

Steps to Victory | Young Send Off

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- [0 : 00] Take your Bibles and go with me to 2 Corinthians 2 and verse 14. And I will be honest, Blake, almost every word I have is just for you and Bridget. So I hope you will prestar attention.
- Give me some attention. You should learn that later. 2 Corinthians 2, 14, the Bible says, Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ.
- I'd like you to stop and circle the word always. And I wish you'd notice that in your Bible. We are victors. We always win.
- If you're a born again believer, worst thing could happen to you is you die and go to heaven. That's winning. It's hard to beat us because we already won. Because the victory is found, as you will see, in Christ.
- Underline the word always. He always causes us to triumph. I think it's hard for us independent Baptists to believe that or act like that or think it's true.
- [1 : 03] We tend to like to be down on ourselves and down on everybody else and judgmental and critical of others and judgmental and critical of ourselves. But here the Bible says he causes us to triumph.
- But the triumph is found in a person. I wish you'd circle in your Bible in Christ. In Christ. He causes us to triumph in Christ. That's why we win. We don't win because of who we are.
- We don't win because of what we do. We win because we are in Jesus. There's several things I love about this verse. I'm going to share three major points with you in just a little bit. But I want you to underline this.
- He makes manifest the savor of his knowledge. And that's kind of like the sweet smelling aroma that goes up to God as we talk about Jesus.
- Look at it. He said makes manifest, makes shown, makes clear, makes obvious, makes people see the savor, the taste, the smell, the good smelling aroma of his knowledge.
- [2 : 05] As we go around telling about it in every place. Verse 4, 15. We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ. God loves it when we talk about Jesus.
- He loves it when we tell folks about what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross. And those that are saved are loving, hearing about the things of God. And those that are lost, they need to hear about it so they can be saved.
- But some of them will get it as a savor of death because they will refuse the gift. And this is where I'd like to end it with you. And who is sufficient for these things?
- I woke up this morning in New York and got an email. Another missionary bit the dust. It's coming home. How do you have victory?
- How do you go on from where you are? Everybody sits here on their night of blessing and they're just as certain that they're going to make it as they are that the sun came up in the morning.
- [3 : 13] A young man was recently in our church and said, you know, I'm not going to do like other missionaries. I won't make it. And I just thought to myself, I wouldn't be bragging yet. When you put on your armor, don't say so much.

Wait till you take it off and let's see what happens. But I'm saying that, I can't imagine. Number one, here's the three things I want to tell you. Number one, watch and pray. Watch and pray.

The Bible says in Mark 13, 33, take ye heed. Pay attention to what I'm about to say. And then he said, watch and pray. Watch and pray. I'm not just supposed to pray.

I'm supposed to watch and pray. In other words, what that means is there are problems coming my way and I ought to be aware of it. I ought to keep my eyes open. I ought to know that at any moment something could happen.

So here comes some things that are just for the two of you. You're going to be dealing with culture shock when this happens. And what's going to end up happening is you're going to find yourself in just a few weeks or a few months going through some of these things.

[4 : 13] You'll begin to criticize the culture and the people and you won't even have a real reason. You'll just be irritable. You'll just get up in the morning and be like, I don't know what's wrong. I don't like this place. I don't like these people.

I don't like my life. I don't like it. You'll complain about the climate and the culture and the people and the churches. You'll complain about vision. You'll complain about everything. You might even complain about your wife or your husband.

You'll complain about everything but you. What's funny is it's always everybody else. Never me. Complain about everything. You'll desire to stay in your house and not get around people.

You'll have fond memories of how great things were back home. You'll refuse to learn the language. You'll be afraid. Afraid of getting cheated and robbed, sick, touching people and being touched by people.

We were just with a pastor. He was a Hispanic. And he said, I just can't get over the way they all suck on the same straw in Argentina. And I'm like, man, you're Hispanic. Hispanic. I said, he said, I'm not getting those germs.

[5 : 15] I said, I got so many Hispanic germs. You're going to be hungry to get back home and only spend time with people that are really important. Other Americans. If you're not careful, you're going to be right in the middle of it.

You won't even see it coming because you're not watching. Watch for it. It happens on a regular basis. The way you handle it is you stay in prayer and meditation. So you can handle any attack that comes your way.

You need to know what to expect. So here come a few things. When you first arrive, you're going to be so excited like you are tonight. Just bounce. You know, Blake. Blake. Everybody knows Blake. Bouncing up and down.

So excited like a kid at Christmas. That's how you're going to feel as soon as you get down to Columbia. You're going to be running there like, I can't believe it. Look at me. Check me out. Here's another selfie.

