

Victorious Christian living

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[0 : 00] Amen. It's good to be here again tonight. Just want to again repeat what Jesus said.!

I want to read a verse in the Amplified in Revelation chapter 22, verse 17.

It says, The Holy Spirit and the bride, the church, the true Christians say, come. I find it interesting that the bride, the church, she says the same thing the Holy Spirit says.

Come. And let him who is listening say, come. And let everyone come who is thirsty, who is painfully conscious of his need, of those things by which the soul is refreshed, supported, and strengthened.

And whoever earnestly desires to do it, let him come, take, appropriate, and drink the water of life without cost. That, I didn't have that in my notes, but I just thought of that as we were sitting here.

[1 : 40] I remember reading that some time back, and that stood out to me. Whoever is painfully conscious of his need. Sometimes it's painful when God deals with us and shows us who we truly are.

Because the reality is that I don't know myself, who I really am. It's what God's word says. I don't know my own heart.

But thank God there's someone who knows it. So why would I trust myself if I don't know my own heart? But I can trust God. He knows my heart. Nothing is hidden from him.

So we don't know our own selves until God really reveals himself to us. And sometimes when he shows us who we really are without him, it is painful.

But Jesus desires to be our healer. And we don't appreciate who Jesus is until we really know who we are without him.

[2 : 48] So I want to begin in Romans chapter 6. I want us just to keep in mind last evening, again, faith, what faith is.

Faith is the victory. I want to just look this evening at victorious Christian living. Faith is the victory. Faith is the gift of God. And yet in order for us to receive God's gift freely, there's always something we have to give up. So I'll just begin in Romans 6.

I think we'll read verses 3 to 14. Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death.

That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.

[3 : 55] That's a promise. That's a reality. If we are planted together with him in his death, if we embrace the cross, something will automatically follow the cross.

That is the same power that raised Jesus from the dead will dwell in us and live the Christ life in us. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him.

Does death have dominion over us? Depends if we're dead or not. If I'm dead with Christ, then I'm living with Christ.

And if I am in Christ, and Christ is in me, and if the life that I now live, I don't live in the flesh, but I live it by the faith of the Son of God, then death hath no more dominion over me.

[5 : 06] That's the glorious gain of the cross, by the way. For in that he died, he died unto sin once. But in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

There is no greater liberty. There's no greater freedom than living unto God. That's the greatest liberty there is. The greatest bondage there is is living unto self.

Self is a hard taskmaster. The worst thing is that we get deceived. We think it's freedom.

That's the worst thing yet. When we call bondage freedom. Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And I'll say that we can't reckon ourselves dead if we're not dead. So first of all, we have to know that surrender. We have to know a relationship with Christ.

[6 : 12] But if we have surrendered and yielded to him, we need to reckon ourselves dead. Unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

Neither yield you your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

And I just want to read that more or less as a background and then go into chapter 7. But I do want to read a few verses before I go into chapter 7 and I was in Galatians.

Galatians. Galatians chapter 3.

Verse 2 and 3. This only would I learn of you. Received ye the spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?

[7 : 22] Are ye so foolish? And the Amplified says senseless and silly. Having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect in the flesh?

And then down to verse 9. So then they which are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. So last evening we talked about faith, trusting God. What faith really is.

It's not just a believing here, but it's a total confidence in, a dependence upon, a relying upon, to the point of committing our all to him. It says, they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

There's a blessing of the new covenant. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. So here we have the blessing, we have the curse.

He's speaking to believers here. It's interesting here that as believers, yet we can walk in the full blessing of God. And I don't think any of us would say that we are walking in the full blessing of God.

[8 : 34] But are we going that direction? Can I see growth in my life? That's what the Christian life is really all about.

It's about a continual work of God in our lives. A continual growth. We're being changed from glory to glory. Can I say that it is becoming a greater blessing to walk with God?

But verse 10 he says, for as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. For it is written, curse is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

If you want to rely on anything of yourself, the word of God says you're under the curse. I'm just saying what God's word is saying. Blessed is every man that trusteth in the Lord.

