

Evil at Work

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[0:00] Thank you so much. If you have your Bibles, I want you to turn to Romans chapter 10. Romans chapter 10, I'm going to be looking at several different scriptures, but I'll get there in a few moments.

Satan is at work in our world. He's on attack. You can identify a satanic attack knowing that it is deliberate.

It is willful. It is intentional. And it is well planned. It is to keep people from coming to know the Lord personally.

It is to keep Christians from sharing the hope of salvation with others. And to keep us from using our spiritual gifts for the cause of Christ in a way that profits the kingdom of God.

He goes overtime to try to thwart the work of God. And as long as we're alive, we're going to experience spiritual attacks. If you're a child of God today, if you surrender your life to the Lord Jesus, spiritual attacks can keep you from thriving in your walk with God.

[1:30] Satan will deceive you. He will attempt to destroy you. He'll play mind games with you. He'll try to destroy your relationships. He'll try to discourage you in your walk with the Lord.

He'll try to discourage you in all life, quite honestly. And he'll try his best to divide the church of Jesus Christ by letting a bunch of other matters come in the way of the main thing.

And all of it, all of it serves as a distraction to keep people from coming to know the Lord and to keep people from growing in the Lord if they know the Lord.

Satan's aim is to defame the name of Christ and he'll use us to do it.

There's not a day when strategic satanic attack has not been devised about your spiritual life, about my life in the spiritual world.

[2:43] Some of us are easier than others to deal with. If Satan can just keep us dead in our sins, we'll never come to know the Lord Jesus Christ.

We'll never be saved. And the reality is, Scripture's very clear that we'll spend an eternity apart from God in a devil's hell. And if Satan can keep Christians casual in their faith, just getting by, we will do little for the kingdom.

We'll make little difference. And when God gets ready to move, he'll move on to somebody else because we're not hungry enough to allow him to use. This morning, I want to look at biblical examples of how Satan works in our world.

I shared some demoralizing devices that he uses last week. And I want to, off of that, I want to speak to how we see examples clearly in Scripture of how Satan manipulates, how he moves, how he works.

They're not the only examples in Scripture, but I think they're good examples in Scripture. Case studies, if you will, that his techniques, quite honestly, have hardly ever changed.

[4:05] Satan's still up to the same thing he's always been up to. He's trying his best to manipulate us to do what he wants us to do. I want us to first look at the doubts that he brings.

We spoke of doubts last week, but now I want you to see how he does that. And the reality is this mess was from the very beginning.

As a matter of fact, earlier this year, I preached on a series I called From the Start, which was really talking about creation and talking about the fall of humanity and what happened in the garden and the ramifications of that.

And when I got to Genesis chapter 3, which talks about the fall of Adam and Eve and therefore the fall of all of us, and I got to looking at the questions that the ancient serpent asked Eve, it's that very

Scripture that God led me to this series called The Real War.

I couldn't help but think about how the devil is seeming to have his way in our world today. He had his way in the garden that day. He seems to have his way in our world today.

[5:20] And part of the reason he's having his way is we don't realize who we're dealing with. And the doubts that he threw out to Eve in the garden were about the Word of God, about what God had said to her.

He asked in Genesis 3, did God actually say? And it really don't matter what else is said after that because he's questioning, is God really who he says he is?

It really doesn't matter what else he throws on that in our lives. His purpose was to bring doubts to her. He wanted her to doubt the Word of God. If you doubt the Word of God, then you doubt the character of God.

And anytime people want to question the validity of God's Word, I'll tell you where it comes from. There's somebody behind it and his name's Satan. How better can you defame the cause of Christ than to go after the Word of God?

He loves for us to doubt God's Word. He'll make, he made her doubt, he'll make you doubt if you're not careful, if you don't trust the Word of God. And when we have doubts, when they come, we need to know how to handle it.

[6:36] I'll tell you how you deal with doubts about God's Word. You deal with it with God's Word. One area he loves to mess with Christians about is to doubt their salvation.

If he can make you doubt your salvation, you're not going to share a faith that you're unsure of. You're not going to make a whole lot of difference in somebody else's life if you're still struggling with your own life and where you stand. I know this well because at 18 years old, God called me in the ministry.

I felt led to do it, but I wanted a burning bush type experience to be verified in that. And at 18, he called me in the ministry. And after I was called to ministry, I felt like I wasn't saved. I questioned whether I was saved.

