

Gospel Orthodoxy - Victory

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: 24 January 2021

Preacher: Chris Thornton

[0 : 00] This reading comes from Colossians chapter 2 and Hebrews chapter 2. Please follow along on the screen, the bulletin, or your own Bible. In Colossians 2 verse 13 we read, And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made a life together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses by cancelling the record of death that stood against us with its legal demands.

This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in him.

Then in Hebrews 2 verse 14 we read, Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

Amen. Amen. Thank you so much, Annabelle. It's so great to see you, or not see you very much on Zoom, but so great to just be with you together, even if it's virtually.

We just, just so value, even during this COVID social distancing time, the sense of being able to be together as a community, and to really walk with one another through this time. So let me, let me just pray for us as we get into God's word together.

[1 : 45] Father, Father, just so aware that your word can often stay in our heads, but in our lives we often fail to live in the light of the incredible truths that you have proclaimed to us.

But I pray, Lord, this morning for wherever we are, whatever situation we're going through, Lord, whether we are doing well or struggling, Lord, we pray that you would speak to us, not just for information in our heads, but you would show us in our hearts what it means for us to walk in victory, what it means for us to live in the light of who you are, and the amazing work that you have done through the cross and resurrection in our lives, Lord.

So we just pray that you would come and be with us now, in Jesus' name. Amen. Great. Great. We've been going through, as those of you who've been following along this series, a series on gospel orthodoxy.

And what we've been talking about is how gospel doctrine, which is not meant to just stay in our heads, but is meant to fuse into our lives, is to be the backbone of our lives.

It's to give us structure and strength to be able to face and live in the light of all the other things that are going on in our world and all the other things that God calls us to as his people.

[3 : 08] And so we need to continue to realign our lives to gain good, healthy posture in not just physically with our bones and our body, but also with our souls and with our hearts.

And that's why we're looking at the gospel again over this series. And what we've seen is we've looked over these last few weeks at justification. We have seen how the gospel tapestry, which has so many threads, that through justification and guilt and condemnation have been dealt with, and we've been acquitted, and we've been given a new status of righteous in Christ if we are trusting in him and we're in him.

We've seen that instead of slavery, he has brought us redemption and freedom from sin and all those things that bind and hold us. We've seen how in adoption and reconciliation, he has taken us from being orphans and alone and rejected, and he's brought us in to his family as dearly loved sons and daughters of the king of the whole universe.

We have a loving heavenly father. Even though our earthly fathers may not be all we wish, we have one who is everything we would long for, and that is the God of all creation.

And today we're going to look at a final theme in this series, which is instead of fear and walking in defeat, we're going to see how Christ brings victory. I don't know about you, but have you ever gone

into an exam knowing that you haven't studied hard enough?

[4 : 44] Knowing that it's too big, it's too hard, there was too much to cover, and before you even go into the examination room, you feel like a sense of defeat.

You feel like, even before I've started, like giving in. Well, that's how many Christians live, and many of us live in our lives.

You see, we want to follow Jesus, but then it looks like, and it feels like, everything in Hong Kong kind of pushes against us trying to really follow him with all of our hearts, whether it's our work culture, whether it's politics, whether it's education system, and things with our kids, or whether it's even just your own sense of sin in your life.

Doesn't it often feel like we're just fighting against a relentless tide that it seems just so difficult to overcome? I don't know if any of you feel like that.

Well, Scripture, and what we're going to look at today, shows us there's a reason for that. It says, we shouldn't be surprised that these things are hard, because there is a war on.

[5 : 56] Did you know that? There's a fight. And the Bible, Ephesians, tells us there is a spiritual battle that is taking place for every believer.

Here's what Ephesians 6 says. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to take your stand against the schemes of the devil, for we don't wrestle against flesh and blood, against other human beings, but against rulers, authorities, cosmic powers over this present darkness, against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

He's saying behind the darkness and behind the struggle of this world, there is a personal mastermind, a spiritual being called Satan or the devil, who has a staff team, and together they are rulers and authorities.