Cursed be the man that trusts in man, who makes flesh his arm, who relies on man. That can be my self-confidence, self-dependence, self-righteousness, my own trying.

[9 : 41] And I believe we've all experienced that. We try in our own strength. We try to live this life, but in our own strength without a full surrender.

You know, so many times we want God to help us instead of letting God do all the work, surrendering fully to him and letting him do it. We want to be in charge.

We want God to help us rather than letting God be in charge in him doing his work in us. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident.

For the just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith, but the man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, cursed is everyone that hangeth upon a tree.

That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. So he talks about the flesh and works in one.

[10 : 57] He talks about the faith in the Spirit on the other hand. And the one is a blessing of God, the other is really, it's a curse. And then back to Romans 7.

So I'll just look at this. What are we trusting in? What are we depending on? Whom are we relying upon? I think I'll begin in verse 7.

Let me read verse 6. And I want to read this in the Amplified. He's talking about dying to the law so that we might be married to another.

Well, maybe I'll just read that verse as well. In verse 4 he says, Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

So he's saying before we can really be married to Christ, before we can really know the fullness, full blessing of Christ, we need to die to the law.

[12:16] And that's the work of the cross. And I'll just say if the cross looks like something that it costs too much, and I shrink back from the work of the cross in my life, let me just say that the cross is the only way that I can ever be free from the law of sin and death.

Because this flesh, this self, is under the law of sin and death. And if I'm under that law, I'm under the curse.

I can't keep the law. And if I'm trying, I'm under the curse. And Jesus said, or Paul said here, through the body of Jesus, we die.

Through the death of Jesus on the cross. We receive by faith. We're identified with him in his death. We receive his death as our death.

So that we can be married to another. And then he says in verse 6, but now we are discharged from the law and have terminated all intercourse with it, having died to what once restrained and held us captive.

[13:32] So now we serve not under obedience to the old code of written regulations, but under obedience to the promptings of the spirit and newness of life.

So one thing that I want to do make clear here is in the old covenant, obedience was a requirement. Under the new covenant, it has not changed. Obedience is still a requirement.

But under the old covenant, it was the obedience out of the flesh, out of works. Under the new covenant, it is the obedience of faith.

And there's a big difference. When I surrender my life and I die to myself, the spirit of God works in me.

And he changes me. And he gives me a desire to serve God. If I want to do something, it might still be a law, but it's not a law of sin and death.

[14:40] If the desire is there to do it and the power is there to do it, it's not a law that brings death and condemnation. It's a law that brings life. And the obedience that we are called to walk in is obedience to the promptings of the spirit.

Now that, the spirit of God works through the word of God. And I think you understand that. He works through this word. He reveals this word to us. But he also speaks to us day by day in our walk of life.

And I want to say that if we rob God, we are giving, we are giving something place in our life, we're giving room to something in our life to occupy that place where we should honor the Holy Spirit.

If I obey the promptings of the spirit, it will always bring glory and honor to God. And it will always set me free. Because he's a spirit of light. He's a spirit of truth.

And if we're going to know victorious Christian living, there is that relationship and connection with God where we hear that still small voice.

[15:52] And that's not something that we ever stop growing in. I desire much more of a sensitivity to the spirit. But if rivers of living water are going to flow out of you and out of me, it's not going to come out of who we are.

It's going to come out of who Christ is. And we must learn to listen to the spirit of God. If we are obeying the promptings of his spirit, that river will flow out of us.

If I am sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, it's going to affect every relationship. With my wife, because as soon as I speak an unkind word, the spirit of God is going to be there to prompt. And we grow in that. For me, many times, it has been when I come to God in the morning in prayer, and if we know what it is to connect with God, and there's a blockage there, God reminds us of something.

That is the goodness of God. That is the love of God. That life is so dependent upon God, I must hear from him every day. I need his help.

