

Burden to Walk in Victory

by Alan Martin

Alan Martin's sermon emphasizes the necessity of humility, reliance on the Holy Spirit, and the pursuit of holiness to walk in victory over sin and temptation.

Topics: "Victorious Living"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of testing leaders and holding them accountable to be examples to the flock. The speaker raises the question of where compromise begins and warns against straying from the truth of Scripture. The sermon highlights the freedom to choose that believers have been given by Christ and encourages walking in the Spirit to avoid fulfilling the lusts of the flesh. The speaker concludes by emphasizing the righteousness of walking in the ways of the Lord and the need for believers to live out their faith as a testimony to others.

Transcript

I'm going to do something a little unusual today. Hear me very carefully. If you are physically able, I'd like you to join me on your knees.

If you're physically able, I'd like us to go to our knees. Father, we are sorry for what continues to happen to your name in this country, not by those who don't claim to know you, but at the hands of those who do claim to know you, even at the leaders that claim to know you. We're not here, Lord, to condemn them.

We are here, Lord, to humble ourselves before you, to acknowledge that, Lord, the damage done to your name, and to plead with you, Lord, to search our hearts, Lord, so that there won't be any of us in our community, before our family, where we work, those who see and know us, that our lives will stop contradicting your Word, that our lives would not show forth just our humanity, but your divinity living within us. The power of Christ reigning, and you keeping us holy, and keeping us pure, and keeping us obedient. We lift up, Lord, this fellowship that must be hurting, and this family that's hurting, and the shock, and we ask for your comfort, and we are grateful that you are forgiving God.

We're grateful that you are willing to purge and cleanse us from sin, and you've shown that. But Father, we long to be a people that also are able to praise you as a God who gives us victory over the world, and victory over the devil, and victory over temptation, and who keeps us pure and holy. We seek before you, Father, the fear of the Lord.

You said that the fear of the Lord would turn a man from iniquity, and it's pure, and it's clean, and it endures forever. You said that those who fear the Lord, the man who fears the Lord for his children, it shall be a strong tower. Lord, we need a refuge.

We want to fear you. We want to behold your goodness. We also want to behold your severity, so that we can stand in your kindness.

Lord, we know you're able. You've always been able. And that's what's so sad, Father.

We confess that despite everything you have done, despite that you never let us be tempted above what we're able, you always, every time, have provided a way of escape, despite all the grace that you have made to abound towards us in Christ, despite giving us your very nature to partake in, despite making every provision for life and godliness, we do wrong. We're weak. Despite every provision you have made for your strength to be perfected in our weakness, we continue not to manifest, in too many ways, your strength.

We continue to manifest our association with Adam. God forbid this continue. Would you raise up for yourself a generation that identifies more with Christ than with Adam? And identifies more with walking in your spirit than living in the flesh? That realizes we're not just carnal.

What we have and what you've done in us is mighty through you. We're sorry, Father, for what people, not just this man or not just those that have fallen in a big way, we are just as guilty in the little ways we fail before our family, before our wives, or before our husbands, or before our children, or before those who know us. And Lord, we seek for you to search our hearts and to try us and see if there be any wicked way in us and lead us into the everlasting way.

Lord, for your namesake, lead us in paths of righteousness. For your namesake, make straight your way for us. Only you can keep our foot from being snared.

You know every trick of the enemy. And you're able to warn us at every step of the way to keep us free. Free to serve you.

Free to glorify you. Free to walk in righteousness. And it's what we seek as a people.

We don't seek just a religious service to make us feel good about being weak. We want to be changed. We want to be transformed.

We want to go from glory to glory and from strength to strength. We want to live by faith. And we want to know the victory over the world that you said all those who are born of God experience.

We want this for your own namesake. We want to be a people who are blameless and pure before the eyes of those in this crooked and perverse generation in which we live. Lord, in any areas where we have compromised, where we have justified sin, where we have resisted your Holy Spirit, according to your mercy and for your own namesake, deal with us.

