

The Church Never Loses

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 15 February 2015

[0 : 0 0] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. All right, take your Bibles if you would and open them to that such well-known verse, Matthew 16, 18.

Matthew 16, 18. Well, this Thursday night is going to be a very special night, and I hope that you are here. We will be appointing Brother John Pearson as a deacon, and he's already been ordained and served as a deacon for many years and hasn't been one in our church.

And so we'll be appointing him. Brother Chuck and I were discussing that in Sunday school, and Chuck and I are concerned about a deacon who was in a bar last night getting in a fight and becoming a deacon at our church.

Amen? And where's Chuck? I can't find it. He's over there. So that's going to be a great night. Plus, Brett Johnson will be ordained this Thursday night.

That's a special time in his life. I hope you'll come. Four great men at our church that are serving as deacons. This is Micah, Roseli, Chuck, Littlefield, John Pearson, and Brett Johnson.

[1 : 0 3] Great men. I'm very proud of them, honored that I get to work with them. And Brother John, of course, has been like the foundation, human foundation of Vision Baptist Church and all he's done to help you get it here.

So if anybody ought to be a deacon at our church, he should. So we're excited about that. I hope you'll be here Thursday night and be a part of the service and see what God's doing in their life.

So open your Bibles down to Matthew 16, 18. I am excited to tell you that the church of Jesus Christ never loses. When I was on deputation and serving as a missionary, it was only a brief period of 20 years.

But in 20 years of time, I traveled to dozens of churches, if not hundreds of churches across America. I was supported by dozens, maybe up to 200 churches over the 20 years because churches died.

Churches closed their doors. I would get word that such and such church had just closed their door. It was often a very exciting time for us because they would sell all their stuff and divide it among the missionaries.

[2 : 0 6] So the more stuff they had, the better offering we got. Amen. And so I didn't really go around going, yes, another one closed this door. But at least we got a big offering towards what was going on. I met a, I knew a preacher named Seitler who said, Harold Seitler, he was a pastor in Greenville.

And Harold Seitler said when he heard that a church closed, somebody said, how do you feel about hearing that church closed? He said, I'm praising Jesus. He said, if it got weak enough to close, it should have been closed a long time ago.

It was already dead. And so I thought that was a unique way to put it. You probably heard all your life about how the church is dying. You probably heard all your life about how weak the church is.

And that all comes because you're looking at everything in the wrong way. So we're going to look at it from the Bible perspective. And I hope you understand this applies to our church as long as we keep doing what he wants a church to do.

Because churches die. The church never dies. The seven churches found in the book of Revelation are not there any longer. So a church may have a lifetime, may live and die, but the church never dies.

[3 : 16] I have not one time in all the ministry years I have. I've been in the ministry over 40 years full time. And I have never one time worried about a church dying.

In fact, I've never been a part of a church dying. I have left churches that died. I've had churches that support me die. But I really believe if we learn the Bible truths and act like that here at Vision Baptist Church, it will be a strong church.

As long as you do what you're supposed to do. So read with me one more time. Matthew 16, 18. You're only going to read it about four times this morning before we finish.

But let's read it together out loud if you would. Ready? The Bible said, And I say also unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Father, help your people understand your church. How important it is to you and what you're doing. And help Vision Baptist Church to always be an assembly after your heart.

[4 : 20] An assembly that does what you want them to do. And you bring honor to yourself. In Jesus' name. Amen. I'm only going to give you three truths you can write down somewhere this morning. But maybe you should write these down and look up these verses.

I hope you'll look up the verses. I hope that even though we have the screen that makes it easy. And I hope that even though you have an electronic device that you can look up everything you want on. And I'm not against electronic devices.

I am using one. And I use one all the time. But I hope you use a paper Bible or some way that you really do keep up with what's going on. Look at it and make sure you've got it.

Mark it in a way you can study it later if you can and if you will. Number one, God's work is going to succeed. You should write that down. God's work is going to succeed.

The church is his work. And it is going to succeed. Number one reason I know it is going to succeed. Take your Bible and go with me.

[5 : 16] The number one reason is because the church is built on Jesus himself. The church is built on Jesus himself. Look at your Bible, Matthew chapter 16 and verse 15.

Now, if you read 16, 18 and you don't have the context and you don't understand what the Bible says, you might think that the church is going to be built on Peter. Because it kind of acts like that in that verse 18.