And their mission is to steal, kill, and destroy. It's to stand utterly opposed to God, his glory, and our flourishing in him. And if you are thinking, well, you really believe in Satan, like red tights and pitchfork, that kind of thing, well, that's not the biblical image of Satan.

You see, actually, I just read recently that the church of Satan, which actually exists, apparently, doesn't believe in Satan's existence.

[7 : 20] And it's fascinating because Satan doesn't care if you believe in him or not. In fact, he's perfectly fine if you don't because what he wants is he wants for you just to trust in yourself, to glorify yourself, to live for yourself, to rely on your own self-centered pride and desires, and be totally apathetic towards God and his kingdom.

And that's perfect for him, for enough to kill, steal, and destroy our spiritual life, our relationships, and even the whole of society in the world.

And lined up on Satan's front lines of his army are three other enemies together with him. The Bible says they call them this, sin, the world, and death.

Sin, the world, and death. Look in this passage that we, from Ephesians, it says, and you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air.

That's another way of saying Satan. the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. Do you see, he says all those things, there is sin, there is the world, and there is the devil, and there is death all in there.

[8 : 39] How do they work? Well, he baits us with sin. What do I mean by that? It's like a fisherman puts bait on his hook and throws it in the water and then a fish comes along, takes the bait and then he pulls it up, reels in the fish and there the fish is just wiggling, dangling and they are powerless at that stage.

They are powerless. They are under that fisherman's control. That's how Satan works. He baits us with sin but then the world is like the tidal system that pushes us towards the bait.

It's the peer pressure of the world around us. It's the get for yourself, live for yourself, make yourself happy and that social media tells you. It's the performance oriented, self-reliant, jump into the rat race and become a rat or else you'll get eaten alive kind of mentality that is everywhere that we swim in in Hong Kong.

And so what we do is we follow the course, we go with the flow of this world so often and the result when we take the bait is then we live like that fish under the power of Satan and we end up to the final enemy which is death.

Spiritual death, physical death. That's where the enemy wants things to end up. And you might want to think how does Satan bait us in this way?

[10:12] What is his kind of military tactics that he uses? Well, I think there are a few that scripture describe, but there are two key areas where there's to operate.

One is in our mind and the other is in our heart because you see on that battlefield your mind is a battlefield. You feel this every day. He, Satan comes and he lies to us.

You remember Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden? Satan comes and says, did God really say don't eat from that tree? Oh, if you eat from, you won't die. You'll become like God.

And what do they do? What's he doing? He's twisting God's word so that you stop believing he's really good that you can actually trust what he says. And so then as you begin to doubt that he's a father who cares for you, you start to look elsewhere for satisfaction rather than to God.

And then from that what happens is once he's got you to sin, then he rubs shame and guilt in your face with accusation.

[11:16] Can't you do anything right? New year, you said you're going to read the scripture and you read it for three days and now you've given up. Hey, you loser. And as we start living under the lies and the accusations of the enemy, what happens is we start beginning to project those onto others and we start deceiving and lying other people and accusing other people, blaming them like Adam and Eve.

started doing and tearing our relationships apart and that's Satan's work. You see, that's the battlefield of the mind. But there's also the battlefield of the heart which works together.

You see, he tempts us like with Adam and Eve but also he can intimidate and discourage us. Do you remember that story of David and Goliath?

a very famous story where Goliath is this monster of a man, this huge giant who represents the very enemies of God's people and he challenges them to a fight, anyone to fight with him.

And the Israelite warriors, they take one look at this huge guy and they go, what's the point in fighting him? They cower away and it says they were greatly afraid and discouraged because they go, he's too big, it's too difficult, we can't beat him.

[12:38] And he starts mocking and taunting them and without lifting a finger he has them under his control. Discouraged, fearful.

And then do you remember in the story this little shepherd boy, David comes along and everyone else is now projecting that same fear onto him. They're going, you're just a kid, have you got a death wish?

