

Living the victorious life

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[0 : 00] Tested or tempted? Have you ever been tested? Now, I wouldn't expect anybody to say no.

Mentally, morally, spiritually, physically, socially. For example, you're late for an appointment, especially those who drive.

Time is not on your side. And what happens? The wee voice says to us, put your foot on the pedal. And hope you're not caught. No blue light flashes. Speed cameras are not working.

Police are having a tea break. And it's easy to feel all of these emotions going through our minds and our lives. However, the truth of the matter is, God knows.

[1 : 22] He won't give us a parking ticket, a speeding ticket. But he knows. Or take, for example, the man who was late for his flight on a plane.

And he phoned the airport, the airline company, and said, there's a bomb on the plane. So they held it up for 90 minutes till he got there.

And then got arrested on his way back. Each one of us have at some times in our life been tempted and tried and tested to do that which you know is not right.

And as Christians, we are in a spiritual battle. A spiritual warfare with the enemy.

Now, as we thought about the church, when people in the church begin to get in touch with God and start doing the things he wants us to do, the enemy will strike.

[2 : 52] He doesn't want you in that place. He'd rather have you complacent, mediocre, than on fire for God. Would you agree?

Good. And it's easy for somebody to say, it's all right, I can cope. But can you cope?

I can handle this situation or that situation. Don't worry about me. But the truth of the matter is, all too often, we can't cope.

I remember about 30 years ago, I can't remember that far back, going through to Cote Bridge.

And taking Andrew with me, my son, past the airport, almost on to watch the motorway.

[3 : 56] And he suddenly said to me, Dad, let's pray. But don't close your eyes. That's a good warning for me, eh?

Don't close your eyes. A timely reminder that we are to watch and pray. To keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, who prowls around like a roaring lion.

And we're all faced with that immense situation where the enemy wants to strike and want to detract and deviate from what you know God wants you to do, so that you're not doing it.

We need to be ready for potential battles at all times.

Because we don't know when or where the enemy is going to strike. You've found that out, haven't you?

[5 : 12] In your Christian walk, suddenly something happens. You don't know what it is. But on thinking about it, it's the evil one trying to distract your attention from where you want to go, where God wants you to go.

And we're all subject to various types or kinds of spiritual attacks. At different times. In different ways.

And with different results. You know, God doesn't desire his children to live in delusion, illusion, or confusion.

He desires us to keep our eyes fixed on him at all times. In order that we will not be pulled away from our faith.

However, it's what the enemy wants every time. Every time you get out of your bed in the morning, the enemy has got a strategy for you and for me.

[6 : 34] To take us off track. And to cause us not to fulfill our obligation to God by following him implicitly.

That's his mandate. To stop you from becoming a good Christian. A holy Christian. A lively Christian.

A Christian filled with God's spirit. Who will enable you to do all that God wants you to do. Our life. Our Christian life. Is a life of warfare. We often struggle. With the calamities. The common calamities.

Of every day. We struggle with opposition. From the powers of darkness. Nehemiah is a good book to read.

[7 : 38] Because in that book you see one occasion. That Nehemiah was faced with the opposition from within and from without.

And the enemy will use any tactic he can. To draw your attention away from God.

He's subtle. He's malitious. He's not going to stop at anything. To get your attention of God.

The best defense. Is a good offense. An adage known. As the strategic offensive principle of war.

And let's never forget. It's the stronghold. Or the strategy. Of our enemy. To maim. Destroy.

[8 : 43] And take out the Christian man and woman. From the relationship with Christ. That's his desire. He likes nothing better.

When a church. Is beginning to. Have that joined up principle. Of serving him.

Serving God. To try and take. Your mind. And your focus. Away from God. It's not that God has lost his power.

It's the church. That has lost its focus. And the enemy. Will do everything. Possible. To destroy that focus.

Being taken away. You'll notice that when Jesus. Was being tempted.

[9 : 45] When Satan took him. Up into a mountain. And showed him all these things. Tempted him in three ways. Jesus said.

It. Is. Written. He wasn't going to let. Satan get off. With his attack. He.

You God's word. He believed God's word. He trusted God's word. And he said. It. Is. Written.

You shall not. It. And. What. A good strategy that is for us. To learn God's word. That when the enemy comes. And tries to deceive.

And take our mind. Off the things of God. We can say to him. It is written. It is written. It. It is written. It is written.

[10 : 43] I remember. Being at a. Faith mission. A valedictory service. Once. And the principal. Then. Spoke about. How. Important.

It was. For his students. To learn. God's. Word. Word. Why? Because.

As they learned. That God's word. God. Would bring back. To their memory. Those things. They had learned. At the right time. And they were able. To speak against Satan.

Oh. That we would learn that. To know that word. To believe that word. To love that word. And to live that word. That we too.

May be able. To say to the enemy. Our enemy. It. Is. Written. You can't confuse me.