Discipline us. Teach us your way. Conform us to your image.

Grant us a broken and a contrite heart, Lord. Restore us to a full salvation. To what it means to fully walk.

Holy and blameless. Not just before men. Even before you, Lord.

May the meditation of our heart. May the words of our mouth be acceptable in your sight, O Lord. For your own namesake, Lord.

Let judgment begin in the house of God. We're not pointing the finger at the world today, Lord. We are mourning our own sins.

We are mourning those sins of those who call upon your name. We ask you to forgive us, God. Forgive us for them being able to say that the divorce rates are just as high in the churches.

Forgive us this, O God. How could it be that all the sins outside the church are the same inside? These things ought not be, Father. And we don't want to be content that there be in any of us.

You said to your servants, Lord. We are to put to death all these things that belong to the flesh. And Lord, let us not grow weary in this battle of by your Spirit and the power you make available.

To put to death everything regarding to the flesh. So that we can learn to walk in your Spirit. We just ask this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ for your own namesake.

Amen. Brothers and sisters, these things ought not be. Where does the faith come from? Where does the assurance come from that you know your sins are forgiven? When that same faith is supposed to be producing complete victory over the world.

This is the victory over the world, even our faith. When that faith says that not one of us are ever tempted above what we are able. That God is faithful.

Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able. But along with the temptation will provide the way of escape. That you may be able to bear up under it.

And just in case there might be one who's thinking, but what of David? Our model is not David. Nor is our model Peter. We are not told to look to them.

We are told to fix our eyes upon Jesus. The author and perfecter of our faith. He's the perfecter of our faith.

And oh do we need it perfected. We need it finished. We do not need to make allowance for sin.

Or to excuse sin. In any way. And this in no way takes away from God's delight to be merciful.

And to be gracious. God forbid that we should take away from that. But that's not the greatest testimony.

The greatest testimony is not just that God can forgive sin. The greatest testimony is that God can take a sinner born in the likeness of Adam. Corrupt to the core.

Convict him of his sin. Bring him to repentance. And grant him a glorious forgiveness and deliverance out of his sin.

Take out his heart of stone and put in a heart of flesh. Take out his old corrupt spirit and put in a new spirit. And move that person by the work of the Holy Spirit.

To walk in obedience to his commands. Put that person back into the world. In the midst of its crookedness and its perversion.

Surrounded by temptation each day. And to keep that person pure and holy. That takes a relationship with God.

That takes a daily dependence on the indwelling power of Christ. And this is what we're supposed to manifest. This is the treasure we have.

This knowledge of God. We have this treasure in earthen vessels. Yes, they're just earthen.

And we are weak in our natural selves. But the reason we have this treasure in earthen vessels. And I've said this again and I'll say it till I die.

Is not to manifest how earthen the vessel is. We have this treasure in earthen vessels. That we might manifest the all surpassing power.

That is where? Within us. Within us. So we are hard pressed, but we're not crushed.

We can be hard pressed. But in all these things. In all the things that may knock the world.

May cause them to be defeated. In all these things we are more than conquerors. Through Him who loved us.

This is what we were called to be. Everyone here whom God foreknew. Every person here whom God foreknew.

He also predestined. He has predestined every person here whom He foreknew. To be conformed to the image of His Son.

And I will again state it according to the scripture. That is not just in the next life. This is the confidence we have in the day of judgment.

That in this world we are as He is. We love the Father like He loved the Father. We obey the Father like He obeyed the Father.

We walk in holiness and righteousness. That's what He enabled us to do here. Not there.

He's enabled us to serve Him without fear. In righteousness and holiness all our days. Is that not what the grace of God teaches us? The grace of God that brings salvation.

Has appeared unto all men. Teaching us to deny ungodliness and what else? Worldly lust. We deny those things.

We don't yield to those things. We deny them. And we live instead of ungodliness and worldly lust.

We live soberly, righteously and godly in this present age. That demonstrates a real faith. That demonstrates someone who has been born of God.

Those who are born of God do not continue to sin. Don't even blink at it. Don't add the but.