Like, are you crazy going out to fight him? Voices of fear coming in all the time before he then takes out one stone and he silences all those voices with one slingshot, knocks Goliath to the ground, walks up to him, cuts off his head and fear suddenly disappears and turns into victory.

You see, friends, I don't know what Goliath feels like in your life at the moment. Whether it's COVID, whether it's cancer, whether it's just people are just not changing in your family, loved ones, so you want to respond to the gospel.

Nothing seems to be happening and you feel discouraged, you feel powerless. sometimes you may want to stay faithful to God and not date a non-believer, but it looks like you look out at the options that are there and you go, there's nothing there and despair begins to set in and your Goliath starts to taunt you.

[14:10] Maybe look elsewhere or every time you look on social media, that voice whispers, look at their life, chase what they have.

Look, where's trusting God actually got you? You're going to miss out if you stay trusting him and you see the lies and the fear and the discouragement it all works together and you see that's the battlefield, that's the place of the fight.

You see, every single day we're in a battle for truth versus lies, we're a battle for fear versus courage, it's a battle for your heart and a battle for your mind and by the way that's why we want to do this series on getting right gospel doctrine because there's so much false teaching out there that Satan wants to deceive us so that we don't hold on to the truth that we have in him and as Kevin said last week, in this battle there is no neutral territory, there is no Switzerland here, you're either baited on the hook of Satan and under his control or you are living under the freedom of Jesus' control, there's no middle ground but the Bible also says that every single human being is naturally under, like that fish wiggling away to death, Satan's control and there's only one way to get free, so

here's the second thing we want to look at, we've looked at the war, now we want to look at Jesus who's the wounded conqueror, you see, just when we were powerless, onto the battlefield comes God's champion, here's what 1 John 3 says, it says, the reason Jesus, the son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil, you see, the reason he came was to destroy Satan, sin, the world and death, those lies in his life, he comes against the lies and the accusations by preaching the truth, by resisting Satan's temptations and calling people to repentance and faith and trust in him and he breaks the grip of fear and bondage that people are, healing the sick, delivering people from demons and the accusations, in his death he came to do away with the very grounds of accusation that Satan could hold us with, see, here's the passage that we looked at earlier, Colossians 2 says, and you were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made, you who were dead, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us, justified us, cleansed us, redeemed us, forgiven us all our trespasses by cancelling the record of debt that I owe you, that stood against us with its legal demands, that accused us, that left us in Satan's grip, this he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

[17 : 34] Satan had us under his control because we'd taken his bait, but Jesus through the cross and resurrection has liberated us, taken sin on himself, brought us off the hook, brought us into the freedom of his waters, we now have a heavenly father who loves us, and here's what he says, in doing this, what has he done?

He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in the cross, in him.

You see, the image here is of a victorious Roman general who is riding on his chariot, and he's just come back from the battle, and he's riding through the streets with the defeated enemy, the slaves, the prisoners of war, in chains behind him.

The Goliath, who seemed so strong before, had such a big mouth, is now disarmed, stripped of all his power, humiliated in the chains, dragged behind him on his way to execution.

Satan, he's saying, and all of his army is defeated. He no longer can claim any power over a believer in Jesus. Why?

[18 : 55] Because he says by liberating us from our sins on the cross, he has liberated us from Satan's claim on us. He's liberated us from sin's claim on us, from the world's claim on us, from death's claim on us.

His victory is our victory. He has lifted us from Satan's defeated domain onto his chariot of victory. That's what Colossians says.

Colossians 1 says it like this. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Jesus, our victorious general, he's plundered Satan's prison, opened the gates, removed all right to condemn you, shame you, and hold you prisoner to fear and discouragement.

And he's brought us into his kingdom of truth and love. And the fear has no place where there is perfect love. This is what Jesus has done for us.

[19 : 59] He has given us victory over those great enemies that we feel powerless in for. But just think about it. how does Jesus conquer? Because his victory is the way that we will be victorious.