[11 : 39] God said it. I believe it. And it's true. And whether that was.

When Jesus was. Being tempted by. Satan. When he took him up a hill. Where it was. In the garden of Gethsemane. When Satan again.

Tried to. Stop him. From going to the cross. Where it was. When he met people. The woman. In adultery.

For example. When he brought this woman. And put her in front of Jesus. And said. What do you say. What do you say. At the end of that.

That scenario. He said. To that woman. Where are your accusers. They have all left. Who has condemned you.

[12 : 41] No one. Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin. No more. And we have to depend. Upon the authority. Of God's word.

We have to depend. Upon the power. Of God's word. We have to depend. Upon the validity. Of God's word. And we have to depend.

On what we have learned. From God's word. To speak against the enemy. So. As a Christian soldier.

You might not be in uniform. Like the Salvation Army. But as a Christian soldier.
Facing the battles. Of life. Day by day. It's incumbent upon us. To be spiritually dressed.
[13:38] And ready for battle. When it comes to facing. The enemy. Paul doesn't write these words.

Just to fill up some pages. There's a purpose behind him. Writing. What he does at the end of. Of Ephesians. You remember.

Just a few pages before. A few chapters before. Where. Paul says. From whom. The whole body. Fitly joined together. And come.

Compacted by that. Which. Every joint. Supplier. According to the effective. Effectual working. Of the measure. Of every part. Maketh increase.

Of the body. Unto the edifying. Of itself. In love. United together. In Christ. A body. Fit together.

[14:40] Every part. Playing its part. Doing its duty. Becoming. A lovely jigsaw. A picture. That the world can see.

And the world. Will be attracted to. Because of. Our allegiance to Christ. And his allegiance. To us. Charles Stanley.

In his book. When the enemy strikes. States. The old testament. Has many references. To the breath of God. From the opening lines.

Of Genesis. Onwards. God's breath. Breathes into us. Is always pure. It provides life.

And energy. And we cannot live. A successful. Christian life.

[15:44] Without. Daily taking. Into our lives. The breath. Of God's. Holy Spirit. He doesn't leave us. As orphans.

He sends his spirit. That we may be empowered. And enriched. And used.

To his glory. Paul. In his writings. To the Ephesians. Outlines. The mark. And duty. Of the Christian. Verse 10. To be stout hearted. Be strong. In the Lord. God. Because. Our spiritual strength.

And courage. Come only. From him. We can try. To live the Christian life. On our own. But we fail miserably.

[16:41] We can try. To live the Christian life. With God. And we succeed. Because. His is the power. His is the blueprint.

For our lives. And so. He calls us. To be strong. When I'm weak.

Then. I'm strong. And. We need to ask. That God may indeed. Take from us. Those weaknesses. And fill us. With all the power.

Of his spirit. We need to be well armed. Verse 11. Put on the whole armor. Of God. What does that mean?

Other than nothing. Should be exposed. To the enemy. Having girded your waist. Put on the breastplate.

[17:39] And having shod your feet. The Roman soldier. Never took these off. Even during a period. Of lull. Nothing.

Was to be exposed. To the enemy. The breastplate of salvation. Covered. The heart. Covered. The abdomen. Covered the feet. All necessary. To go into war. Against the enemy. It would do as well.

To simply. Each morning. When we rise. To say this. Today Lord. I am putting on.

The breastplate of righteousness. I am putting on. My spiritual boots. I am putting on.

[18:37] The shield of faith. I am putting on. My helmet of salvation. I am picking up. My.

The sword of the spirit. Which is. Your word. God has given us. All those things. For our benefit. For our protection.

For our good. To enable us. To fight. Against the enemy. And. All of that. Says Paul.

Do it. With prayer. We have not. To put these things on. Hapazardly. On a whim.

But. We have to do it. Prayerfully. To ask God's. Protection. Against. The enemy. Who comes at us.

[19:37] Like a roaring lion. And you found that. I'm sure. In your life. That Satan. Tries to. Take your.

Mindset. Away. From God's plans. And God's work. The story is told. About. A prayer meeting. In the USSR.

The secret. Peace. The secret police. Arrived. And threatened. The 20. 30. Or 40. Christians. With arrest. Unless they denied.

Their faith. Tell us. That you don't believe. In this God. And you can walk. Out of here. Freely. Slowly. Sheepishly. Some denied. They were true believers. And left. Only a handful.

[20 : 37] Of Christians. Remained. The pastor. Of that. Church. Turned. Turned to them.

Rubbing his hands. Enthusiastically. And said. Now. We can get on. With the real business. Of this prayer meeting.

Those who are there. Want to show their allegiance. To Christ. And why. Have you to be armed. We need to realize.

The danger that we face. We wrestle. We struggle. Verse 12. Not against flesh and blood.

But the powers of this dark world. And there are hundreds. Of ways. Of doing this. Satan. Will discourage us.