Ain't I great? Look at me down here in this country. And then you're going to begin to feel some frustration. You're going to say, now what in the world did I go and do? And how did I get here?

[6 : 13] And why am I here? And then Lord willing, you'll recover, I hope. Some don't. Lots don't. You'll recover and you'll begin to say, I don't know if I can make it, but I'm going to try it.

I think I can. And finally, you'll fall in love with the people. And you'll start to live there and love being there and make it your home. So it's really time to start doing ministry.

I want to challenge you to watch and pray so you never need to lose sight of why you're there. You're there to tell people about Jesus. You're there to see souls rescued from hell.

I need you to know up front, watch and pray. I need you to know up front that you'll always be in over your head. You're going to spend the rest of your life in over your head.

I mean, it's deep. The water's deep. The waves are coming. Things are pulling at your legs. It sounds like you're going to drown. It feels like you're going to drown.

[7 : 07] You're going to need the power of the Holy Spirit of God. You need to get on your armor every morning before you leave the house, before you step out into ministry. So you need to know that you're doing what God called you to do.

That's all the first thing I want you to hear, but watch and pray. So you've got to get up in the morning and say, man, I know I'm doing what God wants me to do. And do not doubt in the night what God gave you in the light.

So as soon as you get down there and things get bad, you'll start saying, I don't know if I ever made the right decision. Everybody I've ever known does that. Get help instead of getting hurt.

Pray yourself happy every morning. Watch and pray. Leave your burdens with the Lord. Fill your mind with the scripture promises and step out in faith. Number two, welcome and prepare for what is coming.

I wish you'd look this verse up. I know we don't believe in doing that much anymore, but look it up anyway. Philippians 4.11. Look it up. Not that I speak in respect of want.

[8 : 09] This is what I want you to do. I want you to understand this. I have learned. It's not a natural thing to do what you're about to do. I love Columbia. I love Latin America. I love Latin Americans.

I love the mission field. I love everywhere I get to go and preach and do all that. But I'll be honest with you, you've got a lot of learning to do. You think you know. You think you know, but you've got a lot to learn.

Paul said, I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. You have to learn that. Paul had to learn it. So underline, I have learned and then underline to be content.

Paul had learned to be content. Paul had to learn to be content. He had to work at being content. It doesn't come natural to be content. He had to learn to be content.

In verse 12, he said, I know. See, I've been taught. I've learned and I know how to be a base. And I know. I know and I know. I know how to be a base.

[9 : 04] I know how to abound and everywhere and all things. We should underline this. I am instructed. Look at that. He said, I'm taught. I'm instructed. The Holy Spirit of God has taught me how to live when I got a lot to eat and how to live when I don't have anything to eat.

I can live when I'm hungry. I can live when I'm fat. I know how to abound and I know how to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me. Now here's some lessons on.

I'm asking you to welcome the problems that are coming and prepare for them. So here's the preparation. Number one, make mistakes. Nobody, whoever does the ministry on the mission field or anywhere else does it without making mistakes.

If you're too afraid to make a mistake. I was getting a haircut today. And the guy told me, he said, it took a year and a half of cutting hair before he didn't get real nervous every day when he came in. And all he's doing is cutting hair three weeks later.

He'll be back. You're dealing with eternity. You're going to make mistakes though. Don't take yourself so seriously. Don't get hung up on mistakes.

[10 : 10] When you make a mistake, just get over it and go on and make another one. Know that ministry, language learning, cultural understanding are all social activities. They're not academic.

Missionaries can't be book people. They can't be in the room people. They're people people. If you can't do that, you ain't going to make it. You got to get out with people.

You got to get out with people. Language learning is more attitude than aptitude. It's more attitude than aptitude. It's what your attitude is. I didn't have any ability.

I was told that repeatedly. But I did learn enough to get by. Work at learning the language. Stretch yourself every day. Stretch yourself.

Every day, do a little bit more. Say a few more things. Make a few more mistakes. Get laughed at a little bit more. And you're going to get laughed at. I've had people in language school throw books at their teacher.

[11 : 07] Don't do that, please. It's always hard for me to explain. She said to me, she said, she came out and she said, I'm not sure he saved. I said, he was a deacon at his church back home.

She said, I don't think he saved. But I mean, he did throw the book at her. I mean, the literal book. I mean, the textbook. He just took it, hurled it at her.

She didn't think that was funny. Stay motivated. Stay motivated. Stay motivated. Remember that you're not there. You need to listen to what I'm about to say to you. Really, I thought about just writing it all down for you.

But remember this. You're not there to learn a language. You're not there to cross cultural lines. And you're not even there to have a ministry. Somehow you get caught up in what you're there to do for you.