His victory wasn't a feel-good victory. You know, victory doesn't always feel like really great in the moment. You see, at the cross, it looked like the powerful, the proud, the pushy, the self-reliant had won.

You know, just like for us. It seems like the more stronger you are, the more successful you are, the more fun you are, that's the way of victory. But that was Good Friday, and Easter Sunday was coming.

The world tells you to beat your Goliaths by yourself trying to be stronger, trying to be more successful, trying to be more attractive, trying to get what you can for yourself. But the gospel says you don't need to make yourself Goliath, you don't need to have a bigger Goliath.

To beat Goliath, you need a better David. And we have one, that is Jesus Christ, who with the slingshot of his cross and his resurrection has nailed that giant right in the face.

[21 : 15] Whatever giant that we face in our lives, which holds us back from Christ, he says, by death I have defeated it, and I am the wounded conqueror who rises to victory.

And so that means for you and I, if we are trusting in Jesus, he has taken us out of Satan's grip and placed us on his victory chariot, headed to resurrection glory.

This is the victory that Jesus has won. But now, if you think about it and you go, well, if Jesus has won, why do I still have to fight?

Why does it still feel like sometimes Satan's winning? Well, the thing is that a wounded, dying tiger, which has had a death blow, doesn't go down without a fight.

It still has claws to scratch and a roar to try and intimidate us, even though his final breath is near. Satan, sin, the world and the devil and death itself are still realities until Jesus comes again and will execute, will wipe them away forever.

[22 : 29] The war is won, but we have still got to walk out our victory and those battles in our day-to-day life. So let's think, from the war and the conquering that Jesus has done, how do we now live in victory?

This is the third thing I want to talk about. You see, some people think living in victory is marching around buildings kind of just rebuking Satan.

Get out of here, Satan. And I know plenty of people who do that, and I see actually Satan's walking all over their personal lives. Others will say things like, 2021, it's the year of your victory, it's the year of breakthrough.

breakthrough. And what they mean is, it's the year of health, wealth, prosperity, everything going great for you. Actually, Scripture doesn't say either of those things.

Here's what Scripture says. Victory means staying close to Jesus, trusting and living for him, living for his glory. You know, that's it. Because if he's riding on the victory chariot and you're with him, guess who's going to be at the winner's party?

[23 : 46] And Satan will try and do anything just to get you to jump off the chariot. He's going, it's so much more fun being dragged down here in the dirt. You know, just try it once.

Everyone else is doing it. You'll miss out if you don't. You'll never know what it was like. FOMO. But Ephesians tells us, put on the armor of God that you may be able to withstand an evil day.

And having done it, he says, oh, march around victorious. No, he says, just stand firm. Stand. Why do you have to stand? Because you've already got victory. You just need to stay there in it.

Jesus has won it for us. We don't need to fight wildly, launch an anti-Satan campaign. Just stay on the chariot, stay firm with Jesus in relationship with him.

A victory is yours because it's his victory. Now, how does that work? I want to show us a few ways that victory works that scripture tells us about.

[24 : 46] You see, it works in two ways. Jesus gives us victory from things and he gives us victory through things. From is when he removes it completely.

Through is when he takes you through and does something in the midst of that. in your lives. And remember our enemies of sin, the world, and death itself?

Well, that's exactly where God wants to give you victory from and through. So let me explain what I mean by that. You know, for myself, I lived under Satan's lies for a long time when I was younger. I really tried hard to be a good Christian Christian and I realized I was just really crap at being a good Christian. And I felt I was totally selfish and this live stream of accusations just kind of kept playing in my head saying you're worthless, you're a failed Christian and I became discouraged, I became despairing and depressed and finally I became really sick.

And I was actually at one point bent almost double because I couldn't just hold myself up with the weight of everything that's going on. And someone said to me, you know, your posture is an indication of your soul.

[25 : 59] So he said, just stand up straight and your soul will begin to kind of feel more confident. So I tried, but I couldn't because I was powerless.

