

# How the Church Builds the Kingdom

by Stephen Kaung

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*The church is built by the principle of the kingdom of the heavens, through the building of local assemblies, and the church has the responsibility to continue to preach the kingdom of the heavens.*

**Duration:** 1:12:56

**Scripture:** Malachi 3:16, Matthew 6:10, Matthew 24:14, Acts 17:11, Romans 7:24-25, Hebrews 12:28, Revelation 12:11

**Topics:** "Church Growth", "Kingdom Living"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the significance of the church and the kingdom of heaven, emphasizing the need for believers to align themselves with God's will and purpose. It explores the responsibility of the church to preach and pray for the kingdom of heaven to come, and the importance of serving with reverence and fear. The concept of overcomers, those who trust in the blood of Jesus and bear testimony to His power, is highlighted as essential for believers to be prepared to meet the Lord.

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## Transcript

Will you please turn to the gospel according to Matthew. Matthew chapter 24, verse 14. Matthew 24, verse 14.

And these glad tidings of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole habitable world, earth, for a witness to all the nations, and then shall come the end. Same book, chapter six, verse 10. Let thy kingdom come, let thy will be done as in heaven, so upon the earth.

Hebrews, chapter 12, verse 28. Wherefore, let us receiving a kingdom not to be shaken have grace by which let us serve God acceptably with reverence and fear. And finally, the book of Revelation, chapter 12, verse 11.

Revelation 12, 11. And they, that is the man child, have overcome him, the accuser, by reason of the blood of the lamb and by reason of the word of their testimony, and have not loved their life, their soul life, even unto death. Let's have a little prayer.

Dear Lord, as we continue in thy presence, we just wait to hear what thou hast to say to us. Lord, we are thy born servants. Waiting to hear from thee our master, our Lord.

Speak, thy servants heareth. And may thy word be living and operative in our lives, enabling us to really be a vessel of thy testimony, amen, to bring in thy kingdom and thy righteousness. We commit this time

into your hand, trusting in thy Holy Spirit to reveal thy mind to us.

We ask in thy precious name, amen. My assignment is the church and the kingdom. Yesterday morning, we spent some little time trying to define what do we mean by the church? And what is the kingdom that we are talking about? The church is not what commonly understood by people.

Sometimes we say, well, I forgot my umbrella in the church. And by that, it shows that we think of the church more in the term of a building where God's people worship. But strictly speaking, the church is ecclesia.

Those who are called out of the world, gathered together unto the name of our Lord Jesus. The church is not where God's people, gathered together under any other name, either under the name of a famous Christian or under the name of a truth, a name of a organization. That is not a church.

The church is where God's people are gathered together unto only one name, and that is the name of our Lord Jesus. Brothers and sisters, this is not just a question over a name, it is a question over who is the sovereign, under whose sovereignty we gather together, we are under. So dear brothers and sisters, as we read the word of God, we find this is what the church really is.

It is true that the church has two aspects. There is the universal aspect and the local aspect. The universal aspect is where all the spiritual principles are being given, and the local aspect is where locally we who are still on this earth, being limited by time and space, how should we work out all these spiritual principles? And as you read the Bible, you find the way of building the church is by building these local churches.

For in the book of Revelation, in chapters two and three, we find the seven churches in Asia, and there in the midst of them is our Lord Jesus as the great high priest ministering to his church. Our Lord Jesus today in heaven is ministering to his church. He is trying to see if he can find himself in the church, if there is any lack that he is going to apply the oil so that we may burn brightly, shining for the testimony of Jesus.

And it is through the building of these local assemblies that eventually, when you come to Revelation 21 and 22, you find the new Jerusalem, the church universal. So brothers and sisters, it is very important to see that the building of the church is through the building of the church local. This is where our responsibility lies.

And we have also mentioned about the kingdom. The kingdom is the king, is the sovereign rule of our God, of our Lord, from eternity to eternity, God rules. This is the kingdom of God.