Don't add it. John didn't. Did he add it? Inspired by the Holy Spirit to write.

He could have said, Those who are born of God do not continue to sin, but we will. That's not what he said. He did say earlier though, Little children, I write these things unto you that ye sin not.

But there he goes, but, if you do. We have an advocate. And I praise the Lord for that advocate.

But here's what I'm going to say. The name of God is being reproached. By people willing to call themselves Christians.

Quite ready to rejoice that their sins are forgiven. His name is being reproached by that. And when that's all the answer we can give to the world.

When we have to tell the world. And this was actually, I read this by an associate pastor of a 14,000 member church. When we have to tell the world, Well, you just have to remember our leaders are just like everyone else.

That's not even scriptural. A leader of the church of God is supposed to be above reproach. Blameless.

That's not supposed to be. We're supposed to test them to make sure that they can function in this way. That they might be examples to the flock.

But, lest you think I'm going to get on some leader that has fallen. Woe be to me if that's where I want to go. You know, the penetrating question to us is.

And should be. Not how did it end up this bad. The more pertinent question is.

Where did it begin? In what little compromise? You know what the scripture says in Proverbs chapter 4. Make level paths for your feet. Take only ways that are firm. Where was the first little place? The first little place that began to stray.

Where is the first little place you and I will begin to stray? Can I encourage you to ask yourself whether or not. The first place we are willing to stray. Is when we are willing to accept less than what God calls us to walk in.

And we soothe our conscience by saying we're just human. This is not the testimony of scripture that we are just human. Paul actually told the Corinthians.

You're acting like you're just human. We are born of God. And the one who was born of God.

Our Lord lives in us. And abides in us. And He keeps us safe.

And if you're saying. He is not adequate to keep us from sinning. You are questioning His power.

Is He able to keep us from sin or not? He is. Then why do we sin? It's not because you can't use that excuse anymore. He lives in us.

He makes up for what we lack in ourselves. He provides everything that we do not have within ourselves. We can all confess.

None of us are righteous in ourselves. None of us are godly in ourselves. None of us have strength in ourselves to do this.

And everything we lack. He is. Is that where we go astray? That we take our eyes off Him? We take our eyes off the moment by moment daily communion in Him.

There is a way not to fulfill the lust of the flesh, isn't there? Are we not given the way? What is the way? Jared, what is it again? Turn with me to Galatians chapter 5. You can look at it. You can take my word for it. It's there in the letter to Galatians.

In Galatians chapter 5. Paul said. Galatians chapter 5. Starting with verse 1. Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty by which Christ has made us free. And do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

Indeed, I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit to you nothing. You have become, it says, and I testify again. To every man who becomes circumcised, he's a debtor to keep the whole law.

If you become, and you have become estranged from Christ. You who attempt to be justified by the law. You have fallen from grace.

This is a problem. This is why many people are not able to walk in the righteousness of Christ. Is they are not fully connected to Christ.

They are living by a state of law. And the law only produces bondage to sin. It can never produce the righteousness of God.

That Christ Himself by His Holy Spirit can produce in us. So we go on, continue on in Galatians. Ok.

Where am I looking for? If you walk. Verse 16. Thank you.

Brethren. Verse 13. Start with me.

We have been called to liberty. Only do not use your liberty as what? As an occasion to the flesh. But in love serve one another.

Now do you understand what He is saying in that? What is He talking about using your liberty as an occasion to the flesh? You have been given liberty to do what you want to do. You are not a slave anymore. Is that what He is saying? What is the difference between being free and a slave? I would like any person who really believes that you are still a slave to sin to stand up and say, I cannot help it.

In the face of all truth in Scripture, stand up and say, I cannot help it. Slaves are in bondage. People that have been set free have a free will.