I felt God was distant, harsh. I was never good enough. I stopped reading scripture. I stopped praying. I stopped really wanting to live for God in any different way.

I just kind of did my own thing. And then a regret live stream started in my mind saying because I looked at everybody else around me and I had to take some time out of university and people were graduating.

Everyone was ahead of me and it kind of said to me, oh, where are you? You're just behind. And Satan just tried to get his hooks all over me. And then God's word came to me.

Do you know, Ephesians tells us that we have a sword? It's the sword of the spirit, the word of God. And it's a sword that we're meant to fight with. Do you realize that God has given us the truth of his word and he's given us community and he's given us prayer?

[27 : 10] That's what Ephesians there says. You've got to pray at all times. He gives us these three things. There's others as well, but the three things that enable us to fight and they're so powerful.

Because you see, at one point, out of the blue, a person just said, hey, they started praying for me and then they just said, hey, I've just got a couple of verses, one from Psalm 107 and one from Psalm 118.

I was like, where is that? I have no idea what they are. And they just gave me these verses. I can still remember them today. And then about three weeks later, a friend of my mom's from Ethiopia, a missionary in Ethiopia who I'd only ever met once, she said, oh, I just thought God was telling me to pray for you.

And I felt there was just a couple of verses I wanted to give you. Do you know what verses they were? Exact same verses. And this is not like John 3, 16. Psalm 107. Anyone know that?

Right. It's just totally random. Except it wasn't random. Because God, through his word, spoke to me. And as he did, his word, through that prayer that I've been praying together, lifted my soul.

[28 : 16] It straightened my back. It gave me hope to rise, that my God knew me. My God saw me. I'm not an orphan. I'm a son of his. That he would deliver me through this.

And he began to just walk me out of self-pity, out of regret, and to actually start to live for Jesus rather than pretending I was and feeling like a fraud. And you know what?

Since that day, I've not lived under regret for a single day. When regret comes knocking on my door, I swing my sword of Isaiah 43, which says, fear not, I have redeemed you, Chris.

I have called you by name. You are mine. You see, and it's gone. That's victory from sin. And each one of us, God wants to bring us victory from sin.

But do you know what, guys? We need to realize where is the battle with sin and discouragement and fear in your life right now? Some of us, during COVID time or even before, we've been taking Satan's bait, jumping off the chariot, because we are not getting in God's word and starting his word, starting every day getting in scripture.

[29 : 37] And man, let me tell you, if you put down all your weapons, you're a sitting duck. And some of you feel defeated because you tried to start reading scripture and it didn't last very long.

And now you're just going, hey, I can't do it. But actually, God wants to say to you, don't walk this alone. God has given us his word. He's given us community. Get people around us.

Say, hey, listen, I need you to help me read together. I need you to pray for each other. Listen, in COVID times, if you're just by yourself, you are like one of those deers, you know, which lions just, you know, when they're chasing the pack and they just look after the one deer that's by themselves and then they pounce.

That's what you're like. He says, sit in prowls like a roaring lion, but actually in community with his word and in prayer and in worship to God. These are our weapons.

And so don't fight alone. Listen, in Lent time, we're going to have time where every day during Lent, we're going to have a Bible reading time on Zoom for just a few minutes in the morning. If you know you struggle with getting scripture, listen, you need to clear your calendar.

[30 : 45] Like, it doesn't matter if you have to answer that email. Scrap it. That time is more important for you to live in freedom than for you to just get stuff done. Let's fight this together because God is going to give us victory through these things.

You know, some of us, the battle is actually not just from sin. It's also through sin. It's the battle to just keep getting back up and fighting and persevering.

Do you know, I've been liberated from some sins in my life, but there are still sins that I'm sure like you that I just wrestle with every day. And sometimes it feels like you're just knocked down again and again.

It feels like that Goliath's got you. But do you know what, Jesus, I've discovered this, Jesus has this amazing ability. That when I come back in confession and repentance and reminding myself of his grace, I get his grace so much more.