If you take it out of context, you don't read all the verses around him. Buddy, we'd have a weak church if that was where it was built. Because you know what happened, don't you? Peter died. You might not know that. He's dead and buried and rotted by now.

So maybe things wouldn't last. But look at what it says in 16, 15. Get the context. The Bible said, and he said unto them, but whom say ye that I am?

Hey, guys. Hey, disciples. Who do y'all say I am? I know what the world says, but who do y'all say that I am? And in verse 16, Peter, Simon Peter answered and said, we know who you are.

[6 : 14] You are the Christ. Thou art the Christ. The son of the living God. You should underline that. Pointer is at it. Peter said, we know who you are. You're the Christ.

You are the Messiah. You're the anointed one. You're the sent one. And you are the son of the living God. In verse 17, Jesus answered and said unto him, Jonah, Jonah, Simon, son of Jonah, Barjona.

He said, look at this, buddy. Blessed are you. Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto you, but my Father in heaven. Peter, there's no way a human being knows what you just said.

No human being understands what you just said. It was God that taught you that. The way you know that I am the Christ, the son of the living God, God taught you that. And then in verse 18, he said, and I say unto you, you're Peter, and upon this rock.

Hey, Peter, listen to this, buddy. Hey, Peter, you're right. And upon this rock, I will build my church. So the reason is it's built on him. Look at 1 Corinthians chapter 3, verse 11.

[7 : 20] Write that verse down. Be able to look it up later so you understand something about the church. The true church of Jesus Christ is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 3, the apostle Paul is talking to the church at Corinth that he's explaining to them that as they build a church, as they build their assembly, as they build their membership, as they help their members to grow up, he said, I need you to understand something.

He talks about a master builder, and he said, you've got to be careful how you build it. He makes this comment in verse 11. Look at what it says in 1 Corinthians chapter 3, verse 11. For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is, say it, the foundation.

When you're going to build the church, you don't look for bricks and mortar. You don't look for rocks and cement. You look for Jesus Christ. Peter, who do men say that I am?

You're the Christ. He's good. That's the foundation. Write her down. That's the foundation of the church of Jesus Christ. By the way, he's the head of the church. I just want you to know these verses so you'll have them.

[8 : 29] So write them down somewhere. Colossians chapter 1 and verse 18 says that he is the head of the body, the church. He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have preeminence.

Now, you need to look at verse up in your Bible and put a circle around the word preeminence because here's what God wanted. God wants you to know that it is Jesus who's the foundation, that Jesus is the head, and that you should know that he ought to get all the preeminence.

He ought to get, hey, he's top billing. I mean, on the marquee outside, the video about the church is going to say Jesus Christ. And when you go in there, the star of the show is Jesus Christ.

It's never a preacher. It's never a preacher. It's never great people from history. The star is Jesus. He gets preeminence. His name should be mentioned so many times in every service.

And it ought to be like, man, all they do is Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. All they do is talk about Jesus because he gets the preeminence. Put a circle around this. He's the head of the body.

[9 : 33] He's the head of the body. I was in out of the keeper riding down the road with a taxi driver one day. It happened more than one time, but a special guy this day. And he said to me, he said, hey, where's your church from? I said, heaven.

He said, I mean, where's it located? I said, oh, Hunter. He said, I know where it is in Hunter. I want to know where your church is from. I said, heaven. He said, I mean here on the earth.

I said, oh, Jerusalem. Because he didn't like it being an American church. He said, what do you mean Jerusalem? I said, that's where our founder was when he founded the thing. Amen.

That's where Jesus was when he founded the thing. Well, he said, well, who's the head of your church? I said, Jesus. He said, well, who's the boss of your church? I said, Jesus.

He said, oh, I can't even talk to you. Look at the Bible. He's the head of the body. Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 22.

[10 : 30] The church is his body. He's not just the head. He's the body. It says in Ephesians 1, 22. And has put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body.

The church, which is his body. I know God's works are going to succeed because it's his church. It's not only his church. It's built on him.

It's he's the head of it and he's the body. It's his church. Well, it doesn't say that, but the Bible says it's his church. I wish you could do what I do in my notes. I have right here in front of me.

Look at Matthew 16, 18 with me. Make sure you somehow make this word big. It says, I say unto thee, thou art Peter. Upon this rock, I will build my church. If you're a, if you ever get around church as much, you know, if a pastor's been there a long time, the church becomes his church.