And can choose. And what are we supposed to do with the freedom to choose we have been given by Christ? We are not to take that liberty and choose to serve the flesh. We are to take the liberty we have been given and it says in verse 16, I say then, walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

So for you and I, where does disobedience start? How will it end up in fulfilling a lust of the flesh? When we stop walking in the Spirit. How does one stop walking in the Spirit? To look away? To seek your own way? The Holy Spirit comes to you and asks every one of us here, every one of us here knows this, there is not a single moment of the day in which you are tempted that the Holy Spirit is not there to say, no, this is the way, walk in it. The Scripture clearly says that in the New Covenant, and ye shall hear a voice in the way saying, this is the way, walk in it.

You know what that way is for us? It's the way of escape. The Spirit is there to say, don't yield to that anger. The Spirit is there to say, don't look at that picture.

The Spirit is there to say, don't say those words. The Spirit is there to say, do, say nothing, do nothing, be still. The Spirit is there and when we choose not to walk in that, these other things happen.

Look at the end of this chapter here, verse 24 and 25. Those who are of Christ, or the NIV says, those who belong to Christ, what does the NASB say? No, just about who are Christ? Those who belong to Christ. Those who are really Christ have done what to the flesh? Okay, now, let's just say you're flesh, guys.

This is what the Scripture is saying. If you belong to Christ, Christ has taken your flesh and crucified it on the cross and handed it back to you. How strong is it? How strong is your flesh if you belong to Christ? How strong is it that person is going to come down off the cross, you're going to rip the nails out of their hands and hand it back to you, and you're going to claim it overpowers you all the time? The problem is not a strong flesh.

That's a lie. The flesh has been crucified. The problem is a weak faith.

And it's not until you believe these things you begin to walk in them. So, it says, since this is the case, since the flesh has been crucified, if you belong to Christ, then it says, what are we to do? If we live by the Spirit, do what? Walk by it. In other words, keep in line with it.

Keep in step with it. Because if you're walking by the Spirit, keeping in step with the Spirit, what will you not do? You will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. And therefore, when we sin, if we have sinned, let's not look at what the end result of that is.

Let's look at where it began. Let's look at it real quick in James so you can understand it. We need to understand these things.

Book of James. Chapter 1. Book of James, chapter 1. Let's start with verse 12. Blessed is the man who endures temptation.

Do you want that blessing? Do you want it? I want that blessing. Can you have it without being tempted? No. Okay.

You're going to be tempted. You're going to be tempted. Christ was tempted without sin.

And because He was tempted, because He suffered when He was tempted, the Bible says in the book of Hebrews, He is able to succor those who are tempted. You know what it means to succor someone? It means like what a mom does when she runs to hear her child's cry for help. Which one of you mothers hears your child scream and is not your heart already racing? That's how fast the Father will be there when you're being tempted.

That's how fast He'll be there. When you're tempted and you're being pressed and you've grown, He'll be there. He'll be right there to show you the way of escape.

He's able to help us in this state. He knows we're weak and because He was made like us in every way, so He knows how to help us in this state of weakness that we're in. But we must endure to be blessed.

Blessed is the man who endures temptation, for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life. Now that is not saying, blessed is the one who endures temptation and fell and sinned and was forgiven. Is it? Please don't read that into that.

This is talking about blessed is the one who endures temptation by not yielding to it. That's what He's talking about. For when he's been approved, when he's been tested and approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love him.

Let no one say when he's tempted, I am tempted by God. For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when by his wife he is drawn away.

And that's what Adam said, right? The woman you gave me. No, you're not tempted by your wife. Wives, you're not tempted by your husband.

Parents, you're not tempted by your children. Worker, you're not tempted by your boss. What you're tempted by is your weakness.

You have a lust. Now this is interesting. It says by your epithamia.

It does not say by your evil epithamia. See, the word epithamia, strong desire, is used in the New Testament more times positively than negatively. That's why when it's evil, they have to put the Greek word k-a-k-o-n, kakon, with it.

Evil desires. No, you just have desires. They're wonderful.

Desires are wonderful. I'm glad I have a desire to be with my wife. It's wonderful.

I love to swim. It's wonderful. I like to see beautiful... I want desires.