I struggled with that because I made a decision early in my life. That's one reason why I love to be very thorough with children to make sure they don't question it later on down the road as best we can to secure that.

And I struggled with that. And I'll tell you what I did to deal with it is I went back to the very scripture that I had shared with others as I tried to lead them to faith in Christ.

[7:48] I remember when I was seven, eight, nine years old, we had the basketball goal in the yard, I mean, in the neighborhood. And they came to our house to play basketball and I'd pull some kid off the basketball court and bring him in the garage and say, have you ever come to the point in your life where you know Jesus?

Or something like that, you know. And when I struggled with that at 18, even though I had led people to Christ, but I struggled with that because that's the stuff the devil loves to work.

He didn't want me standing here today, folks. And he didn't want me doing it when I was 18. And what I went back to is the very scripture that I used with others to lead them to Christ.

The pivotal passage is Romans 10, verse nine. When I looked at Romans 10, nine, if you confess with your mouth Jesus, Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. And I realized, yes, I had openly confessed the Lord.

I knew the Lord Jesus. I shared the Lord Jesus. I knew that. And did I believe in him? I dedicated my life to him. It was the evidence of scripture that caused the doubts of salvation to go away, quite honestly.

[9:03] But he loves to go after us like that, to doubt it. And I said last week, and I'll say again, if you have doubts about your salvation, let that be a glaring red flag.

Let's talk about that. And when we do, I'm going to take you to Romans 10, nine. I'm going to take you to the word of God.

Because that's where we find our security. But he brings doubts about salvation. He'll bring doubts about the Lord's presence. When you're going through a difficult time, he'll make you think you're all alone.

He'll tell you nobody cares about you, especially God don't care about you. Why would God let you go through this if he cared about you? He loves to give you doubts about God's presence. And when he does, I want you to look at Hebrews 13, five.

I will never leave you or forsake you. He'll never leave you alone. He will come to you. He'll give you doubts about the truth of his word.

[10:07] Did God really say? Can I trust God's word? Is it outdated? Does it speak to where I live? What does it say about that?

2 Timothy 3.16 is clear as it can be when it says, all scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

In other words, you can rest in the word of God. It is perfect. It is without error. Trust the word of God. It will take away your doubts. But the devil loves to cause doubts.

There's the doubts. There's also the desert. And I want you to see what he did in the desert. Satan always wants to thwart God's plan of salvation. And if he could defeat that, we'd all go to hell.

We'd have no hope. He's tried to do that since the birth of Christ. How? He used King Herod to try to kill Christ as a child.

[11:13] And we don't talk about it at Christmas time, but there's a lot of babies that died in a search to find Christ. King Herod was bloodthirsty to shut down who possibly could reign as king one day.

He also tried to, Satan also tried to tempt Christ in the desert. When Christ went for what I call his seminary experience, he went to the desert to spend time with the Lord before he went public with ministry.

And it was in that time of fasting and praying that the devil came to him and tempted him. And he hit Christ hard when he was most vulnerable. Matthew 4, all the synoptic prophets speak to it of some degree.

Matthew 4 speaks to it the most. And he tells us that Jesus had fasted 40 days and 40 nights and he was hungry. So Satan tempted him to turn the stones to bread.

But he didn't stop there. He tempted him again. He threw out a temptation to tell him to jump off the pinnacle of the temple. Probably referring to the highest point on that wall.

[12:20] That's the southeast corner of the wall that surrounded the temple. If you jump off that, that would throw him into the depths of the Kindred Valley. The low spot there.

Why did he give him such a temptation like that? So Jesus could worry about proving that God the Father was protecting him. Third, he gave him another temptation and told Christ.

He tempted him with the rule of the whole world. And he said all he'd need to do is bow down to Satan. And he could have the whole world. And Christ answered each and every one of them with Scripture.

Every time he answered with Scripture. Satan tried to manipulate Scripture. Use it out of context. Not use it correctly. Christ came back and used it correctly.

But there's a lot more to these temptations in the desert, however. These temptations were really about the direction of Christ's ministry. They were about the power behind his ministry. They were about the positioning of the ministry of Christ.

[13:24] They were all attempts to thwart Christ's ministry from the start. And the intent of the devil was to make him sin by defying God and choosing some kind of second route.