[21 : 38] He will. He will. He will. He will. He will. He will. He will. He will. He will. Distract us. He will. Postpone. Things we should be doing.

That he may have his way. And we wrestle. It is a struggle. That we face. Nobody can deny it. I found it. I'm sure you found it too. When you've been going to do God's work. And suddenly. This comes up. Or that comes up. To distract your attention. And he is a powerful enemy. He is devious.

He is subtle. He is spurious. And we have to be equal. To the attack. Not to be taken away.

[22 : 39] Unaware. And certainly not to be put off. Our prayer life. Pray. Without.

Ceasing. What does that mean? Does it mean. You've always got to close your eyes. I don't recommend it. If you're driving. Does it mean.

We can only do it. When we want to do it. When we feel like doing it. We can do it anywhere. Talk to Jesus. Let him know.

We're thinking about him. Presenting to him. Our requests. And knowing he will answer. In his time. In his way.

With his purpose. Don't be taken unaware. I'll be falsely. Pulled into. The situation.

[23 : 43] You don't need to pray. Wait till tomorrow. That's. One of the strategies. That Satan will use. By telling us.

Tomorrow. Will do. Nowhere. In God's word. Do I find. I'm willing to be corrected. Do we find. God saying to us. Or Jesus. Giving us this. Affirmation. Wait. Until tomorrow. It will be okay. Child. Just wait. For a few more days. A few more hours. And then. And then. The whole issue. Of wanting to pray. Goes over our heads.

We forgot about it. Because. We are. Because. Because. That. Is when we are caught. Unaware. Of the attack.

[24 : 40] Of the enemy. Our calling. Our duty. In the midst. Of these attacks. Is to withstand.

Verse 13. To withstand. Everything. The enemy. The enemy. Would throw at us. We need to be equal.

To the attack. The attack. And we have a. We have a savior. Who is far superior. Than any enemy. And who can enable us. To withstand. The full force. Of what the enemy. Want to bring to us. To resist. To stand our ground.

And to stand armed. God equips us. Paul didn't use those words. Because he had nothing else to say.

[25 : 44] To fill up some pages. Some lines. In chapter 6. And we have it. There is a purpose behind that. He knew.

We would need it. As the church. Grows together. Is united together. Is bound together. So. The enemy.

Will inevitably attack. And try to. Put us off. Doing what God. Wants us to do. We have to stand. Our ground. Be firm. And resolute. There is an old chorus. That I used to sing. In the Christian endeavor. Get thee behind me Satan.

Get thee away. Get thee behind me Satan. I want to learn to pray. I want to be a Christian soldier. I want to be one today.

[26 : 44] Not tomorrow. Not next week. But now. And just as now is the day of salvation. So now is the day. When we stand against the enemy.

Then. When the evil day comes. As it surely will. As it surely will. You'll be able to resist the enemy. The enemy's attacks.

And after fighting to the end. You will still. Hold your ground. I want to be able to do that. I need to develop the strategy. That God gives us in his word. Through Paul. I hope you will too. Let's not be defeated.

Or live as a Christian defeatist. But live. The victory life. In him. He's given to us.

[27 : 46] This strategy. He's given to us. These tools. He's asking us. To follow him. In all his.

Immutable excellencies. God bless you. As you go from here. Into this week.

That lies ahead. And all you have to face. You don't know. What the enemy will bring to your life. To your mind.

But. Be equal to the task. And. Get thee behind me Satan. Get thee away. I don't want anything to do with you today.

So get thee behind me Satan. Get thee away. I want my Christian soldier. I want to learn to pray. Pray. Without ceasing.

[28 : 46] You don't have to close your eyes. He hears. Every day. Everything we say. When we're walking. When we're drying the dishes.

When we're driving. He listens. And he responds. Maybe there are some here this evening. Who've been going through difficult times.

Recently. Maybe health. Maybe work. I don't know. Maybe you want somebody to pray for you tonight. To help you.

Through these difficulties. To reassure you. That God is on your side. That God will never let you down. I am with you.

I am with you always. It was Graham Brown. That said. A few weeks ago. God doesn't take a holiday. And that's so true.

[29 : 49] We never think about that. Packs his case. And goes somewhere. No. He's always with us. And we rejoice in that. And he's always ready.

So if you want prayer tonight. Please come and speak to us. At the end of the service. And we're more than delighted. To pray with you. And pray for you.

In those situations. That you might be facing. Or even if you think. You're going to be facing something next week. We can get it in the bud. Nip it in the bud. Tonight.

With our God. Okay. Father. Just bless this congregation. We all have struggles. We all have problems.

We sometimes. Let ourselves down. And let you down. But you've given to us. The tools. And the strategy. And the greatest tool of all.

[30 : 49] Prayer. I just ask that. Each person. In this congregation. Will not. Be succumbed. To the temptation.

But will. In every day. In all situations. Stand firm. And be able to withstand. The enemy's attacks. I pray that. In your name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. ■■■■.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.