[17:09] I need his help in prayer. I need his help. If the Holy Spirit doesn't help me when I read this word, it becomes a dead letter. But when the Holy Spirit is helping me, this thing becomes alive

and powerful.

And I love it. It's like sitting down and eating a good meal that you enjoy. And I know when the Holy Spirit makes Jesus real, I get up in the morning, and I look forward to my cup of coffee, and I look forward to my time with God.

Same as we sit down sometime and look forward to just a good quality time with our spouse or best friend. That's what the Holy Spirit does. Makes Jesus real.

And if I need him, I'm so dependent upon him, it affects my life throughout the day. When we are so dependent upon him, as soon as we grieve him, it's going to affect our attitude.

And I want to learn to become more and more dependent that like David, when he cuts Saul's skirt, the moment, the moment I grieve the Spirit of God, it would smite my heart.

[18 : 26] Sometimes it takes 30 minutes. Sometimes it takes an hour. Sometimes it's the next day when I go to God in prayer. And better late than never.

But I want to learn to become sensitive to the Spirit of God that the moment, whether it's even just in my mind, in my heart, in an attitude, but God can speak to me.

And that's not bondage. That's liberty. That's learning to become sensitive and obedient to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in our life. And it's becoming so dependent upon the life of another.

That's, I live my life or I live the life of Christ. And the only way I can live the life of Christ is to learn to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. He will live that life of Christ through me.

And so, here's a man, here's Paul writing this, born again, no doubt, no question. But I want to read down through the next few verses some very important truths here.

[19 : 26] What then do we conclude? What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin but by the law. For I had not known lust except the law had said, thou shalt not covet.

But sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once but when the commandment came sin revived and I died.

And the commandment which was ordained to life I found to be unto death. For sin taking occasion by the commandment deceived me and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy and the commandment holy and just and good.

Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. I want you to note this. But sin that might appear sin working death in me by that which is good that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

The law is good because the law under the old covenant it really was who God was in a sense. It was the nature and character of God. But we could never keep it in our own strength.

[20 : 37] But what is the purpose of the law that sin might become exceeding sinful. The purpose of the law is to bring us to the end of ourselves.

Paul said I was doing fine before the law came. But when the law came sin revived and I died.

In other words the law proved what was sin in my life and really it condemned me to death. Verse 14 For we know that the law is spiritual but I am carnal sold under sin.

A believer this is not an unbeliever writing this. He's a believer but he says I'm carnal. For that which I do I allow not.

For what I would that do I not but what I hate that do I. If then I do that which I would not I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me.

[21 : 51] And so we see here a struggle a battle going on very clearly in a heart that has been regenerated. Very clearly in someone that has been born again. Because he says it's not I that do it anymore but it's sin that dwelleth in me.

For I know that in me that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. How did he know? Do we know that? How do we know that?

That's the work of the law. For the will is present with me but how to perform that which is good I find not.

So he had a will. He had a changed heart here. He had a heart to will is present. To will to do what is right to will to serve God. That is my heart.

That is my desire. But I just find this constant struggle. For to will is present but no power.

[23 : 19] How to perform that which is good that which I will I find not. for the good that I would I do not.

But the evil which I would not that I do. Bit miserable isn't it? I would say most of us have been here. and some believers they don't stay here long. They lay a hold of Christ somehow in faith and just give it all to him.

But for many of us we find this has been our experience. And I want to I want to imply this to us tonight in two different ways. if this is still your experience there is a way.

I know when this was my experience and God made a clear clear change in my life. From a believer to I would say an overcomer.

[24 : 41] At the same time there's a measure there's a measure where in certain areas of our life this is also still a continuing ongoing work.

And I hope that makes sense. Maybe this is not I don't identify with this with my whole life anymore like I used to. But there's maybe areas that I can still identify.

Now if I do that I would not it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me. I find that a law that when I would do good evil is present with me for I delight in the law of God after the inward man.

But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

So here a believer and yet a captive held captive under the law not being able to find freedom from the law of sin and death.