The devil was not only the only one that tried to persuade Christ to do things that he was not to do. The people did that as well. Folks had a different expectation of what the Messiah was to be than what Jesus was.

Some of them had read parts of prophecy. Some of them had read other parts of prophecy. They had all kinds of ideas of what to anticipate and what to expect. And they tried to mold him into what they expected him to be.

People still do that today. Some of them just wanted a Savior on their terms. Others really believed that prophecy proclaimed him to be something different than who he was or do something different than what he did.

And they wanted him to provide for them. Some wanted a social ministry. The stones to bread is a whole temptation about is his ministry going to be one where he just provides the needs for folks.

[14:32] A social ministry apart from the gospel is not a gospel ministry. The second temptation about jumping from the high point is referring to the temptation of relying on the miraculous works for all of his ministry.

And Jesus did miracles throughout his ministry. But he always did them for a purpose. The miracles that he performed were never an end in themselves.

They never were. They were always for another purpose. To show something. I always try to encourage people. When you read about the miracles of Christ. Hang around and get the message that comes forth from it.

Because there's always a message. It's the only reason he did it. He didn't heal everybody. But the people that he healed, he had a message with it. Why did he raise Lazarus from the dead? Did you know that Lazarus is dead today?

He did die. So why did he raise him then? Why did he raise him? To show he had power over death. That's why he raised Lazarus. What about the woman who was hemorrhaging?

[15:41] Fighting through cultural barriers and fighting through the crowd and everything he could just to touch the hem of his garment. Why did he choose to heal her? To show the power of faith and the difference that makes.

He healed a blind man. Why did he heal the blind man? John 9 says to open the spiritual eyes of others. That's why he healed the blind man. The devil wanted Christ to focus on the miraculous and not on the message.

But Christ would not fall to the devil's wants. Or he wouldn't fall to other people's wishes. You remember when he fed them? Fed the 5,000? What did he do after he fed them?

Matthew 14 says he said disperse them. And then he went up on a hill to pray and told them to get across the water. Get away from those folks. Why?

Because they would just follow him to the next meal. They wouldn't listen to what he had to say. They didn't want their life changed. They wanted their belly full. And that was not his ministry.

[16:40] That was not what he was to do. He'd have made a lot of people happy if I'd been there. But he wasn't there to do what made people happy. Satan wanted to throw him off. The third temptation speaks of the expectation that Christ would be a mighty warrior like David.

A lot of people anticipated that when he came that he would come. And he would take over the world. He'd bring peace to Israel from their enemies. And Christ does bring peace, thank God. But it's not about world peace. It's about a peace that passes all understanding. It's about a peace that he can give us that's unlike anything the world can give us. John 14, 27.

Jesus said, peace, I leave with you my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give unto you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let it be afraid. The temptations in the desert were about causing Christ to sin, to destroy his possibility, to be the perfect lamb of God, to be the ultimate sacrifice.

But it was also about throwing him off, of course, in the kind of ministry that he was to have. But every time a temptation was thrown out, Christ succeeded with each temptation. And do you know how he did it?

[17:47] He did it by leaning on and by quoting the word of God. And he came out of the desert not destroyed, but ready and certain of his purposes. And do you know what?

When he came out, the same kind of temptations that the devil threw out at him, people threw out at him. And he was never fazed by it. We don't see him ever fazed by leaving the 5,000 after he had fed them and not feeding them their next meal.

He never fazed by that. He wasn't fazed by them trying to make him an earthly king. He was not fazed by that. You know why? He had already dealt with that in the desert. He came out with his face set on what he was to do.

He knew exactly what it was. And he came out certain of his purpose. And when people tried to sway him about those things later, he had already dealt with it. His face was set. He teaches us that when temptation comes, I want you to hear me.

He teaches us when temptation comes, we need to lean on God's word. Know it. Bring it up. Hang on it. We'll spend a whole Sunday morning talking about scripture that you need to know, that you need to have right before you so that when temptation comes, you can rest in the word of God.

[18:58] It was all in the desert. It's like a case study of how he works. Third case study I want you to see in the devil's temptation is the disciple. And I put that in quotes because Judas was never a disciple.

Disciple means a follower of Christ. It means a student. That's what the word means. And Judas really didn't follow. And I'll be honest with you, it absolutely amazes me.

It amazes me because he walked with Christ. I mean, literally walked beside him through his life. Watched what he did and how he ministered.