And so somebody might say, have you been to, have you been to that church? And I say, I don't know that church. They'll say it's so-and-so's church, meaning the pastor of that church. And they kind of refer to it that way.

[11 : 34] It's like Austin Gardner's church. Well, Jesus would have said, I take exception to that. That's not Austin's church. That's my church. Amen. I take, don't call that the, don't call that the, the, the deacon's church.

Don't call that the pastor's church. That's my church. He has every right to say it's his church. He has every right to say it's his church because in first Corinthians chapter six and verse 20, he bought us with a price.

Look at your Bible in first Corinthians six 20. He said, for you are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are gods. I want you to look here just a second.

How many of you are born again? Say amen. All right. If you're born again, you know what? You're, you're owned. You belong to somebody in the book of revelation. He's even going to put his mark on him in the book of revelation.

He's going to, he's going to brand this people. He's going to brand them. Say that's mine. Kind of like the old cowboys brand a cow on the rear end. So everybody knows that he is. He's going to brand us in Galatians chapter six.

[12 : 36] Paul said, I bear in my body, the marks of the Lord Jesus. I belong to him. And it's obvious. People can see that they know I belong to him. We are purchased. Everybody sitting here that's born again.

You belong to Jesus. Not only that, the church, the assembly belongs to Jesus. In Acts chapter 20 and verse 28, the Bible said, take heed therefore unto yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers to feed the church of God, the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood.

He bought us individually and he bought us collectively, but he owns us where he is. You see, the Bible said in Matthew 16, 18, and the gates of hell will not prevail.

How can I know the gates of hell won't prevail? I can tell you how I know it. He's the head. He's the body. He's the foundation. It's his. He owns us. He owns the church. He bought it all.

It's Jesus's work. Not only that, he said he would build the church. Look, if you would, Matthew 16, 18 again. You've been reading this all the time we've gone through, but it says, and I say unto thee that thou art Peter upon this rock.

[13 : 46] I will build my church. I will build my church. So I come into Vision Baptist Church and I can know this when I stand up here to preach. Hey, he's at work. This church belongs to him and he's busy building his church.

He is going to build his church. The church is not a bunch of weak, oppressed people living in fear of the devil, but rather a bunch of servers moving forward in faith.

That's who we are. It's his power working in us. This morning when you came to church, you may not even realize everything I'm about to show you. You may not know what I'm about to show you, but God's working in you.

God is working in you right now if you're his. You belong to him and he's at work in you. Look at what Paul told the Ephesian church in Ephesians chapter 3 and verse 20.

Paul says, now unto him, that means like I'd like to go ahead and brag on Jesus just a little bit, who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think. Praise Jesus. He can do more than we ever dreamed of.

[14 : 51] And then he makes a statement, according to the power that works in us. Underline that. According to the power that works in us. Some of you were lost in deep, dark sin.

Some of you, if we talked about your pastor for the church, the whole church would be like, I don't know him that way. I've never seen him that way. How did all that change? I'll tell you how he works in us. Amen. There's people in this room that were liars and arrogant and proud and thieves and drunkards and drug addicts and messed up people and messed up families.

But the God of heaven says, hey, don't you worry about your mind. I bought them and I'm working in them. That's pretty good stuff. Amen. They're mine and I'm working in them. Paul said, hey, now unto him that can do anything and everything more than I'd ever dreamed.

And he's already working in us. That's pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty good. Pretty good. Pretty good. Amen. That's pretty good. How about this one right here? He's working in us. He is working. His power is working in us.

He's working in us. Colossians 1 29. I'm just telling you, I found these verses in Spanish. I didn't know them. I never really preached them until I was preaching in Spanish. And sometimes words in another language that mean the same thing just resonate with you.

[16 : 01] They just sound so good. I was reading in Spanish and the word in Spanish is actua. And it means the word acts in you. It's like it's, it's at work in you. It's acting in you.

And I remember reading, I said, they don't say that in English. And I went and read English. I said, yeah, it does. I should have read that a long time ago. But look at what it says right here. Look at what this verse says. The Colossians 1 28.

Where into I also labor. I work striving. I'm trying to do a work for God. I'm trying to make my life count for God. But look how he does it. According to his working.

According to his working, which worketh in me mightily. I saw Sunday school teachers coming in here this morning. You were setting up your little tables. You were getting out your food.