[25 : 54] I want us to just keep this in our mind now. Paul's experience here. We want to look at another man that had this same experience it just wasn't written like this. His name was Peter.

Peter. And I think if we would look at the life of Peter find there's great hope for me and great hope for you.

Would to God that many more of us would have that testimony. Peter. When I look at Peter's life a little bit his repentance Peter forsook all to follow Christ.

you could have known that you could have said that Peter knew surrender. He forsook all. At one place he said Jesus we forsook all to follow you.

We could say he was a devoted follower of Jesus. When Jesus said cast your nets on the other side Peter said Lord Master we've toiled all night.

[27 : 08] We fished all night. The best time for fishing is over. We caught nothing. Nevertheless it's your word. It's your word outdo it. So we could say Peter was a man of obedience.

He was quick to obey. He was ready to obey. He was a man of faith. He walked on the water. None of the other disciples did that.

Peter walked on the water. Peter cast out devils. Peter healed the sick. He was a man of spiritual insight.

When Jesus said whom do men say that I am? The disciples gave different answers to what the people were saying. Jesus said but whom do you say that I am? Peter said you're the Christ the son of the living God.

He said blessed are you. Simon or Jonah flesh and blood didn't reveal this to you but my father in heaven. So he even had revelation. Peter was a man that had revelation.

[28 : 10] Today we call him a very good Christian wouldn't we? Was he spiritual? Was he carnal? But they were still arguing who was the greatest.

He was the greatest. He was the greatest. He God. And then right after that when he said thou Christ the son of the living God Jesus began to talk.

Maybe I should just turn there Matthew 16. Very few Christians would be left today if they would have got such a rebuke.

Jesus began to show his disciples how he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things. The elders and sheep, priests and scribes and be killed and be raised again the third day. Sorry. Verse Matthew 16 verse 22.

Then Peter took him and began to rebuke him saying be it far from thee Lord this shall not be unto thee. But he, Jesus, turned and said unto Peter get thee behind me Satan thou art an offense unto me.

[29 : 31] For thou savest not the things or you do not mind the things that be of God but those that be of men. You don't mind the things of God. You still think naturally.

You still think carnally. And so Peter here in his own self will was trusting his own wisdom, was trusting his own thoughts more than what Jesus was saying.

Just think of it. Peter, this devout follower of Christ, this one that looked like he was all in, he actually took it upon himself to rebuke Jesus. And how many times do we do that? When the spirit of God comes and he speaks to us but we, we just push that aside.

We trust in our own thoughts. We trust in our own wisdom. In our own self will we push that still small voice aside instead of seeing that Lord I need thee every hour.

[30 : 40] I need you, how I need you. We just kind of push him aside. And we trust in ourselves. Jesus said if any man would come after me let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.

We'll basically talk, see that Jesus, outside of that he didn't talk much about denying self or use the word deny. We find it there and then we find it later when he said, Peter before, before the cock crows you're going to deny me.

Three times. We must deny self to follow Christ but the reality is that Peter, this devout father of Christ, this one that had the, he had the will.

He had the will power and he willed to follow Christ. He replied most vehemently, Lord I won't die. I won't deny you.

I'll go to prison. I'll die for you. But because he had not denied self, he denied Christ. And if we do not deny self, we will deny Christ.

[31 : 56] We deny Christ or we deny self. He was full of self-confidence and what Peter's real need was, was deliverance from self.

It was his great need. He had many, many things commendable in his life. But he was a man that still had confidence in self.

And it greatly limited how God could use him. I want to say, God had his hand in all of this.

But three and a half years of walking with Jesus and of hearing the teachings directly from the mouth of Jesus didn't change Peter's self-confidence, but something else did.

What was it? a Holy Spirit. But I want to look at something that preceded the Holy Spirit.

[33 : 09] God, give me grace to explain this. Because God's dealing with all of our lives. It's very precious.

But if we don't understand it, we can get frustrated and miss the mark. God had to break Peter. And when Peter denied Jesus, it broke him.