He heard sermons of Christ. He watched people get healed. He watched people come back to life.

And the whole time, John 12, 16 tells us, he was stealing from the money bag of the Lord.

The whole time. Listening to all of that, taking in all of that and lost as a dime dropped in the depths of the ocean. Do you know how I know Judas was not saved?

[20:02] Jesus said in Matthew 26, verse 24, that it would have been better for that man if he had never been born.

What a statement. What a statement. And I can't help when I read that to think, you know, that's true for everybody who lives this life and never surrenders his or her life to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because scripture tells us they'll spend an eternity in a devil's hell apart from Christ. It would have been better if they had never been born. A lost man would be better off if he was never here.

And that's why Jesus died to save us. However, I'll be honest with you, the devil works overtime to steal that opportunity. And you know how he does it? I talked about this last week. I won't talk about it again. The darkening of the mind.

That's what he does. And you can be in an atmosphere on a regular basis. I want you to hear me this morning. Because it's a burden on my heart. You can be in an atmosphere and watch it happen and hear the gospel, witness it all, and never surrender your life to Christ and spend eternity apart from God.

[21:22] I've said again and again, the greatest burden that I have in ministry, the thing that will always haunt me in ministry, and I don't even know who they are, are the lost men that attend the church that I pastor on a regular basis.

They follow their wives in. They come out of habit. And they don't even know the Lord. And I don't know your heart.

I can't tell you who I'm talking about. But I'll never stand here and not be convinced that there's people that so often darken the doors of the church. And never know the Lord Jesus.

And Judas is a great example of that. He walked physically with a bodily Christ. And never got it. It does not come by osmosis.

And I'm not good at science, and I don't know exactly what that means. But I think it means you don't get it by just sitting here. You have to surrender your life to the Lord Jesus.

[22:34] There was the disciple. There was also the case study of the defiant. The defiant. Peter gives us all an opportunity. Peter tried his hardest to be everything he could be for Jesus.

And he overstepped again and again by trying too hard. But his heart was so sold on Jesus that when filled with the spirit of God in the book of Acts, man, he did amazing things for God.

And Jesus saw it all the time. He knew he was going to do it. However, he tried to correct Jesus one time. Jesus was telling the disciples. He was sitting down finally telling them exactly how it was all going to play out.

And he was telling them how he was about to go to the cross. And Peter pulled him aside and corrected him. Peter would have none of it. He had a dagger on his thigh.

He wasn't going to put up with anything. He worked the safety team for the disciples. He wasn't going to put up with it. And he took Jesus aside and told Jesus, don't you speak of such. He rebuked the Lord.

[23:36] And I want you to notice what Christ did and how he did it. It's in Mark chapter 8 verse 33 and it says this. But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, get behind me, Satan.

For you're not setting your mind on the things of God but on the things of man. He rebuked Satan directly to Peter.

Now, was he calling Peter Satan? No. Was Satan in Peter? No. Peter was a child of God. Satan came and dwelled the same place the Holy Spirit is.

He knew that Satan was using Peter as a tool. And Peter was well-intentioned and he was defiant and he was looking out for the Lord. But what he said could easily serve, I want you to get this, as a distraction to what Christ was doing.

And that is exactly what Satan was trying to do. And Jesus recognized it for what it was. And so he said, get behind me, Satan. Because it was Satan that was leading Peter to defy the Lord about that.

[24:48] There's the defiant. And then the other example is the discouragement. Christ used the Apostle Paul to spread the gospel like no one has ever before and no one has since.

A little over 23% of our New Testament is written by the Apostle Paul. He was a mighty warrior for the Lord.

He had a pedigree with strong religious background. He saw Christ himself on the road to Damascus. He was on his way to go kill Christians. And Christ appeared to him and he saw him himself.

He went to the third heaven. He speaks of it in 2 Chronicles 12. Speaks of it in a third person. But he was really talking about himself. And when I say third heaven, if you go out today and look outside, when you walk outside, you'll see what Scripture calls the first heaven.

Tonight, if it's clear and you can see the stars and the moon, you'll see the second heaven. And then the third heaven is that that we cannot see. That a rocket can't reach. It's where the dwelling of the Lord is.

[25:55] And here that's what he speaks of in 2 Corinthians 12.

Interestingly, I want you to notice, if you read that passage later, he does not describe what he saw.

