it. You know what? And if we confess our sins, He's faithful and just to forgive us.

How many years was it, Sean? And it was still coming up. And then every once in a while it would still come up. And then I would have to just own it.

Yeah, do I have a reason to be bitter? Probably. But does it mean that I'm justified by that? No. Because God calls me to release everyone.

Because if I can't forgive men their trespasses, neither will my Heavenly Father forgive me. And if I don't find forgiveness from God, then what's the point of anything that I'm trying to do to better myself? Nothing. It's all a zero.

If you can believe, you say, well, what if I forgive? What about whatever is going to happen to them? Bible says, bless your enemies. Pray for those who persecute you and spitefully use you. Love those who are the unlovable.

God calls us to love everyone. You know, even our government officials. He calls us to love them and to pray for them.

To pray that we can live at peace as believers. And only God can do that. And that's to always be a miracle.

It's not what I can do and God can add to it and kind of make it good. No, God has to change the heart. He says, He'll take a heart of stone and make it a heart of flesh.

He'll take our sin and put it with Him, nail it with Him on the tree. Having disarmed principalities and powers. When He deals with the sin issue, He disarms principalities and powers in your life.

And if the enemy has power and control over your life, then you haven't yet fully dealt with the sin issue. Because when the Son sets free, He's free indeed. He told some Jews who believed in His name, and they said, you know what, buddy, we're free.

We're Abraham's descendants. We're Jewish. We've never been abanished to anybody.

We're like a cut above. We're better than the rest. With that kind of attitude, you'll never repent.

We need to see ourselves in the light of God's word. You say, well, then I'm going to lose my self-esteem. I'm not going to love myself.

Show me one scripture where it says you're supposed to love yourself. You show it to me and I'll repent right now. You know what it says? When those men saw that they sinned gravely against God, they loathed themselves and they repented.

When you loathe yourselves and repent, you're going to experience waves of God's love, waves of His love. When I experienced waves of God's love, when I knew that I had committed so many atrocities against Him and against my wife and against my family and against so many others, I just bawled my head off. And then I would just experience another wave of this love and I'd just say, how could I have done it? Why did I wait so long to humble myself? I just didn't want to humble myself.

Because what do people think if I can't do it? What do people think if I relapse? What do people think if they see me at the nightclub dancing with other women? What will they think? I can't show any weakness. I've got to keep a stiff upper lip. I've got to press on.

I can figure this out. No, we can't. God died for our sins.

Jesus died for our sins so that we could be free. If I humble myself under His heavy hand, He's going to lift me up. He lifted me up, He says in Psalm 40, out of the miry clay.

That's sin, my friends. Out of the horrible pit. That's a place where the enemy has you.

And He placed us upon a rock. That's Jesus Christ. Right? And He put a new song in my heart.

A new song in my mouth. Praise to our God. You know what? I'm going to say there's no other name under heaven by which men must be saved.

His name is Jesus. I brought a text this morning. Said I've struggled with some things.

This and that and the other thing. What's your advice? I said love Jesus. And out of your innermost being will flow rivers of living water.

Just love Jesus. Say well, I'm trying. I'm trying to love Jesus.

And a lot of times, you know, we had a wonderful meal yesterday. We had Indian food. We had the samosas.

We had the butter chicken. We had the ala gobi. We had a big feast.

After I had all that, I was just so full. I wasn't hungry for this. Scripture says whose God is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who set their mind on earthly things.

God gave us all things richly to enjoy, but I'll not be brought under the power of anything. He said, man, you know, I should probably read my Bible. But Netflix has some new shows.

And then this thing has some shows. And then, oh, we could go there and we could go shoot some pool. And then we could do this.

And then we could do that. And get all this cool stuff we could do. Whose God is their belly, who's just satisfying the lust of the flesh.

And then we wonder why we're not hungry for God's word. He took them through the wilderness to say what? To show them he sent leanness into their souls so that they would see that man doesn't live by bread alone, but by every word of God. You want an appetite for the word of God? Stop feeding your flesh and junking out on all the other stuff that's out there.

You say, well, isn't it all permissible? Scripture says in Hebrews 12, throw off every weight and sin that so easily entangles. It's not just sin, which is clear cut, there's weight. And what ends up happening is you can't run the race that God has called you to run when you're loaded down.

I've never seen a guy go to the gym to go work out and train. When he's got his jeans on, he's got two shirts on and he's got his jacket on and he's got his tuque on and he's there training like he's going to overheat. I've never seen anybody.

I've never gone to the gym and seen a guy full dressed and full winter gear just working out with a backpack on his back. No, I go there and they're wearing the smallest stuff and the littlest things and they're there and they're training and the runners, they're running with almost nothing on and they're serious about winning some kind of piece of junk that's going to tarnish. And he calls us to run the race with perseverance, fixing our eyes on Jesus and run in such a way as to win.