You were preparing your lessons. You were talking to people all around you. And you were working hard to get something done for God. Praise the Lord. You were working hard. But while you were working hard. He was working in you.

[16 : 55] Mightily. Amen. You thought, you said, look at me. I'm getting my lesson ready. God's up in him. I keep thinking that. But I'm working. Amen. He's here. Where two or three of us are gathered together.

He's here. And he's working in us mightily. This is one of my favorite verses. In the whole Bible. Hang on. You're going to love this verse. Turn with me to 1 Thessalonians 2. In verse 13.

His word works in us. His word works in us. In 1 Thessalonians 2. In verse 13. The Bible says. For this cause also thank me God without ceasing.

Because when you receive the word of God. Which you heard of us. You received it not as the word of men. But as it was. As it is in truth. The word of God.

Which effectually worketh also in you that believe. Look at that verse. That's a crazy verse. You've got to underline this. He said. When I came and I spoke to you. And I gave you the word of God.

[17 : 53] You didn't take it as the word of men. And so many people you're going to talk to about the Bible. They're going to act like. Well that's just. The Bible's just a man book. And it's just a bunch of words of a bunch of men. That wrote the Bible.

And Paul said. That ain't how y'all took it though. Y'all took it like God was speaking. Amen. But then he goes on to say something I love. I love this. It's like the most wonderful practical truth in the whole Bible.

If you get this book in you. It changes you. And look what it says in the verse. It says. It says. Which it is the truth. The word of God. Which effectually. Effectually. Actua. It effectually works in you.

You put this book in. It'll just go to work. The fact is. There's a story in Mark. About the word. And it's talking about a seed. And it says how you plant a seed.

And you have no idea how it works. But it does. You drop that seed in the ground. And it's down there. And you don't see it working. You don't understand it working. But that little seed germinates somehow. And a big little.

[18 : 48] A little sprout comes out. A little bit seed. And starts knocking big old clods of dirt out of the way. And comes popping out of the ground. And you might not understand how it grows. You might not see how it grows. But it grows. Amen. And some of you started out putting the book of God in your heart.

And as you started learning the work of God. It started changing you. So we got a successful church. God's work won't fail. He said the gates of hell won't prevail. Because I promise you this. His word will get inside of you.

And make a difference in you. I think I've told you this. But I met old Daniel. Daniel. In Atequipa. He's the pastor of a church. And we were talking one day.

And I said Daniel. You're such an unusual Peruvian. I said almost every Peruvian I know. That's a grown man. Is a drunkard. They're all drunkards. And they're rabble rousers. And they're whoremongers.

And you don't see a lot of good Peruvians. And Daniel says I was too. I said no you weren't. I've known you for years. I first met you in 1986.

[19 : 45] And you have never been like that. And he said you just didn't meet me. When I was a drunkard. And somebody showed me the Bible. And it changed me. If you'd have met my dad.

You'd have thought. He never was a drunkard. He never was one of those guys. You'd have said my dad didn't understand anything. From the other side of the tracks. You'd have said my dad never understood anything. That other style of living. But once the word of God got into my dad.

And the word of God got in there working in him. Effectually it changed him. Hey we're going to win. The gates of hell shall not prevail. Because Jesus is the head. Because Jesus is the body.

Because it's his church. Because he bought us. And he purchased us. Because he's working in us. And his word is working in us. His work will succeed. His work will succeed.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 15 and verse 10. The Bible says. But by the grace of God. I am what I am. And his grace which was besought upon me. Was not in vain.

[20 : 40] But I labored more abundantly than they all. Yet not I. But the grace of God which was with me. It's a great verse. Paul said. You're looking at me. I used to be the chief of sinners. And the persecutor of the church.

I was there when old Saul died. They had his clothes laid at my feet. I'm a bad guy. But he started working in me. He started working in me. And everything I am today.

I owe to the grace of God. Everybody in this room would say that. Amen. Not a one of us believes that we deserve anything. We know good and well. If we'd have got what we deserved. We'd have gone to hell. But God saved us.

Forgave our sins. And gave us new life. And made new creatures out of us. I love Warren Frick's testimony. Yeah. I've never heard it. You've got to go tell him. Say. Brother Frick. Tell me your testimony. Finds about Jesus.

It's a beautiful testimony. Finds out about Jesus. He don't know nothing. The boy don't know nothing. He's a young man. He don't know anything. But all of a sudden. His life has changed. It was the word of God that did that. It was God.