He did not want to do that. He did what he hated to do. But when Jesus looked on Peter with that look of love, and I say look of love because I believe that, Peter went out and wept bitterly.

I've been there. It hurts. It's very painful. It's very painful. painful. But that low place of desperation and brokenness and pain is where there's liberty.

God's making a way for something. the next verse.

[34 : 33] I want to read the next verse here in Romans. I didn't read it on purpose until now. Verse 24.

O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

The Amplified says, O unhappy and pitiable and wretched man that I am, who will release and deliver me from the shackles of this body of death? That's where Peter came to.

Paul had this experience. Peter had this experience. When he went out and wept bitterly, I believe it wasn't just a bitter self-remorse like Judas had, but it was a true repentance.

It was a true breaking of this strong, self-willed, self-confident man that Peter had been for so many years. And God was after that to break it.

[35 : 47] And God was after that to Peter broke. This verse here, verse 24, none of us like to be here.

I know there's times that God has shown me myself in such a degree that it has overwhelmed me. Selfishness. But I remember a time in my life when I was here, and these are the exact words I told God.

I just said, God, this does not work. Either I'm done with Christianity, or I got to go all the way. I tried and tried and tried and tried in my own strength but without a full surrender.

Because there was things I didn't want to let go. There was things I was trying to hold on to. I did not understand much then. But there was things in my life I wanted to change, and I could not.

And I look back today, and it was the goodness of God and the love of God and the mercy of God to not give me victory. Because he wasn't after my victory over that sin.

[37 : 04] He was after me. He wanted all of me. Not just to give me victory over sin, but I'm still in charge of my life. And I came to this place.

And it was a process. It wasn't just a one day. But I remember saying that statement to God, and yet, I knew deep down inside, I knew I wanted to go all the way.

But the price just looked too great. But God began working, and I would say it was a process of several months. And for Peter, it was a process.

He didn't just find full deliverance that night, but the process began. The process began that night when Peter went out and wept bitterly. Oh, wretched man that I have failed my Lord.

I have dishonored the one whom I loved. I have denied him. I have miserably failed and betrayed him. And to the way that man would look at it, it's just over.

[38 : 10] I'm done. I want to just say deliverance starts there. True deliverance starts there.

Any sin in our lives, any lack of Christ's likeness in our lives is a result of self. We can always trace it back to the root of self.

There's a deeper root than just sin or just a lack of character, a lack of Christ's likeness. And again, I would gather from Peter's life and I would gather from Romans 7 here, that you may be a devout godly believer, yet one in whom the power of the flesh is still strong.

Am I wrong? a devout godly believer, many things commendable, but the self-confidence is still strong, the self-will.

I believe that's possible. Here it says, I'm still carnal, sold under sin, sold under the power of self, but yet I have the will to follow God.

[39 : 31] thank god there's a higher way. But many times God leads us through this path.

I'll just say that it is the work of our Lord and it's the work of the Holy Spirit to reveal who this self really is. And unless the Lord discloses it, unless the Holy Spirit discloses it, I can never truly know myself.

Peter did not know himself. He didn't know who he really was until that happened. He went out and wept bitterly.

He realized who he was. And until we realize who we are in ourselves, we never really appreciate who God is.

We never appreciate his holiness and his goodness and his love and his mercy until we really know who we ourselves are. And the more I see God, the more I'll see myself, but the more I see myself, the more I'll see God in a different light.

[40 : 48] That self-life, this self-life, this self-confidence, this self-will, it greatly, it greatly hinders the blessing and the power of God.

Greatly. It will hinder it. It can hinder it in God's blessing in my finances, business.

And some of us trust God in some areas. We found some areas to learn to walk with God, but there's other areas of our life, maybe, that are not, where we're not experiencing the blessing and power of God.

Our time, our time. I think one of the blessed, greatest things that we can see is our total dependence on the Spirit of God to make this word precious to us and to help us in prayer.

By the way, there would be no word without the revelation of the Spirit. He gave men. He moved on men. He inspired men. And takes the same Holy Spirit to reveal that to us.