How many ever start something to fail at it? I don't. If I'm going to say, well, we're going to build a house. I had a big cry because I knew what it was going to take.

And Sean was looking at me like, it's not going to take that. Oh yeah, it's going to take that. It's going to be two and a half years.

It was three because you've got to sit down and count the cost whether you're going to have enough to finish because once you lay a foundation, you can't quit. Everybody that drives by is going to mock. You go to Haiti where we've been and you're going to see somebody who bought some property, laid a foundation, put a couple cement walls up and you drive by and say, oh yeah, they went bankrupt.

And that thing's been there. We've been there for 10 years. That same thing, nothing's happened on it in 10 years.

It's still sitting there. No, if you're going to follow the Lord, you've got to sit down and count the cost whether you're all in or whether you're half-hearted in it. Because if you're half-hearted, don't start.

It's going to, you're just going to say, I tried that, didn't work. I don't know anybody who competes in athletics or whatever and their intention is to be mediocre or to lose. I mean, you don't want those guys on your team.

You know, sure, sometimes you're going to lose and sometimes you're going to be discouraged. You've got to come alongside one another, encourage one another to contend for the faith. Let's keep going, brothers.

Let's press on. Well, I fell seven times and nobody will talk to me. You know what? God can and he will, but you've got to get your eyes on him and get it off the flesh.

It's the spirit that gives life, gentlemen, the flesh, prophets, nothing. Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. Run the race with endurance.

You know what endurance is? You know what? Some of us we can run, I can run to the fridge and like with the best of them. But if you ask me to go for a run down the road, I'm going to start huffing and puffing. But lately I've been on the treadmill because, you know, I've got to get some exercise and everything.

And you know what I found? I was at Costco yesterday and I'm running around and I'm doing my stuff and I wasn't getting tired. Right? I was doing those chores that need to be done with my wife. I wasn't getting tired.

I didn't have to take a break because of endurance. You've got to start somewhere. No, we have to start somewhere with our spiritual walk.

You have to say, you know what? I have need of endurance. You get up a little earlier in the morning, you need to discipline yourself to focus on things. You get into prayer.

You say, you know what? I'm going to cut some things out of my life because the Holy Spirit's given me some conviction. And you know what? I'm going to lay off some of that stuff, the butter chicken and that, right? And I'm going to start to eat those good things. Because as a man thinks, so is he.

You start to fill your head with all kinds of garbage and all kinds of other stuff. That's what you become. And if you surround yourself around people who have this kind of mindset, right? My grandmother used to tell me, and she gave me this thing called teens creed, show me your friends and I'll show you who you are.

Show me your friends and I'll tell you who you are. That's why it says in 2 Corinthians 6, come out from among them and be separate. Don't touch what is unclean and I'll receive you.

You want the promises. I'll be a father to you and you'll be my sons and daughters, but we're not prepared to separate ourselves. Now, it's not always possible, but you know what it is because you don't have to eat lunch with them.

You don't have to talk all the same drip of the world with them to fit in or to be accepted. Because if you want to be accepted, then this isn't for you because Jesus was rejected. He came to his own people and his own people rejected him.

He was a man of sorrows acquainted with grief, right? A man that God had afflicted. He was the God man, God's son, born of a woman, born in the likeness of sinful flesh who was not sinful flesh. He overcame sin and he never sinned once and he became that perfect spotless lamb of God that deals with the sin of the world and he deals with mine and yours.

That's why the shed blood of Jesus is so important. That's why it's important to be filled with the Holy Spirit and with the Word of God because we can't. It's like a car with no gas.

You don't have the Holy Spirit in your life. How are you supposed to live according to this book? It's just a bunch of rules. That's why we fail because we don't have the power to perform what God has asked us to do.

It has to be a miracle. It has to be God working in us both to will and to do for his good pleasure. He says, work out your salvation with fear and trembling, right? Deny the self, deny flesh, die to the self.

Yes, the works of the flesh are evident. So how are we going to do that if we don't have gas? We don't have power. Willpower will take you so far but it won't fill you with righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

That's what the Holy Spirit will do. When the Holy Spirit fills you, he'll make you righteous, he'll fill you with peace, and he'll give you joy. You say, well, what do I have to be joyful about? It's not our circumstances that give us joy.

It's Jesus who gives us joy. You say, well, I spent some time in prayer. I felt like a real peace come over me a couple days ago.

And I was like, man, so such turmoil out there that I can just have the peace of God which passes understanding just here. Like it was tangible, you could feel it, you know, because God is our rest. Guys, we have to come into this rest.