[21 : 33] Amen. Not Warren Frick. It was God doing that. That's what's going on here. But look what he said. He said. Your grace wasn't in vain with me. I worked hard as I could. But it was still your grace.

Your grace. I know this. God's work will not fail. You should say this with me in your heart right now. The gates of hell will not prevail. I mean you could repeat that with me.

Say it. The gates of hell will not prevail. Say it again. The gates of hell will not prevail. I can promise you. I've always been a part of a successful ministry. You say. Brother.

You must be really something special. No. I got a promise. The gates of hell will not prevail. Amen. God is great. God is good.

That's why as our church. We have a church planning movement. That's our goal. I want to see churches started everywhere. Because it's the work of God. And when God does his work.

[22 : 29] Nobody can stop it. And everywhere you put a church. God makes a difference. Look if you would at Matthew chapter 28 verses 19 and 20. If you would. And I'll get to the next point. Look at this.

Matthew 28. 19 and 20. The Bible says. Go ye therefore and teach all nations. Baptizing them in the name of the Father. And the Son. And the Holy Ghost. And some people when they read the Great Commission. They think our goal is to go teach and baptize.

But that's only the two thirds of the job. And the hardest job is the next job. The church. The church. The church.

Is the important thing. Look at verse 20 with me if you would. Go teach and baptize in the name of the Father. The Son. The Holy Ghost. And then it says. And teach them to observe all things. Whichever I've commanded you.

You got to have a church. You got to have a bunch of people. Gather around in circles this morning. Talking to people. And a man sitting there. Talking to some young children. And another man talking to some teenagers.

[23 : 23] And another man talking to some older teenagers. And another man talking to some singles. And another man talking to some couples. Another man talking to some older people. Because we're teaching everybody to observe everything. How you got to find out all about this book.

Because he said. I want you to know my book. Can't do that without a church. Were you here to hear old man. Witherell sermon. What a. What. The blessings this Thursday night.

If you missed that. You should go back and watch it on the internet. We all said. I was traveling around with a guy preaching the gospel. Everybody's getting saved. But we never did do no follow-up. So. I decided to become a church planner.

And start a church. So they'd hear more. And they would know. So we would start a church planning movement. If God would let me. I'd see us start dozens of churches across America. If God would let me.

I'd like to start dozens of churches inside of Atlanta. I want to see us start churches. What kind of churches? Not Republican churches. I want to start Bible churches. I want to start a church where they come in.

[24 : 17] It's like Bible all the time. Bible in Sunday school. Bible in the preaching service. Bible in the discipleship program. Bible, Bible, Bible, Bible. And when people walk up and say. Man, that's a Bible church. Amen. That ought to be our goal.

Number two. By the way. The church never loses. The gates of hell shall not prevail. Satan is not near as powerful as you think.

Let me just tell you guys. You guys do not understand Bible truth. You're cowering like the devil. Some big bad dude. He's whipped and has no teeth. And he's hooked on a chain.

He's a loser. And all through the Bible. There's not an idea in the Bible. That Christians are supposed to cower in fear. Look at what the Bible says in Matthew chapter 16 and verse 18.

The gates of hell shall not prevail. Let me give you some good Bible truths you should remember. Some of you think. Well, I can't help but sin because the devil seems to make me sin.

[25 : 15] The devil can't make you do diddly. The devil has no power. If you're still sinning, it's because you want to sin. If you're still sinning, it's because you choose to sin.

Look at what the Bible says in James chapter 4 and verse 7. It's one of my favorite passages. I guess I say that a lot. But they're all my favorites. But anyway, it's one of my favorite favorites.

Look at James 4, 7. Now listen, the devil's not as strong as you think he is. Matthew 16, 18. Jesus says, and by the way, the church is just getting started. I believe Jesus started the church himself.

And he's getting the church started. And he looks up and says, guys, I'll build my church. And don't y'all worry. I got the devil whipped. You know what that verse in Tennessee Hillbilly? It's my church. I'll build it. It'll be built on me.

And I'll whoop the devil already whooped him. Amen. Amen. That's what the verse says. Now it says this. Submit yourselves, therefore, to God. Resist the devil. And he will.

[26 : 11] Say the word out loud. I didn't hear it. He will flee. Now let me explain something to you. I didn't. When you're learning a new language, words mean things.