[42 : 04] And even in prayer. When I was at this point in my life, I knew very little of connecting with God and laying a hold of God in prayer.

But when I began to get desperate, it changed. I believe it was Leonard Ravenhill that says, God doesn't answer prayer.

He answers desperate prayer. Now take that for what it's worth. We're not saying across the line. But look at God's word. We can't please God without faith.

Because faith, we must come to God by faith and believe that God is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him. The Bible says, keep on asking.

Seek. It's a little bit more desperate now than just asking. Keep seeking. Knock. Now you're getting really desperate. Keep on knocking.

[43 : 08] The Bible says if you seek him with your whole heart, you'll find him. That was mentioned earlier. we could look at a lot of God's word and realize that many times God answers prayer when we get desperate.

And the reason for that is because faith. God answers a prayer of faith.

God says if we don't believe, if we don't have faith, don't let that man think that he's going to receive anything from the Lord. And faith is complete dependence on God. And until we come to a place of desperation where we don't trust in ourselves, we can't have complete faith and confidence in God. And so God answers desperate prayer. God desires to bring us to a place of desperation of seeing our complete need of him.

Because really, surrender is a pretty radical term, isn't it? Does somebody surrender when they're not desperate? Naturally, in an army, surrender is the last thing, right?

[44 : 31] We try every other way before we surrender. And most times it's true in our own lives. Most times surrender comes out of desperation.

And that's exactly what God is after. The self-life, again, it greatly hinders the blessing and power of God.

That is so true in the church. It is so true in the church. Where the self-life is allowed to function in the body of Christ, it will so greatly hinder the power and the blessing of God.

Where it's allowed to function in a marriage. Where it's allowed to function in a home. Where it's allowed to function in the individual believer.

Again, God is good. He wants to bless us more than we want to be blessed. He wants to give us his power more than we want his power. He wants to fill us with his spirit more than we want to be filled with his spirit.

[45 : 41] That's a reality. But there's something that hinders so many times. But I'll just say this, Jesus Christ can deliver you from the self-life if you humble yourself.

Praise God. There was hope for Peter. There was hope for Paul. Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

I think we would all agree that's the darkest verse in this chapter, isn't it? This is the bottom now. in this chapter. But what's the next verse?

I want to read it in the Amplified. Oh, thank God. Thank God he will through Jesus Christ, the anointed one, our Lord.

So then indeed, I have myself with the mind and heart served the law of God. But with the flesh, the law of sin. So what's the answer? That's true for all of us.

[46 : 54] With a mind and heart, we can serve God. But with the flesh, we will serve the law of sin. What then is the answer? The power of that flesh has to be broken. There's no other answer.

The cross is the answer. There is no other answer. The power of that flesh must be broken. And for God to bring us to a place of that brokenness, he brought Peter to that place.

And I'll just say what happened on the day of Pentecost, we could say, oh wow, in a moment the Holy Spirit changed that man. But it was a process. It was a process.

process. I can testify to this. It was so hard for me to let go of my future. Part of it was a shed business.

And it was a process of a few months. But I got desperate. And I began letting things go.

[47 : 56] I began confessing sin. I'll just say, if we want God to move in our lives, if we want revival, there's a few things that have to take place. Confess any known sin.

The Bible says confess. He who confesses his sins shall prosper. We confess our sins, we'll prosper.

If we cover them, we're not going to prosper. Several verses in Proverbs talk about that. Lay everything down that God's asking you to lay down.

If there is anything questionable in your life, that this would displease God or dishonor God, God brings that to your mind. Let it go. Repent of any known disobedience.

Any place where you're disobeying God? When I got desperate and miserable, and I was miserable, but when I got desperate, I began letting things go.

[49 : 07] I had to go back to people make things right. I had to confess things, and there was things in my individual life that God asked me to lay down. Not sin. My friends did it. Other people in church did it.

But I just knew God was asking me to lay it down. And that was a process of a few months. But God was dealing.