I'm like, you could even love me. And as I realise that, do you know what, it doesn't leave me crushed, it leaves me more grateful. And what it does, it changes my heart to be less judgmental to be towards others, more compassionate, more persevering.

[32 : 05] And we begin to look a little bit more like Jesus and his love. So brothers and sisters, if you are wrestling with these things, whatever your sin struggle is, stand up, straighten up, because God is going to give you victory from and he's going to give you victory through your sin.

Jesus is amazing. But it's not just victory over sin. Jesus also wants to give us victory over the world. You know, in John's gospel, Jesus says this.

He says, I've said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you'll have tribulation. But take heart, literally, take courage.

courage. I have overcome the world. You know, some of you, victory from the world this year is going to look like this.

Family members that have just been resistant to the gospel, resistant to you in so many different ways, God is just going to break through into their hearts. He's just going to melt that resistance.

[33 : 16] And he's going to draw people to Christ. People that you never thought it was possible. God is going to do that this year. I really believe that in some of our lives. For some of us, it's that those voices of, why are you single?

Why do you want to, like, trust Jesus? Why do you want to give that much? Like, think about your financial security. Don't trust Jesus in this area. Those voices that just kind of come at you all the time. And you're just going to go, they're not going to bother you so much.

Because Jesus is going to give you victory from the world in some of these areas. And you can just trust him and it will give you this peace to just walk through your day with him.

But for many of us, it's not just victory from the world. Jesus doesn't promise that 2021 is going to be a bed of roses. There's still COVID around. There's still trials.

trials. But he promises victory through the world. Which means courage and peace in the midst of our trials. You see, that's how he conquered, didn't he?

[34 : 21] Through the cross. You know, some of us have rarely shared the gospel. Because we live under this fear of rejection, of inadequacy. This fear that we're just not going to get it right.

Maybe we've had bad experiences before and we just don't know how to do it. And this year, that's going to change. Fear, you may still feel afraid.

Jesus doesn't promise removal of feelings. But fear is not going to rule you. That you're actually going to have a new confidence to share with your colleagues, with your family, with your friends. And you're going to just walk, and regardless of what people's responses are, even when it feels negative to you, that you come back in community and we encourage each other and we get back up.

With newfound courage and confidence. And that's the place of peace with Jesus. Because victory through the world looks like courage in spite of what others say.

[35 : 22] And that's the place of experiencing Christ's peace in the midst of trials. Victory from and through sin, victory from and through the world.

Let me give you one more. One that I think has become closer to some of us during COVID times. Victory from death and through death. There's this amazing passage in Hebrews 2 which says this. since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he, Jesus himself, likewise partook of the same things. He became human.

That through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

He's saying, like, Hong Kong is just filled with a fear of death, right? Like, it's no number four anywhere. You know, and COVID has brought death closer to some of us.

[36 : 25] Some of us don't just have a healthy caution. We live paralyzed by fear. For others it's not COVID, it's cancer. And cancer just kind of looms like this Goliath in your family with loved ones.

It's in your genetics. It's wherever it is. And Jesus says, with all of these Goliaths of death, if we're in Christ, he will give us victory.

You know, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. But Lazarus died again. Jesus himself went through death and came out alive victorious.

Victory from death. Let me give you an example. Eight years ago, I was in Hong Kong. I got a call at 2 a.m. My dad rang me to say, your mom's just had a massive asthma attack.

The doctors said she's not going to get through the night. She's almost flatlining. All the vitals are just down. Listen, pray. Pray. Nothing else I could do.

[37 : 33] I prayed and then I just went back to sleep. He said, I'll call you in the morning. He calls me back in the morning. I'm expecting to get out and have to get on a flight. He rings me and says, you never guess what. The doctors have said it's just a miracle.

They can't explain it. You know, the moment you and other friends started praying, her vital signs went from almost flatlining right back to normal. Like, not even stable.