There is nothing in heaven or on earth that is not under the sovereign rule of our God. But unfortunately, we find that there was rebellion first among the angels, and then later on, we find again in man. And because all these rebellions, people try to get out of the sovereign rule of God, but God never give up.

He has his wonderful plan, and his plan is to have someone who is little lower than the angels to destroy the work of the enemy. So God's purpose may be fulfilled. So we find yesterday morning, we mentioned something about how the kingdom builds the church.

The Lord Jesus said, you are Peter. I will build my church upon this rock, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And immediately following that, the Lord said, you are given the keys to the heaven, kingdom of heaven.

So brothers and sisters, we find that it is the kingdom of heaven that opens not only the door, but also to build up the church. Now in what way? Who is going to build his church? This work, God has not given to any one person, or many people. This building of the church belongs to our Lord Jesus.

He said, I will build my church. And how he is going to build it? He will build it upon that one foundation, which is the Lord himself. And he will build this building with the materials that comes out of his life.

So he said, you are Peter. You were formerly Simon, a dust, but now you are Peter. Because there is a new element that has come into your life.

It makes you a living stone, even though a small stone, and yet it is a part of that rock. And the Lord Jesus said, I will build my church upon this rock and using this material. So brothers and sisters, we need to realize that the building of the church is not just building you and me as natural man.

No two man, no two person can really be one. But praise and thank God that in each and every one of us, we have the same life. And that life is the building material.

And because of this, you find something is absolutely necessary. And that is ourselves. If we ourselves, if we in the natural, if our flesh, if our old Adam is still there, you find it is the largest obstacle to the building of the church.

Ofentimes we think Satan is our greatest enemy. But brothers and sisters, more and more we realize our greatest enemy to the building of the church is we ourselves. So I remember Martin Luther once said, he said, I'm not afraid of the Pope.

I'm not afraid of all these cardinals. I'm not afraid of all these dukes and counts. But I'm afraid of the old Adam in me.

Brothers and sisters, how true that is. So in our Christian experience, I believe after we have believed in the Lord Jesus, the first awakening that come to our life is we begin to realize, even though there is the life of Christ in our spirit, and he is telling us, urging us to move on heavenward, but at the same time we do begin to sense there is in our soul still that old Adam life. And these little darlings are in war.

As the Bible said, the spirit lusts against the flesh and the flesh against the spirit. This is a common experience to all believers. Do not be disappointed because when we are in that civil war, we will feel that most of the time we are defeated instead of victorious.

Even though sometimes we do have a heart to follow the Lord, but the will is in us. To do is not in us. Just like the apostle Paul in Romans chapter seven, how he cried out, oh wretched man that I am, who can deliver me from this body of death? If Paul cannot do that with such an iron will, now how about you and me? Are we able to deliver ourselves from ourselves? We can do anything, but there's one thing we cannot do.

You cannot live of yourself. It's beyond us. We are the problem, brothers and sisters, not until we realize that in the building of the church, the real problem is ourselves.

Unless we are willing to let go of ourselves, unless we are willing to allow the Lord Jesus by his love to constrain us, that we are willing to let go, there is no hope for the building of the church. Sometimes we hear people say, where can I find a perfect church? And the answer is, if you find it, because you go there,

so it becomes imperfect. So brothers and sisters, you can see how hopeless we are.

Have you given hope of yourself? Do you still trust in yourself, rely on your iron will? If you are, you will go through more conflict. So dear brothers and sisters, thank God, he arranges so many different kinds of circumstances. We call it the discipline of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit would arrange our life. We who are the lords, thank God, we have someone who is in charge of our life. And he is the all-wise God.

He knows just exactly how to break us, how to deliver us, how to bring us into this body of Christ. And with his wisdom, he will arrange our everyday experience. This may not be true with unbelievers, but so far, unbelievers are concerned.