They can be pure and right and holy. But having them, they can be exploited. We're weak in them.

It's when you're by your own strong desires, you are drawn away. What are you drawn away from? You're drawn away from your communion and abiding with Christ. You're drawn away from keeping in step with the Spirit.

You're drawn away from that communion you have with the Father. You're drawn away... Do you see it when Satan was trying to tempt Jesus? He was trying to draw Him away. Where did He take Him? He took Him up to a high mountain, and what did He show Him? All the kingdoms of the world and all their glories.

What was He seeking to do? Draw Him away from the Father. But we know that the Father, it says God is the Father of heavenly light, right? It says every good and perfect gift comes from the Father of heavenly lights. Every good and perfect gift comes from there.

When you're abiding in faith, you know what you're being tempted to do is not going to do you anything. It's to rob you. It's to steal from you.

It's to kill you. It's to entrap you. Of course it tastes good.

Of course it smells good. You know, I would think sardines smell good to the raccoon. And it tastes good to the raccoon.

But you use it to bait Him to get Him into your trap. You know, the Bible says don't be like the horse or mule, which must be bridled with a bit to make it come, but has no what? Has no understanding. When are we going to understand that it's not worth taking the bait? It's not worth taking the bait.

It's not worth watching that worthless show. It's not worth looking the extra second at that ungodly picture. It's not worth reading the rest of the story.

It's not worth it. When are you going to understand? And especially, when are you going to understand that the very thing that made you sick, and you go to do it again, is not extra food? Isn't that what the Scripture says? That the person who falls back into the very thing that God delivers them from is like the dog that returns to its vomit? It made it sick. But because it has no understanding, it goes back to something that made it sick.

Stop that, people of God. Do not be foolish. Understand what the will of the Lord is.

The things that Satan in this world offers us do not fulfill us in any way. Jesus said, the person who drinks of the water I give shall never thirst. He satisfies.

And when we walk in Him and live in Him, you can never have a life more full than the life in Christ. Young people, listen to me. Listen to me.

If you don't see it lived out in your parents, don't get discouraged. Don't get discouraged. Prove us wrong.

Prove us wrong. But parents, don't let it happen. Listen, God forbid.

God forbid that ultimately in the hearts of your children, they're looking at you and they're saying, it doesn't work. Where is the joy unspeakable full of glory? Where is it? I have found a treasure all complete. It supplieth every need.

When I sit and learn it Jesus free, I am free. I'm free. Indeed.

Indeed. It is joy unspeakable. And what does it say? The joy of the Lord is our strength.

When we live in this joy, when we walk in this victory, our children will see it is working. It works. And it does work.

When does it begin to work? This is the key. When does it begin to work? Show me. How many Thomas's are out here? Okay, Alan.

If you'll just find someone that it really works for, we'll believe you. Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet believe. Not only does it work, it is sin when it is not working.

It is sin when it's not working. We are called and instructed to abound in grace, to live in freedom, to go from glory to glory, from victory to victory, from strength to strength. We are called to put to death the things that pertain to the flesh, and to sow to the Spirit.

We're told to make no provision for the flesh. We're told to clothe ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ. And I guarantee you, when people see a group of mature saints, you know, being finished, growing up into the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, when they see that men of integrity, men of righteousness, men of blameless, they'll marvel.

They will marvel. They will notice a difference. And we need to be this difference now.

Our world is vastly being shown these high profile people that fall. Do you all realize what's happening? Think of in the last several ten years or so, amongst the Catholic Church, you know, they're quoting

statistics that I don't even want to name the percentage. Percentages are hard to verify.

But they're just kind of saying it's not even uncommon for so many people to be completely contrary to Scripture and be their leaders. And now, the Protestants, along with them, how many more is it going to take to fall? When we wake up, until we wake up and realize the foundations are being shaken. The foundations are being shaken.

And we need a wake up call. If we are truly broken and truly mourning over things like this, I think the response in our heart says, it stops here. Here's where it stops.