And you use them without ever thinking about them. And so I'm in Spanish. I'm learning the language a little bit. And they have this word that means flee. And I said, what's it mean?

And it means run. And I thought, well, we already have another word for run. So why don't we need another word for run? But all languages have lots of words. But I'm brand new. And I'm just learning.

And they said, well, this kind of runs like running scared. And that's what flee is. Look at it.

Submit yourself, therefore, to God. Resist the devil. And the devil will run scared. Submit yourself to God. And the devil will tell you. You never start a. You're going to have a race.

[27 : 09] We're going to have a 50-yard dash. You ever see the coach get out there. Or the guy get out there and say, on your mark. Get set. Flee. You don't say that.

I'll tell you, when you flee, you flee when the cops come and you're a thief. I'll tell you, when you flee, you flee when you're a cockroach and they turn the lights on. I'll tell you, when you flee, you flee when you're scared.

And here's what he said. He said, submit yourself to God. Resist the devil and he'll take off running like a scaredy cat. Say amen. That's right in the book. Amen. You guys are going around all the time.

The devil's going to get me. The devil's going to get me. The devil ain't going to get you. You belong to Jesus. You belong to Jesus. The devil's not near as powerful as you think he is. Verse 8 says, draw not a God.

He'll draw not a you. Satan is a defeated foe. In Revelation chapter 12 and verse 9, The Bible says, That means kicked out, booted out, lost.

[28 : 13] You're out. It means open the doors and throw him in the street. He was cast out. In verse 10, he said, I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now has come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ.

The accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused him before God day and night. Verse 11. This is a whole sermon. I used to preach this all the time on deputation. Look at what it says in verse 11.

And they overcame him. Look at that. They won. They beat him. They pinned him. He tapped out. But they overcame him by the blood of the lamb, by the word of their testimony, and that they loved their lives not to death.

They loved not their lives to death. You know what happened? The devil started beating up on them. So you're in some kind of situation, and the devil's trying to tempt you, and you feel like you're going to fall into sin. Maybe it's going to ruin your marriage. Maybe it's going to ruin your testimony.

Maybe porn flips up on your screen, on your screen, and you're like, I don't know how to defeat porn. That's not true. You do. Submit yourself to God. Would God want you on there?

[29 : 18] Say, no, he wouldn't. Then don't be on there. You say, well, the devil's telling me. He said, the devil ain't going to do it. I resist. The devil said, okay, I give up. The devil only hangs around because y'all are buddies. You say, well, I just can't seem to get rid of him.

No wonder. He knows you don't mean it. He knows you don't mean it. Tell him you belong to Jesus. Tell him you surrendered your life to Jesus. You ain't going to do that junk.

And tell him you'd rather be dead than do what he wants you to do. And he'll say, I give. And I run. Not only that, God will bruise him under our feet. He's a defeated foe.

The devil's not as strong as you think he is. In Romans chapter 16 and verse 20, and the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. I love that.

Paul's ending up his letter to the Romans. Things aren't all that good in Rome. You know, people are suffering and things are going wrong. And Paul ends the book and he goes, hey guys, by the way, I know the old devil's messing with us, but don't worry.

[30 : 25] Pretty soon, God's going to let us stomp his nasty head. He's going to do that. We're going to bruise his filthy head under our foot. Our God has the power.

Our God. God's people overcome. All through the Bible, we are overcomers, guys. We are overcomers. The Bible says in 1 John 4, for ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them.

We overcome. I don't ever walk down the street. I won't live in fear. I just won't live in fear. By the way, I've lived in a place where bombs went off outside my house. I would preach and prove, and while I was preaching, bombs would go off, and all the lights would turn off, and you'd see police on the streets.

I won't live in fear. I don't have to live in fear. I'm connected. I get on airplanes. You say, are you scared on airplanes? I say, are you crazy? I'm on the airplane. It's going to be good. He takes care of me.

Amen? I used to have had people sit beside me on an airplane saying, are you nervous about flying? I said, no, you're okay as long as God wants to use me. And somebody said, well, what if you don't want to use you? I said, well, you might be in trouble then. But you are God's.

[31 : 29] Amen? Amen? Amen? You can't lose. You can't lose. We have overcome. Greater is he that's in you than he that's in the world. The devil steps up to you and starts trying to tempt you.

Just say, let him loose. Let him loose. He'll take care of you. Greater is he that's in you than he's in the world. Romans chapter 8, verse 37. We are more than conquerors. Now, hey, we don't just win.