Brothers and sisters, be assured that you have someone who is taking full responsibility for you. Even your very hair has been numbered. Now we often say, nobody knows how many hairs you have.

Nobody knows how many hairs even fall off in the morning when you comb yourself. But our Lord Jesus not only knows the numbers, he even numbers every hair. So this morning when you comb your hair, number certain number fall down.

And he notices it. Now if someone can notice you in such a way, do you think he will neglect you? Do you think he does not know what is going on in your life? Do you think that he is not trying to perfect you? So dear brothers and sisters, be assured that we have the Holy Spirit in charge of our lives. He will so arrange our circumstances.

Whom are you going to meet today? What is going to happen today? Everything is under his control. And dear brothers and sisters, if we do not fight against that or murmur against God, but we yield ourselves to him and he will be able to work out his full salvation in our life. So dear brothers and sisters, this is the way that the church is to be built.

And it is all being built by the principle of the kingdom of the heavens. Now this morning we would like to go the other way. We would like to share together on this matter of how the church will bring in the kingdom.

As we know, when our Lord Jesus first came into this world, the message was, repent for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn nigh. You know, brothers and sisters, for 400 years, God was silent to his people. Malachi was the last voice in the Old Testament, not because God does not want to speak to his people.

Even from the very beginning, when you look in the book of Genesis, when God put man in the garden of Eden, he just not leave them there, but you find he comes to visit them. In other words, God always is looking after us, but because his people did not hear, will not hear. After he has sent prophets again and again into their midst, trying to remind them, but they were so stubborn in their heart, they refused to listen.

They wanted to go their own way. And eventually they drew God to silence. Brothers and sisters, it is a terrible thing if we drive God to silence.

If he cannot speak to us again, where will we be? We are lost. But after 400 years, the Lord could not contain himself. He spoke again.

He sent a messenger before the king. John the Baptist came and his message was, repent for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn nigh. Brothers and sisters, we usually think of repentance in connecting with our sins, but here you find repentance is to be based upon the coming of the kingdom of the heavens.

It is positive. Why do you need to repent? It is because the kingdom of the heavens is coming. And if the kingdom of heaven arrives, where will you be? Will you be able to be in the kingdom of the heavens or you will be outside of that kingdom? So that is something for us to repent about.

It is more than just to repent your sins. It is even to repent of your goodness, of your confidence, of your self-righteousness. Everything that is not of God in our lives must go because the kingdom of the heavens is nothing but the sovereign rule of our God.

So brothers and sisters, you find when our Lord Jesus was sent into this world, he began his ministry with the same preaching. He said, repent for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn nigh. And even after he was resurrected from the dead, during those days he was with his disciples, he was still talking to them about the kingdom of the heavens.

And you find the apostles took up that gospel. When you read the words spoken by Peter and the 11 on the day of Pentecost, it is the gospel of the kingdom of the heavens because the one whom you have rejected, he is now be anointed as Lord, as Christ. That is the message of the kingdom of the heavens.

And even when Paul was in that hired place in Rome, waiting to be judged, you find at the end of Acts, he was still preaching the kingdom message and teaching about the Lord Jesus. So dear brothers and sisters, this is the gospel. That has committed to the church.

It is the responsibility of the church to continue to preach the kingdom of the heavens. Why? Because as we already read in Matthew chapter 24, it says the message of the kingdom of the heavens shall be preached throughout the whole earth to all the nations and then the end shall come. So dear brothers and sisters, this message of the kingdom of the heavens has been entrusted to the church.

And why is it so? Because only when that message is not only preached, but believing and experienced, then you'll find the end has come. When our Lord Jesus left his disciples and ascended to heaven, he promised he will come again. So during the first century, God's people are looking forward to his return.

And in all these centuries, 20 centuries before us, those who love the Lord, they are all waiting to see the coming of the Lord in their lifetime. They are not mistaken because the Lord can come at any time if his bride is ready. The reason why his bride, he is not coming yet.