He was breaking me. And one day in church, after church, we had a visiting minister there from one of our other churches.

And there was a young brother in the church, younger than me. We were just, it was after the service, we were just visiting. And he went up to the ministry, and he just, he asked him if they could pray for him, for the Holy Spirit.

And they prayed for him. I don't know if anything happened to him or not. I don't know that. I don't remember that. But I know as they were praying for him, it began to burn my heart. I had such a cry. [50 : 18] I was desperate. I knew I had a need. And I broke. I know I went home that afternoon.

There was times the love of God was so real to me. I was just so full of joy. And the next time I just saw myself, it just broke me. And I was just like, maybe emotional like that.

But from joy to brokenness, from joy to brokenness. But things changed to the point where God, I knew God was asking me.

I knew he was, I didn't know where at that point. But I know God started giving me such a burden for the lost. I had no interest in that business anymore.

No interest in it. And again, I, God calls some of us to business. He calls us to different places. And his dealings with us are not the same.

[51 : 25] But what I'm saying is, once I surrendered and broke, the Holy Spirit came in. He began to give me different desires. My finances changed.

My giving changed. My prayer life changed drastically. Absolutely drastically. And I look at that as a huge turning point in my life.

And even today, there's a difference between night and day when I know I have the aid of the Holy Spirit in prayer and when I don't. You know, sometimes it's hard in prayer and sometimes it's just good.

Because I think sometimes God allows it to show me that I need him. But I know when the Holy Spirit is present, when Jesus is present, the presence of Jesus is so real, you can just pour your heart out to him.

Lord, break me. Lord, make me holy as you're holy. Lord, I just want you. There's a desire that doesn't come from me. It comes from the life within me.

[52 : 33] It comes from the Christ life within me. And that same desire to pray and to intercede for others. What a blessing when God's Spirit puts God's desires and will in our heart and then we pray God's will and desires back to him.

That's powerful. Very powerful. But it takes a vessel that's surrendered. And God has to bring us to just such a place of brokenness.

His dealings with us are different. They're not the same. And it's not just a one-time thing in our life. I know from that point my life drastically changed. I wasn't living in defeat constantly like I was before.

But up to this day, we still go through these periods where God has to break us. And we get desperate. But here, Romans 8. I just want to say that Romans 7, the end of Romans 7.

Dad mentioned this today to us men. The end of Romans 7 is what leads us into Romans 8. And I'll just say the things that are impossible with men are possible with God.

[53 : 49] And God has to bring us to a place where I realize it's over. I can't. God, I cannot. It's impossible. I have tried. I have tried. I have struggled.

And I am done with me. I can't. It's impossible. But with God, all things are possible. That lesson we do not learn easy. It takes a deep dealing of God in our lives.

Then the Holy Spirit can fill us when we come to the end of ourselves. Do you trust God to work in you both to will and to do or do you trust your own will? And your own will power to do.

So the gateway to Romans 8 is the end of Romans 7. And if you want to look at Romans 7, you can count them. I didn't count them exactly, but you will find the words I, me, and my very, very often.

Probably you'll find, I don't know, you can probably count several handfuls. I didn't count them specifically. And the other words that you will find there is the law. The law, the law, the law.

[55 : 05] You'll find something different in Romans 8. The whole picture changes in Romans 8. There is therefore now no condemnation of them which are in Christ Jesus.

Peter was not yet in Christ Jesus fully. What I'm saying, he was a follower. But he had not fully come out of himself and into Christ, let go of self, and know the power of Christ, the power of another life in his, being lived in his life.

To them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. As long as we're doing it in our own strength, there's condemnation. But when we let go completely in Christ and just

total surrender, there is no condemnation.

For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus have made me free from the law of sin and death. There is now a new law. I think some of you last week at youth meetings, Jeremy played that clip. Caterpillar to the butterfly. Any comparison? That's Romans 7 to Romans 8. It's the same life, but yet it's a different life.

[56 : 22] The same insect. It's a different life. For what the law could not do, and that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemn sin in the flesh.