We more than win. We don't win our games 35 to 34. We win them 2,000 to 1. Yes. We don't just win. We plaster them. Amen? We're poor sportsmen.

You know how you're supposed to be a nice sportsman and don't win too much? Jesus said, no, my guys, they win big time. They are more than overcomers. Say amen. Amen. Amen. Hey, hey.

And the gates of hell shall not prevail. Satan is not the one God's people fear anyway. If you ever say the Bible, God says, y'all fear me. Y'all show your respect to me and I'll whoop his rear.

[32 : 31] That's what he said. We can be certain of what God will do in and through us. Number three. Time to quit. Four minutes to finish the whole message. Number three. The gates or seat of authority of death and hell have no real authority.

In Matthew 16, 18, the Bible says, I say unto thee that thou art Peter and upon this rock I'll build my church. And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. In the Bible, gates usually refer to the seat of authority.

So like the mayor and all the councilmen, they're at the gates. If you were to go down to the gold dome in Atlanta, that would be called the gates in Bible days. That would be where sin and Satan and demons could be gathered together plotting against the people of God.

Satan wanted to be like God, but he never accomplished his purpose. I don't have time to go into it very much because our time's running out. But in Isaiah 14, 12, an indication of how Satan's life began as Satan says, How art thou fallen from heaven?

You've been kicked out of heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning. How art thou cut down to the ground which didst weaken the nations? For you said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven.

[33 : 41] I will exalt my throne above the stars. I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation and the sides of the Lord. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the most high God, but you've been kicked out and thrown in a pit.

Verse 15. You've been kicked out and thrown in a pit. I just want you to know, Satan is a pompous, arrogant, know-it-all loser. He said, I will, I will.

God said, you won't. He said, I will all you want, but you won't. I'll kick you out. So the devil said, I'm going to be like you. God said, okay, boom, you're out, done, over with.

Matthew 16, 18. God saves people no matter how death and hell try to stop them. In Matthew 16, 18, it said, and the gates of hell shall not prevail. Did you know hell's been defeated? Listen to this.

Hell's been defeated. In Revelation chapter 1 and verse 18, Jesus has the keys of death and hell. You know who has the keys, don't you? The guy that can open it and close it.

[34 : 43] Some of you guys are like, I'm afraid when I die, the devil put me in hell. He ain't even got the keys. He couldn't open the door to throw yet if he wanted to. He ain't got the keys. God's got the keys. Jesus has got the keys.

Death is the last enemy, but it's been defeated. First Corinthians 15. Okay. Hang on. Jesus is the, man, he's the stuff. But listen to this. John 11, 25.

God's people don't even die. Did you know that? If you're a born again believer, you're never going to die. Hey, hello. You should listen to that statement. John 11, 25.

The Bible said, Jesus said to them, I am the resurrection and the life. He that believes in me, though you are dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Do you all believe that?

That's what he said. Let me explain something to you. Soon, and not so long away, some of us will step up to that day when it's time to die. And though my wife may stand at my side and be terrified and scared and be missing me and loving me and everybody be thinking, poor guy's dying, I'll just be moving houses.

[35 : 52] The U-Haul van will back up to my house and God will say, wake up, Austin, you're home. And I will immediately be in heaven. To leave this body is to be present with the Lord.

I will walk straight into heaven. I will never go into the ground. I'll never put my body in a casket. They'll put my body, but not me. They'll put my body in a casket. You guys will look at me and say, look at that.

He wasn't that good looking and laughing. He's so ugly now as a cadaver. But I'll be in heaven all the time. And while you stand there crying at a funeral, I'll be going, hallelujah, man. Look at where I'm living now.

Amen. I'll never die. You'll never die. We have victory. Because Jesus has victory. We have victory.

By the way, we attack the very gates of hell. In Matthew 16, 18, the gates of hell shall not prevail. Gates are defensive weapons. When it says the gates of hell won't prevail, it doesn't mean they're coming after us.

[36 : 49] It means we're going after them. That's good stuff. I'll just go down to the devil, bust him one in the mouth, and jerk that lamb or that goat out of his mouth. You remember old David?

David said, a lion came into my tent, and a bear came in, and they grabbed one of my lions. I grabbed him by the hair of his chinny-chin-chin, knocked him in the nose, and took the lamb and walked away. That's what the devil did.