You know, oftentimes I think we are anxious for the Lord to come. We wonder why he doesn't come. But on the contrary, our Lord is anxious to return, to receive us to himself.

But because we are not ready. You know, so far as I can recall, there is only one occasion in a marriage that the bride waiting for the bridegroom. Usually in a marriage, you find the bridegroom will already be there.

He's very anxious, waiting for the bride to come. And he wonder why the bride delayed. But so far as I know, there was only one occasion.

And that was Huston Taylor's great-grandfather. He was a young man, careless, free, not religious in a sense. But on the day that he was going to be married, when he woke up in the morning, he suddenly realized, I'm going to be married.

That's a great responsibility. So he went to the field to pray. And he prayed and prayed and prayed and prayed.

He forgot the time. When he woke up, suddenly he realized that was the time of his marriage. Because the bride was already there waiting for him.

Everybody was wondering why he went. So he rushed to that church building and was married. But something happened.

That very evening, he asked his wife to kneel down and pray. And it was a surprise to his wife because they used to be a happy couple. They liked all these amusement and all these dancing and everything.

And suddenly, she married a husband who was a Methodist. But he had to kneel down and pray. And after that, for generations, the Taylor family have been serving God.

They came to China, and we are ever grateful for what has happened. So, brothers and sisters, usually it is the husband that is waiting for his wife. But in our case, it is just the opposite.

The Lord Jesus has been waiting and waiting and waiting. Why? Because the bride is not ready. He cannot marry a baby, a teenager.

Not for the groom. He had to marry a counterpart, one like him. Just like Eve comes out of Adam.

It is part of Adam. Therefore, they can be united into one. And that is what our Lord Jesus is waiting for.

Brothers and sisters, it is more than a personal matter. It affects the eternal purpose of God. So, how we need the kingdom and the kingdom truth to build us up, that we may really be grown to the full statue of Christ.

And at that time, he is able to come back and receive him to himself. So, brothers and sisters, you find our Lord Jesus, when he first came into this world, he began to preach the gospel of the kingdom of the heavens. He's saying he's drawing nigh.

Why? Because the king has already come. He's going to establish his kingdom upon this earth. This earth is a rebellious earth.

It is under the control of Satan and the evil spirits of the air. So, he came, tried to build his kingdom in such an environment. He was alone.

So, he said, the kingdom of the heavens has drawn nigh. The king is here, but where is my people? So, he began to preach. And thank God, there were some who responded to him.

They became his disciples. They followed him. And because he began to have disciples, around him, people who are willing to leave everything to learn of him, to be transformed by him, to be conformed to his image.

It's a long process, but that's the beginning. So, therefore, you'll find in chapter 11 of the gospel according to Matthew, he began to say, the kingdom of the heavens is to be seized by violence, and the violent seize upon it. In other words, the kingdom of the heavens is here now.

The Lord is here. His disciples are here. So, you'll find that the kingdom of the heavens is on earth now.

And the way to enter into the kingdom of the heavens is to seize it by violence, not doing violent to other people, but doing violent to ourselves. Put our body under, put our flesh away, and allow the Christ, the life of Christ, grow and mature in us. But even so, the kingdom of the heavens is already on earth, but it is hidden.

So far as the world is concerned, it is hidden. You remember in Matthew chapter 13, the Lord used several, seven parables about the kingdom of the heavens. In other words, so far as the appearance of the kingdom of the heavens today, it is still hidden.

So, he used two parables. One, the parable of the treasure. There was a man looking for great treasure, and he discovered a treasure.

So, what he did? He hid it again in the earth. He went and sold everything he has to buy that earth in order to get that treasure. Now, what is that treasure? And then he followed by another parable, the pearl.

A man is looking for great pearl. And when he find one, he sold everything to get that pearl. Outwardly, the kingdom of the heavens today is like a mustard seed that has grown abnormally into a big tree, and the birds of prey began to settle upon it.