We have to enter into this rest. Jesus becomes your Sabbath rest. You know, some people will fight about whether it's Friday to Saturday or whether it's Sunday or what it is.

I'm going to tell you, Jesus is our Sabbath rest. Being found in him, being found in Christ, being submerged in Jesus, not walking according to our own ungodly lust, but according to his will, according to his mercy, he saved us. So, guys, love God.

Love Jesus. Fix your eyes on him. Jesus is the bridge to being reconciled with the Father.

There's no one comes to the Father except through Jesus Christ because Jesus is the one who deals with the sin issue. No more blood of bulls and goats sacrifices. He has sacrificed once the offering of himself on the cross for us.

One sacrifice. And if we're walking in submission to him, he has perfected forever those who are being set apart. It's the direction.

If we keep following Jesus, he's perfected us forever, those who are being set apart. So when God sees us, he sees us just as if we haven't sinned. That sounds like a heresy.

But you know what? That's what the blood of Jesus does. Cleanses us from all sin. Right? There's no condemnation for those who walk in the spirit.

We're not walking after the flesh. That's where the condemnation is. Men love darkness rather than the light because their deeds are evil.

So we want Jesus and we want the flesh too. Well, that's why we have condemnation. That's why our conscience is bothering us.

Because we're trying to do things in the flesh rather than walking in the spirit by faith. Trust Jesus. If you get confused, you don't understand what to do.

Cry out to Jesus. Ask him for help. He's going to answer you.

Just keep asking. I got victory over the bitterness. It took me a couple few years.

It's like an onion, it got thinner and thinner. And then all of a sudden, a month later, it would come back again. Oh man, it's back.

I got to confess it again. I remember there was still about 10% of that left of that bitterness. And Sarah got baptized.

We were in Palm Springs there. And I confessed it to a couple of brothers, to Gordon and to Dale, who were there. God orchestrated it.

And I started weeping. I says, I'm going to be meeting with my brother. We're going to be playing baseball together.

And I still have this bitterness toward my brother. It comes out by my comments, smart comments. It's there.

I can sense it. And I said, I don't want it anymore. And I'm humbling myself.

And they beat me up a little bit. They said, why are you hanging on to that? Why don't you just give it to the Lord? He died for that. I know all those things.

I can't get it out. I don't have tweezers that are sharp enough and deep enough to get that thing out. I'm just confessing my sin because he says, if I confess my sin, he's faithful and just to forgive and not just forgive, cleanse me from it.

We need cleansing people. How are you going to walk in victory if you don't get cleansing? It's like saying, I'm a king's kid and we still got all this baggage of the flesh that we're not allowing him to cleanse us of. We're still smoking.

We're still drinking. We're still partying. We still do all these bad habits.

It says, no, but you were washed, but you were set apart. We want the promises, but we don't want to allow him to cleanse us. We have to get him to work his way all the way through our members so that people can see Jesus when they see us.

Right? I remember there was time when you're sitting in the club there and you're smoking a big wine dipped cigar with a drink in your hand and you're telling people about Jesus because you don't want to deny Jesus. Right? You never want to deny Jesus. You say, oh, you know, those Christians, well, what are you talking about? I'm a Christian.

You stand in there and you just have no light that you're denying him by your actions. It's because of guys like me from the past. I said, that's a hypocrite there.

Right there is a hypocrite. Another one of those Christians that lives just like me. Why do I need Jesus to be the same? No.

Come out from among them and be separate. We need cleansing, sanctification, not just justification, sanctification and glorification. That means as he is, so are we in this world.

People see Jesus through us. When my brother went to the hospital to go see Sean there, he saw, oh, he's just glowing. He saw Jesus.

That's what we want to be. If we allow God to deal with these things, get the darkness completely out and the true light shining, then people can see, hey, what happened to you? What's going on in your life? And it can always be a testimony of the hope of Jesus. Just get in love with the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to obey in its lusts and you will do well.

You'll have this narrow gate will open up for you. Once you get through that narrow gate, which is Jesus, it'll open up for you and the grand entrance will be provided for you. He starts in faith and ends in love.

It's just the cycle of life and the spirit starts in faith and ends in love. Let the Lord give you love for people. Let the Lord give you love for your enemies.

Let him give you love for everyone because God is love. That's why he sent his son. Who would give their son for someone an unclean? For someone who nailed him on the cross, he would give his son for the guy who actually would nail his son on the cross.

That's what God did. For God so loved the world, he gave his only son that whosoever would believe in Jesus should not perish, but have this everlasting life. That life is in his son.

And we are partakers of the divine nature through faith in Jesus Christ. Amen.

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