Maybe them, but here it stops. Lord. You know, because we really need to be at this hour, Lord, we have sinned.

We have done evil. We have been unbelieving. Forgive us for being so slow to be mature.

You know, the Lord is kind and gracious, but oh, I think He waits to hear that we really realize how His heart must be breaking and groaning over these things. But you know what? I want to just encourage you something, and I'll be done today. I don't really have a message today.

I just have a burden. A very strong burden. And this is my burden.

When these things began to deal with me, when I really began to focus on the discrepancy between what I believed and how I walked, in that stage, when a real deep work of grace began to deal with me, I can remember distinctively sensing, and I want to be careful when I say I heard God say, but this is the strong sense that I have of how He was dealing with me. I strongly sensed that He was saying, I'm not interested in hearing you say I'm sorry. That's a start.

What I'm interested, what I'll consider to be true repentance for you is let me do in you what I've been wanting to do. Let me finish my work. So that when they look at your life, they see a finished vessel.

And I'll be glorified. That's what I sense for you and I. We need to say we're sorry. We need to confess our sin where we've missed the mark.

But far more than that, we need to draw near to God and be empowered to let Him do in us what He longs to do. You know, there is a difficulty here. I understand it.

Do you sense it at times? I was trying to describe this to someone. I don't intend to do this, but it happens all the time. You know, as I continue to declare what I believe the Scripture says that this life in Christ is possible, you know what it does without me intending to do it? It draws a line right there in the sand.

It draws a line right there and says, okay, who of you believes this? I'm not saying it, am I? But here's what happens. If you really believe this and you're not walking in this, you know what you're forced to do? You're forced to either deny it and disagree so that you do not have to be condemned yourself. Or you say in your heart, yes, I step over.

That's when Jesus said, think not that I have come to bring peace, but a sword. That's what the Word does. It creates a division.

Those who believe it end up on one side. Those who disbelieve end up on the other. And I don't mean to do it.

But we dare not change Scripture so that it can match our experience. Can we agree on that? Can we fully agree on that that we're not safe unless we interpret the Bible by what's consistent with what we experience? Can you see the danger in that? Then none of us rise above. No, the Scripture is true.

The Scripture is true. And those who believe will know it. Those who believe will walk it.

I want to end with what I think it's Hosea says at the last verse of Hosea. The ways of the Lord are right. The righteous walk in them.

The rebellious stumble in them. The ways of the Lord are right. The righteous walk in them.

The rebellious stumble in them. Let's spend some time quiet before the Lord. And I'm done.

Oh, I thought it was early. I was looking at that clock. Let's spend some time quiet before the Lord.

If your heart is just led to pray out loud, I don't want to hinder you. You go ahead. What we do know is that You could keep us by You.

What we do know, Father, is that You said You're going to protect Your bride before Jesus returns for her. Father, my spirit rejoices in what Alan said because I know it's true. Father, I know that You've called me to be a part of a spotless bride.

And that I have a responsibility every day that I live and not live. Father, will You bring it to our conscious awareness every day that this thing we've become a part of is something bigger than ourselves. It's bigger than our own personal relationship with You.

Every time I sin, I sin against my brothers. My life affects everyone that I call my brother and my sister, every member of the body of Christ. Father, I know that You've called that end times body of saints, whoever they may be, whether they are our generation or some generation to come.

We're going to have to go through some hard times. We're going to have to perfect our faith to be able to find our complete, total, entire satisfaction of life itself in You and in nothing else. Because we are truly going to be called to give that up.

Why don't we sing something together? Just a prayer. Don't worry about grabbing a handle. Thou art the Father.

I am the Son. Christ only, always. Christ only, always.

Those that have made plans and need to go and be somewhere and be at peace and may the Lord continue to use you as you go to be a witness. And I know some of you are going to be with your relatives and you need to be there. And we know you need to be there and share Christ with them and love them.

But I have a sense that some may want to stay and ask some questions or confess. I don't want to close the service for those, but those that need to go, we understand. God bless you.

And walk in His grace and power this week.

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