That shows the outward form of the kingdom of heavens in the eyes of the world. In the eyes of the world, the kingdom of heavens is Christendom. Wherever the influence of Christianity is, there is the kingdom of the heavens.

The kingdom of heaven is supposed to be very small, a mustard seed. It belongs to the plant, not to the tree, which is another species. And yet, it grows into a tree.

And the birds of prey, that is satanic power, comes into it. Or like a woman put yeast into the meal, and everything is leavened up. That is what Christianity is today.

Outwardly, it becomes abnormally big. Inwardly, it is not only morally, but spiritually corrupted. But thank God, in spite of all these outward things, there is something hidden there.

There is some reality there. And the reality is in two aspects. So far as the treasure is concerned, it speaks of the truth of the kingdom of heaven.

So far as the pearl is concerned, it speaks of the experience of the kingdom of the heavens. And there is a reality there. There are some people throughout the 20 centuries, up to our time, there are some real ones, people who really do violence to themselves, willing to take up the cross and follow the Lord, deny themselves, and allow the Lord to build his life within them.

They literally are living in the kingdom of the heavens. They literally are living under the dominion of our Lord Jesus. They are hidden.

They are just a little flock, so far as the world is concerned. But brothers and sisters, this is what the kingdom of heavens is today. There is the kingdom of the heavens here on earth today, but the world does not see it.

And unfortunately, sometimes, even God's people do not see it. Are we living really today in the kingdom of the heavens? Positionally, yes, because he has delivered us out of the power of darkness and has translated us into the kingdom of the son of his love. So positionally, every believer is supposed to be daily living in the kingdom of the heavens today, even before it will be publicly manifested.

But brothers and sisters, how very few are truly living in the kingdom of the heavens. How very few people really let the truth of that kingdom of the heavens sink deep into their heart and transform them and experience the kingdom today. They are really under the sovereign rule of our Lord Jesus.

God's purpose is for the whole church, everyone who is saved, everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus to be in the kingdom of the heavens, to inherit that heavenly kingdom. That is the will of God. But sadly speaking, through all the centuries, thank God we have seen those who really exhibit in their lives that they are literally living in the kingdom of heaven.

For instance, John, when he was exiled to the island of Patmos, why was he exiled? For the kingdom. And throughout the centuries, we thank God for these people who are willing to follow the Lord to the very end. In every century, you find many hidden ones.

The world may not know them, but God knows them. They are literally living in the kingdom of the heavens today. The church has the responsibility to spread the news of the kingdom of the heavens.

Unfortunately, even the truth of the kingdom of the heavens have been hidden for many centuries. We often speak of the Dark Age. There were several centuries where Christianity has entered into Dark Age.

Even the very simple truth, the basic truth, salvation by grace was forgotten. During that period, the Bible was chained, was not allowed to be read. And people thought they could go to heaven only by accumulating merits.

If you have enough merits, you go to heaven. If you do not have enough merits, then you have to go to purgatory to be purged until one day you are totally purged. Then you can go to heaven.

And even they tried to speed it up and said, you can buy indulgence. If you pay certain money, then you will get out of purgatory quicker. Brothers and sisters, all the truth you find in the Bible were lost.

Not to say experience, but thank God. Since the 16th century, when God raised up Martin Luther, John Calvin, and people like that, the reformers, they tried to bring back an open Bible. They tried to insist upon salvation by grace, not by merit.

And since then, we find century after century, God is recovering all the truth that has been lost throughout the centuries. And this kingdom truth was recovered in the 19th century. Brothers and sisters, we have a responsibility because the Bible said, when the message of the kingdom of heaven is preached throughout the whole world as a testimony to the nations, then the end will come.

You know, when I first came to this country in the 50s, I was even warned by people not to talk about that because they say, if you talk about that, they will consider you as heretic. But thank God, today you can

talk about it. And people began to realize that a gospel is more than just grace because grace brings us to the kingdom.