That's the work of the cross. What the law could never do, the work of the cross. And then the subsequent work of the spirit of God. That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh. It's just that simple. But they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit.

For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace, because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

God has to teach us that. God taught Peter that. God taught Paul that. And so again, I just want to say that when God wants to give us the Holy Spirit, and can I say that's a continual work, or a further measure of the spirit, he brings us to the end of self.

[57 : 45] He brings us to the end of self. And I think after a while, once we go through that circle enough of times, we begin catching on. It's still not always easy, but it does make it easier.

When I realize, when I start surrendering and submitting to what God is doing. You know, when God wants a seed to grow, what does he do?

The seed has to die. He brings the seed to the end of itself, and out of that comes life. It's the same way with us. And then Romans 8, 13.

Maybe we'll look at Romans 8 a little bit more later on. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die. But if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Don't try it on your own. Marty, I remember your brother Mel. I was pretty young.

[58 : 52] But I never forgot what he said. One day he was sharing an opening. And he just said, it's too bad that we can't just sometime take a gun and kill this flesh. He meant the old man, the carnal man.

It's not quite that easy, is it? But through the spirit, we can embrace the cross.

Through the spirit. Again, thank God, he will deliver me. I cannot deliver myself from this power of flesh, but thank God, he will deliver me.

And through the power of the Holy Spirit, the wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? You want to look back into the context, it's quite gruesome, gross, but the body of this death, the Romans had, there was one death penalty they had, and that was to chain a corpse to a man until he would die from the stench of it.

And that's what that implies. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? In other words, this self, it is just dragging me down. It's killing me, and I'm just done.

[60 : 10] I'm done with it. Who shall deliver me? It was a point of, it was a place of quite desperation. But again, whoever, whoever is painfully conscious of his need, let him come, and let him ask.

And again, if you earthly fathers, evil as you are, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more?

How much more? Will my heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him? But just know that when you're asking for that, you have to let go of yourself and your own try, your own self-confidence.

But again, thank God. There is victory through Jesus Christ, our Lord. There is an answer for every problem. We say Jesus is the answer.

We know it here. Do we know it here? Do I know that for my every walk of life? My finances, my habits, I want to overcome.

[61 : 22] my time, my thought life, my marriage, we could go on and on, my prayer life. Do I know that Jesus is the answer?

Do I know that? He is the answer. Whoever is thirsty, let him come. Let's just stand again for prayer. Father, I just thank you tonight.

Hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus, that there is an answer. Thank you for the Holy Spirit. Lord, you've not left us helpless. You've not left us comfortless. You've not given us your word, your commandments, and said, just see on your own how you're going to do it.

But Lord, you said that you would send the comforter, the helper, the intercessor, the standby, your very spirit, very Christ himself, the very spirit of Christ.

And Jesus, when you were on this earth, you said, I can of mine own self do nothing. But we read in Acts how God anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost and power. Father, we ask for that anointing of the spirit of God in our lives to do what you have called us to do, to live the Christ life, Father, we cannot live the life of another, the life of Christ in our strength or power.

[62 : 45] But Lord, I thank you for the Holy Spirit. I thank you for the power of Jesus Christ. Father, thank you for the work of the cross. And I just ask, Lord, that somehow by the spirit of God, you would reveal this to us.

Father, when you're dealing with us, when you're breaking us, may we realize your love and your goodness and your wisdom. May we realize the hand of God. May we submit ourself, Lord, to your dealing in our lives, to your work in our lives, Father.

And Lord, may the power of your Holy Spirit just rest upon each one of us, living the beautiful Christ life in us, changing us from glory to glory, changing us from the inside out, changing our hearts.

We sang that tonight. Change my heart, oh God, make it ever true. Lord, it's only your spirit can do that. But Lord, as we surrender, as we come to the end of ourself, may we realize that it's at the end of ourself that we can enter into the fullness of who you are.

Father, just make that a reality through the power of your Spirit again. Bless your Word tonight in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[63 : 52]