He says nothing about it. Now that's kind of fascinating to me because 20 years ago there was a plethora of books that came out about people who died for 90 minutes or some kid died and went to heaven.

And all what they saw. And they came back and wrote a book, a best-selling book about it. Some of it was found later to be a farce. But the reality is the one person that we know that's went to heaven and come back didn't say anything about it.

I think it was too glamorous and too glorious, excuse me, too glorious for us to even imagine so he didn't bother sharing. How do you put in words what you can't even describe? He had a lot to be proud of, yet he stayed humble.

And he tells us how in 2 Corinthians 12 verse 7. He said, So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited.

[27:21] Now I could tell you what thorn means in the Greek, but I learned it in the woods. So we had some woods close to my house when I was growing up. And we made bike trails and stomping trails and built dams in the creek and then played there.

And every now and then, we'd get off the beaten path. Maybe we were playing war or something else. And we'd go into the untamed forest. And then all of a sudden, we'd come to a dreadful stop. Because we done ran into a thorn bush. And I learned there before I ever took the first Greek class that thorn means in the Greek something sharp and painful that sticks deeply in the flesh.

That's exactly what it is. And that's how Paul described his circumstances. A thorn in his flesh. Now when he says in his flesh, that sounds like possibly a physical ailment.

And we have a clue of what he speaks of from Galatians chapter 4 verse 13 and 14. When he talks about a physical trial that he's undergoing. And he says there, you know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first.

[28:28] And though my condition was a trial to you, you didn't scorn or despise me but received me as an angel of God as Christ Jesus. Some theologians said that he could have suffered from inner ear.

Some said it could have been migraine. Some said malarial fever. Some said epilepsy. Some said that he had an eye ailment. Possibly solar retinitis. Because of what happened to him on the road to Damascus when he saw the Lord and was blinded for three days.

He gained his sight back but maybe he never gained it all back. In Galatians chapter 6 verse 11 he talks about having to write in large letters. Like one that cannot see very well.

He could be speaking of the torment that he went through. It could have been several problems of what he went through. 2 Corinthians 11 verse 24 through 27 talk about what he went through.

He says five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. That's not on drugs. That's by rocks.

[29:30] Okay. Just to be clear. Three times I was shipwrecked. A night and a day I was adrift at sea on frequent journeys in dangers from rivers. Dangers from robbers.

Dangers from my people. Dangers from Gentiles. Danger in the city. Danger in the wilderness. Danger at sea. Danger from false brothers. In toil and hardship through many a sleepless night. In hunger and thirst.

Often without food. In cold and exposure. Danger. Some say it could have been depression that he dealt with. No wonder he'd been through so much.

The persecution that he suffered. Or the constant adversaries of the Judaizers that went after him. They constantly dogged him. They plagued him when he was in Corinth.

He talked about it. It could have been some kind of socially debilitating disease. Or some kind of disfigurement that caused ridicule or defamation.

[30:28] He talks about flesh quite a bit in his letters. It could have been a battle for blasphemous thoughts. Maybe a battle in the conscience. Or maybe struggles with lust.

Maybe it was somebody on a persistent, vicious personal attack. That's a messenger of Satan. It could be any of these. The truth is we don't know what it is.

Nobody does. And don't let somebody claim that. I've got my opinions. But that's all they are. Why is it ambiguous here?

I believe it's ambiguous. And I want you to hear me. I believe it's ambiguous. Because the Lord left it that way to relate to every one of us. Because we all have stuff that humbles us. Or at least ought to humble us.

Remember pride is just a fragile shell over a more fragile person. It's just somebody trying to hide the fact. That they have an insecurity.

[31:28] And so they try to look over secure. And there's no need to have it. Paul didn't have it. He was hurting too bad. Why would God allow somebody that loved him so much, that did so much for him, why would he allow that to happen to somebody close to him?

Because in reality, because of the ailment that humbled him so, he was more like God. He was filled with more of God. You have to get yourself out of the way to let God lead the way.

Henrietta Mears, in many ways, set the standards for Sunday school in America. She founded a publishing company still in existence, Gospel Light.

Wrote a million plus bestseller called What the Bible is All About. A great review of the Bible. She influenced a young Billy Graham. She influenced Bill Bright, the one who started Campus Crusade for Christ.

She influenced Richard Harvison, a former chaplain of the U.S. Senate. And Henrietta suffered from childhood with extreme myopia. The weakness and the irritation of her eyes plagued her throughout her life.