So it has to be preached. How can we experience it if we do not even know about it? And thank God today, it seems as if it is spreading, knowing that unless we allow the kingdom of the heavens to work in our lives, then when the kingdom of the heavens shall appear upon this earth publicly, we will have no part in it. That doesn't mean that we will not be saved.

We are still saved, but we have not grown up. We have not been disciplined enough to grow. And most likely, during the kingdom age of 1,000 years, instead of reigning with Christ in glory, we may be thrown into darkness to repent and to go through discipline because God's will cannot be defeated.

Thank God, once he set his eyes upon us, he would never let us go, no matter how. So there is a blessed hope there. So brothers and sisters, it is our responsibility, the church's responsibility, to preach the gospel of the kingdom of the heavens.

And then the end will come. Number two, we are not only to preach about it, we need to pray about it. Because in the Lord's prayer that we are taught, he says, may thy kingdom come.

May thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. So this is a prayer that God has committed to his people. Sometimes we do not know how important the prayer is.

We may repeat the so-called Lord's Prayer without really knowing what it means. Brothers and sisters, it is a commitment. It is the Lord who is asking us to pray in this way.

Because this is his will. How he wants his kingdom to come. It is delayed and delayed and delayed.

Because his people are not praying. I remember in 1904 and 1905, there was a great revival in Wales. And the instrument God used was a young man, Evan Roberts, a miner.

How he prayed and said, Lord, bend the church and save the world. He was greatly used by God during that Welsh revival. And then he became a hitter for years.

When he came out again, they asked him, what are you doing? What have you been doing during these years? He said, I'm praying the kingdom prayer. Brothers and sisters, do you have the burden to pray for the kingdom to come? Or are you afraid to pray that way? Suppose the kingdom shall arrive publicly today. Will you be there? Are you ready for it? Can you go in and rule and reign with Christ for a thousand years? Many God's people are afraid that the Lord shall come because they are not ready.

Do we really mean business when we pray? May thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. I hope that we will make this prayer much more real to us from now on.

We have a responsibility to pray about it. And not only that, we need to work for it. Having this everlasting kingdom, how we need to serve with reverence and fear.

Our service today is a preparation for our service in the future. All our services today are probation. God used this time to train us.

Whether we are really serving the Lord out of our heart, whether we are really serving him according to his will, it will be shown at the judgment seat of Christ. We need to serve him with reverence. And that is,

serve him according to his will.

How I can recall in my youth, when I first got saved, I tried to serve him. But I serve him according to my will. I thought that's what he wanted.

I told him where I go to serve. I make all the decisions, which deal, but brothers and sisters, until one day the Lord took all this away. Just like the Bible said, many will say, I preach in your name.

I perform miracles in your name. I cast out demons in your name. But the Lord said, I do not know you, you wicked man.

Brothers and sisters, are we serving according to his will? Are we serving in the power of his spirit instead of our own intellect, our own influence? We need to serve him with reverence and fear. It is true, perfect love casts out fear. That's true.

But the fear there is the fear of a slave. There is a holy fear that should always be with us. We are afraid that we may not please him.

That's a fear that we need to have all the time. And if we have that kind of fear, brothers and sisters, we are saved. The Lord wants everyone whom he has saved to be in that kingdom.

But unfortunately, we find only a remnant. Just like in the Old Testament, you find that remnant principle. When the 12 tribes of Israel departed from the Lord, thank God, there were always some, a few remnant that were faithful to the Lord.

And when they were talking one to another, as you find in Malachi, the Lord will record their conversation. And they shall be as sun rising up. So brothers and sisters, on the one hand, we do realize it is not the will of God.

God's will is for all of us to be in that kingdom when the kingdom shall publicly appear. And all of us shall reign and rule with him for a thousand years. That is our heritage.