Just like, totally back to normal. In an instant. God can bring victory from death. He has power to do that. God can take us, the things that we feel powerless and he has a slingshot that can do what nobody else can do.

But my mom, like Lazarus, will die one day. So will all of us. Even if you're 21, you will. Let me tell you it's 100% success rate there.

But Dylan Carson, who is a theologian, he tells this story where he was at a prayer time where everyone was praying for a friend who had cancer.

[38 : 39] And it looked like this was it. And people were naming and claiming her healing, binding the cancer and saying, and in the midst of it, kind of casting out.

And then in the midst of all of that, I think it was Carson's wife just really felt she had to pray something different. And his wife started praying this.

God, help her to die well. Help her to die in a way that glorifies you. Everyone looked around completely stunned. Because they thought that actually victory is only death, victory from death.

They didn't realize that victory can also be victory through death. You see, I want to die well. I want to die close to Jesus, looking at Jesus, seeing with a confidence that I'm going to see him.

I want to die like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German pastor who, on the last words before he was executed by the Nazis, he said this. He said, this is the end for me.

[39 : 42] The beginning of life. That's victory through death. That resurrection hope that Jesus has gone through the grave and so will we and we will see him face to face.

And my hope for every watermarker is not that we all become world shapers, although some of us may. It's not that we all get our dream jobs, that we all become famous, we all get the amount of money we want, although some of us may.

My hope and prayer is that we are a people who learn together as a community, learn to walk and fight together and walk in victory over Satan, sin, the world and death.

That every one of us will stay so close to Jesus in his word, prayer and worship, that we will, in community, have this gospel courage to keep sharing, in spite of difficulties, the gospel.

We have this peace and we live in the light that we are justified, redeemed, we are adopted, we are reconciled. We're not orphans. We have a father who loves us and we go into our world and we go into our lives in that confidence.

[40 : 51] As sons and daughters of the kings, as those who are more than conquerors through him who loved us. And when we die, we will say the same as Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

This is the end for us. This is the beginning of life with our wounded conqueror, Jesus, forever.

Victory from forever. Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting? The sting of death is sin. The power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, he gives us the victory through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Let's pray together. I think some of us, we actually haven't recognised that we're really in a battle.

And there are things that you've been living under. Where you haven't realised behind that, Satan has wanted to take you off the chariot.

[42 : 15] And I believe today, God really wants to speak to you. And he wants to tell you, don't walk through this alone. Don't walk through thinking I'm always going to be defeated.

Some of you have just kind of given up, whether it's in scripture reading, whether it's really in just resisting temptation, a whole load of areas. And God wants to lift and straighten you up to say, look to me.

Look to me in your difficult circumstances. Look to me where there's things which you just think are just not changing and you don't know where hope is going to come. Look to me, I've overcome.

Look to me. Some of us, we just need to get the sword of the spirit out. And not just read scripture, but wield scripture against those lies.

Recognise where the battle is. I just want to give you a second, just to allow God to just speak to you.

[43 : 22] What's he saying to you right now? Where is it that he wants you to walk in victory?

Where is it that he wants you to walk in victory? Where is it that he wants you to walk in victory?

Father, we just thank you.

Lord, we are weak. Lord, we are weak. That we are more than conquerors, not through our own strength. Lord, we are weak. Jesus looked defeated, but actually his very defeat was the moment of his greatest triumph.

Lord, I pray for us that you would encourage us, that you would lift up our heads to see you today. I pray that you would let the gospel go from not just our heads, but into our hearts.

Lord, I pray that we would be a community that's not just thinking about ourselves, but it's looking out for each other to fight together. Lord, I pray that we would be those who get to our death day and have a glorious glimpse that Jesus is our great hope.

[45 : 01] And that we would be the Lord. Lord, I pray. Lord, I pray that we stay close to you. Lord, I pray. Draw near to us now. And may we draw near to you. thank you for your victory that we have in you in Jesus name, Amen