[32:46] And Henrietta often said, I believe my greatest spiritual asset throughout my entire life has been my failing sight. For it has kept me absolutely dependent upon God.

Because whatever your thorn is, whatever that difficulty is that stays with you, child of God, God's grace is sufficient.

God's grace is sufficient. It's sufficient to save us through the love of Christ. God's grace is sufficient to sustain us in our every weakness.

God's grace is sufficient to lead us through any trial that we face. God's grace is sufficient to lead us through any trial. God's grace is sufficient to lead us through any trial that we face. So just know today, Satan is alive and well on attack. He's prowling around like a lion, seeking whom he may devour.

And by seeing how he's worked in the past, we can understand how he works today. He hasn't changed. It's the same old schemes. and no matter what it may be you can know today and I want you to go home with this one you can know we are not alone we are not alone Satan will whisper in your ear nobody cares he will he'll whisper in your ear where's your God now he'll try his best to get you to lose your confidence in your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the midst of your battle he'll try his best to do that and I want you to know today based on the word of God we're never alone he walks right there with us you can rest in him number two and get this now we are not an exception [34:59] I'm not you're not an exception we don't have an excuse for the sin in our life don't say if anybody else experienced what I experienced they'd be doing the same thing that's not an excuse you're not an exception your circumstances are not exceptional we walk on common ground folks we need a Savior for every one of us we are not an exception to the rule don't ever let the devil excuse your sin away in your life and you be convinced by that and continue on in that pattern because you're not an exception third thing is this we can resist and we can win God's going to let me bring this up every week because somebody needs to hear it James 4 7 resist the devil and he will flee from you you can walk out of your sin pattern today only by the blood of Christ only by the grace of God and find victory we can resist and we can win and the fourth and last thing is the only hope we've got we must rely on Christ we must and we don't need to do that every Sunday we need to do it every day every day we need to rely upon Christ and if you're one of those unspoken that I pray for and you're here today and you've never given your heart and life to the Lord Jesus you've never surrendered to him

I got good news for you today's the day of salvation if you feel any inkling of the need to come to Christ you didn't come up with it on your own scripture says you're dead in your trespasses and sins you couldn't do it on your own it's God leading you it's the Holy Spirit pricking your heart so you respond to him and be saved and change forever empowered are you going to be perfect? no you're not going to be perfect but your position's going to change and because of that positional change you'll have a strength beyond measure to fight whatever it is that you're fighting you can have victory in your life but only through Christ and only through by relying upon him maybe you're here today and you've done that privately but you've never acknowledged that publicly we're going to baptize in a couple of weeks and maybe you've never been baptized as a believer Jesus by his example and by his commission shows us that it's the first step of obedience for us to follow and if you don't do that it'll be a hindrance in your life I promise you it'll hold you back from being what God would have you to be if you've never done that as a believer I encourage you just follow his lead and obey you come we'll talk about it maybe God's drawing you to First Baptist Church wonderful things are happening thank God for that maybe he's drawing you to be a part of this I encourage you to come I'd be happy to guide you in that process and there's the rest of us and maybe some of those too that in reality there's stuff that we're battles we're fighting in our life we're fighting it with tooth and nail doing everything we can except what we could do and that is to rely upon the word of God and to rely upon the strength of God to rise above that and church I'm asking you today before you leave this room whether you do it right where you stand or whether you do it at this altar or whether you do it with a pastor praying for you regardless of how you do it today will you ask the Lord Jesus to give you victory in those areas to give you the grace that would be sufficient for the thorn that's so nagging you that you'll gain strength in the midst of weakness the devil would love to bridle us he'd love to hold us back from being everything that God would have us to be and he uses these things he's been doing it since the earth was created to try to hold us back from God's very best for our life God wants his very best for you he wants his very best for me and the devil don't like it hey listen he don't like us talking about it either but we have victory where his grace is sufficient

Lord Jesus I love you I thank you for your word how it gives us guidance in the stuff that we face stuff that we don't understand but yet your word gives us guidance leads us through that God I pray today that we'll drop our pride that we'll drop our stubbornness our defiant nature and that God will humble ourselves before you that we'll seek your face and that God will walk away from the sinful patterns of our life that so plague us God give us strength today to simply obey as you speak to our hearts and lives right now Father I pray in Jesus precious name Amen and intersection