He has promised to give to us. But unfortunately, because of our own weaknesses, you find we have to accept the fact that not only in the Old Testament time, there is the remnant principle. In the New Testament time, there is the overcomer principle.

When you come to the book of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, you find to the seven churches in Asia, the call is the call to overcome. It is as if, so far as the church as a whole is concerned, it has lost its testimony. In other words, Christ cannot find himself in the church.

I often remember that dream that A.J. Gordon dreamed. He was a young man, a famous pastor in Boston. He had a big church with pipe organ, with choirs, with everything, very successful.

And one day he dreamed a dream. He saw that before he began to deliver his sermon, he was sitting on the platform, and he saw a man coming in. He didn't know that man, but the usher brought that man to the front.

But somehow his attention began to focus upon that man. When he got up to speak, he was wondering what that man will say to his sermon. Whether that man will approve the big pipe organ that they have.

Whether the man will approve the choir they have. What will that man think about? So he decided that after the sermon, he had to meet that man. And usually, you know, the pastor, after the sermon would go to the door to greet everyone that was coming out.

So he tried to catch that man. But when he arrived at the door, the man was gone. So he asked the usher, who is that man? Now she said, don't you know him? He's Jesus.

And A.J. Gordon realized the pipe organ had to go. The choir had to go. Everything had to change.

And from that time onward, the Lord greatly used him. Brothers and sisters, the Lord today is looking for overcomers. Now who are these overcomers? They are not someone, some people who are special.

No, they are just like one of us. They are not perfect. They have their failures.

But thank God they overcame. How do they overcome the accuser? Satan is the accuser. He's always trying to accuse us, right or wrong, true or false.

He's accusing us. You know Martin Luther, greatly used by the Lord? But one day he dreamed a dream. He saw Satan coming to him, showing him a screw.

And the screw was written, the sins of Martin Luther. And it's written both inside and outside, full of sins. And Satan accused him saying, how dare you to do the work of reformation? Such a sinner.

And Martin Luther took up a pen and wrote over it. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from every sin. And Satan disappeared.

These overcomers, they are just normal Christians. They trust in the blood of the Lord Jesus. Dear brothers and sisters, the more you grow in the Lord, the more you feel precious of that blood.

Even the very tears of our repentance needs to be washed. Thank God for the efficacy, the power of the precious blood. It is because of the word of their testimony.

They have a testimony to bear. And because they live out that testimony. So when they say it, there's power behind it.

You remember your Acts chapter 17? The seven sons of that Jewish high priest, Sceva, they tried to exorcise the devil. And they tried to use the name of Jesus. So two of the sons tell the demons, I cast you out in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preached.

And the demons said, Jesus I know. Paul I'm acquainted with. Who are you? So these demons overcome two of them.

They left naked. Brothers and sisters, to say Jesus is Lord is not easy. Unless you are moved by the spirit of God and say Jesus is Lord, then truly his Lordship will be manifested.

So this is the word of their testimony. And they love not their lives, their self-life, even unto death. That's how by the grace of God they overcome.

So dear brothers and sisters, it is our prayer that in God's sovereign mercy, he has gathered us together this time together to hear about the King and the kingdom, to prepare us to meet him face to face. Are you looking forward to seeing him? Are you afraid to see him? May the Lord really apprehend each and every

one of us and make us ready. I always feel whenever people ask me, are you ready? I say, ever ready, never ready.

This is our attitude. And hopefully by the grace of God, he consider us as ready. Shall we pray? Dear Lord, we praise and thank thee because thou art the only one who can prepare us ready to meet thee face to face.

So Lord, here we are, give ourselves totally over to you. May thy spirit touch each and every one of us. Do not let us go, but work in each and every one of us constantly, persistently.

Lord, if we resist, wait until we turn back. Pray Lord that thou will apprehend each and every one of us here this morning and make us ready. To meet thee face to face.

We worship thee in our precious day, amen.

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