That's what Jesus did to the devil for us. Amen. The old devil thought he had me. He was on his way to hell with me. I'm going to take and ruin my life. And Jesus walked up and said, no, you won't. That belongs to me. Popped him in the nose and brought me home.

Amen. The statement is very clear. Satan's power and authority and gates cannot stop the church of the living God. We're at a war against Satan.

In Ephesians chapter 6, we're to be strong in the Lord and the power of his might that we might stand. We don't lose. We don't lose.

[37 : 49] We'd rather snatch him from the burning. I have time to give you the rest of it. I'd like to take you to Revelation 19, 11, and 4, but I don't have time. But listen to this. Let me just finish. I don't know how to explain this to you, but whenever you get this real deep abiding trust in him, on your deepest, darkest moments, you will know you will win.

On the darkest day of my life, and I could name the day, my wife will know exactly what I'm talking about, the greatest tragedy that's ever happened in my life happened. The devil reached into my home and stole one of mine and tried to ruin her life.

On that Sunday morning, after that, I got up to preach to the Hunter Church, and my message was this. I will win in this too.

So how do you know you'll win? Because I belong to him. Amen? That's the message I preached. Literally. I said, I got up that morning, and I'm crying, I'm broken, I'm hurt.

Beyond anything you can imagine, I'm broken and I'm hurt. But I got up and I said, guys, things are rough, but I will win. And you win. We all win. Because we are more than conquerors.

[39 : 03] And greater is he that's in us than he that's in the world. We have the power of God on us. On the day they beat me up and stole our Bible college land, and I put 12 stitches in the top of my head, and it was all over, and I was at my house, and we'd lost like 30 acres of land and at least \$30,000 or \$40,000 worth of investment.

We were at the house. I was on the phone talking to my buddy Paul Forsythe on the phone, and I had the greatest peace. I knew. I didn't know why it happened. I don't know why he let that happen. I don't know why God let the devil beat me up today.

But I thought, I told Brother Paul, I said, I know he's going to do something. He don't let us lose. Amen? He don't let us lose. Later on, we would buy the land where the Bible college sits today.

And if you were to go, you'd say, why in the world did you ever think about that first set of acres? You must have been really messed up to even want that land. And I'd have to say, yeah, I think you're right.

Well, I can remember thinking that was the greatest thing in the world. But on the day you're, if you're here today and you're a born-again believer, and things are going wrong in your life, trust Jesus. You'll win.

[40 : 10] Trust Jesus. You say, well, sometimes God's people don't come out on the top. Oh, you'll win. You might go to heaven. Amen? I mean, cancer may be beating you and you may be going to die, but when you die, you win.

Amen? And in the middle of the darkest dungeon, in the middle of the darkest valley, in the middle of the worst things going on, God's there with you like never before. His people win.

We are more than conquerors through Christ that loved us. Oh, I could tell you a thousand stories. They threw John Bunyan in prison to shut his mouth.

And while in prison, he had to mix his ink by using stuff off the wall and water, and he wrote a book called Pilgrim's Progress. You're still reading. Hundreds of years later, the devil said, I won.

And God said, no, you didn't. My man might have suffered, but he's still speaking and he's dead. You thought you won. And on one day, over 2,000 years ago, Jesus died.

[41 : 12] And I can imagine a dance around the foot of that cross as Satan and all the demons were like, we have won. We have killed him. And the God of heaven's like, dream on, boys.

Three days from now, watch him come out of the ground. And three days, they even said, seal up the grave. Put a bunch of cement where he can't get out. God's like, I can make a world in six days, dingy.

I can get him out of the ground. And Jesus came out. And when he came out, he had the keys of death and hell hanging in his belt and said, he thought he won.

I won. You serve the winner. Say amen. You ought to go home knowing, I don't care what you're going through, I don't know where you are. The gates of hell will not prevail.

Killed a guy named Jim Elliott. And the Aka Indians killed him. And I'm sure they thought that it's over. But then his life story has been ringing true for over 50 years.

[42 : 08] Men surrendered to be mysterious. A girl named Johnny Erickson Tata had a horrible accident and looked like her life was over. And yet God's used her. I don't care who you are or where you are.

The gates of hell will not prevail. Father in heaven, bless your people. Encourage them today. Help them trust you. Help them believe you.

And help them live like your sons and your daughters. And I'll give you praise. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.

Thanks.