And what I'm going to learn a language. And I'm going to cross cultures. I'm going to have a ministry. You're there to see lives changed. It ain't about you. It's not at all about you.

[12 : 08] It's about everybody else. You're there to see people come to know Jesus Christ and grow in him. So get out and make some friends and lead some people to Christ. Number three, and I'm done. You need to wonder at the power of God.

You need to remember why you're on the field. 1 Timothy 1 verse 11 says, According to the glorious gospel, The glorious gospel, The glorious gospel.

It's the glorious good news. It changes lives. It makes drunks into deacons. It makes prostitutes into pure ladies.

It turns everybody's life around. It's a glorious gospel of the blessed God. And that was committed to my trust. You need to underline that verse. Committed to your trust.

Paul's telling Timothy, I can't believe you let me hold on to something so precious. The glorious gospel. In verse 12, he said, And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who hath enabled me.

[13 : 12] You need to underline that. Paul knew that it came from God, And God committed it to his trust. And Paul knew that God had enabled him. God calls you, enables you.

Gives you what you need. And you don't have it on your own. You're going to mess up a thousand times. But God gave it to you. God empowered you to do it. And then in verse 12, God put you into the ministry.

That's what he did to Paul. So I just remind you of a few things that were done. Jesus loves them. Jesus loves them. He wants them to be saved. He called you and he empowered you.

You are there with a message. It's really not about you. Not about your ministry. It's about Jesus and his message. It's about their eternal destiny.

Start winning people as soon as you get there. Don't wait after language. That's another thing. I think dumb as a rock. People are like, When I learn the language, I'm going to get some people in church. No, you need to get somebody in church first.

[14 : 14] Today. Get somebody to go with you on the first day. If you do enough pantomime and jumping up and down and handing stuff to them, they'll go. Just got to get people to go. We're there to get people in church.

You might not make it through language school. Jesus might come back. You got to do it today because you don't have tomorrow. Invite people to church. Use your language time to see people saved.

Get involved in everything. Become one of them so they'll listen to you. That means work at learning how to express yourself to them and with them. Enjoy their food, their fun, their friendship, their fellowship.

Genuinely care about their eternal destiny. I would challenge you on a regular basis to go outside the city. Do it with your wife. Do it alone. Sit in your car and look out over the lights of the city and cry.

Say, God, what am I going to do? I challenge you to drive up and down the streets at night and just talk out loud to him and say, God, what am I going to do? What did you put me here for? Help me. The real battle is to get the gospel to the people.

[15 : 20] Not about you. About getting the gospel to the people. So focus on what you can control and don't get hung up on all the minor problems. That's what everybody gets upset about. Don't even worry about, I don't know how to do stuff.

You'll figure it out. Good night. Everybody has to figure it out. Get help when you're frustrated or hurting. Don't pull away. And last thing I want to say to you. God wants to work.

So are you going to let him? What's amazing is that our God wants to do more than we would ever dream of or ask him to. Look at Mark chapter six and verse five.

Jesus said he could do their no mighty work. He could do their no mighty work. Save, lay his hands on a few of the sick folk and heal them. And then he was shocked.

He marveled because they didn't believe him. I would hate to think I'd be the missionary that went to the mission field and didn't believe God. I'd hate to be the guy sitting there with the word of God, the salvation that God's given me, the power of the Holy Spirit living in me and let it all flop and fall on the ground because I don't believe God.

[16 : 30] It's going to be scary. Scary. It's your, let me tell you, 18 years, 19 years counting language school on the mission field, never comfortable.

But I ain't comfortable as pastor of this church. I always know I don't do a good job. I always know I'm not enough. I always know I don't measure up. I mean, if I thought I did, I think I'd get pretty cocky about it.

So you just got to keep believing God. I'm begging you to believe God and let him do big stuff with you. Father in heaven, I love you. I thank you for Blake and Bridget.

And I thank you for what you're doing in their lives. And I pray that you would just show your power and show your life. God, use them. I pray there'd be churches, lots of churches started out of their ministry. I pray there'd be lots of lives changed.

I pray you'd show your power in a real way. And I'll give you glory and honor and praise for all that you do. I love you. Thank you. In Jesus name. Amen. I want to ask any of you that might want to say a word to Blake or Bridget, if you'd come this way, you can.

[17 : 37] Blake, I want you to know I love you and I believe in you. I really do. I expect God, come on, you coming? I want you to know I love you and I believe in you and I'm expecting to see God do big things with you.

Bridget, I'm praying that God will use you. It's a big deal to be the wife of a missionary and to help him and to encourage him. And as up and hyper as he gets, he's going to need you more than you'd ever dreamed.

But she's going to need you to love her. So how about doing a little of that? Amen.