

# 23-0723a Transcript

## 23-0723a - *Victory In Christ, Tom Freed*

**Bible Readers:** Mike Mathis and Kevin Woosley

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## Victory In Christ

Transcript (0:03 - 34:43)

### Scripture Readings

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Reader: Mike Mathis

##### **Matthew 16:24-26,**

(0:03) For the first scripture reading, the reading from Matthew the 16th chapter verses 24 through 26. (0:22) That's Matthew 16 verses 24 through 26.

Then Jesus said to his disciples (0:35) If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. (0:48) For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake (0:59) will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul? (1:11) Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? (1:18) That finishes the reading. (1:20)

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Reader: Kevin Woosley

##### **Luke 12:32-34,**

(1:25) I'll be reading out of the book of Luke chapter 12 (1:31) verses 32 through 34. That's Luke 12, 32 through 34. I'm reading out of the New King James.

(1:42) Do not fear, little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. (1:53) Sell what you have and give alms. Provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old. (2:01) A treasure in the heavens that does not fail where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. (2:15) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. That ends the reading. (2:22)

## Transcript

**Preacher:** Tom Freed

(2:27) Good morning. Boy, I guess I'm preaching today. I didn't realize that until Scott texted me the other day and said (2:37) what's your, what are your verses and name of your scripture. So I was a little panicked, (2:45) but I threw something together for you. I don't know if it was miscommunication or (2:52) I've got Alzheimer's, but I don't remember at all.

Sorry about that. (3:00) The name of my sermon is Victory in Christ. So I'm sure everyone in here at one time or another (3:09) felt like they fell short in life.

You know, they didn't meet their goals, they didn't live up to (3:15) their full potential, or they just failed in some important area of their life. So it's easy to get (3:22) down on ourselves, you know, to have negative self-talk or think we should be ahead of where we (3:28) are in life. I doubt that most of us think we are where we should be in life or don't think we (3:36) should have it better.

So we think we should be making a certain amount of money, have a certain (3:43) level of education, have a perfect marriage and the right number of kids, you know, have a house, (3:49) car, and all the worldly things to be successful and happy in life. (3:54) But it's called, you know, keep it up with the Joneses. You always look to your neighbor and (3:57) see what they have and wish you, you know, had the car they had or whatever new gadget or, (4:04) you know, the house.

So the world judges success a lot differently than God judges it. (4:12) To the world, whoever has the most toys wins. I've never heard that saying before.

It's, you know, (4:20) whoever has the most material possessions, whoever has the most material things wins in life. That's (4:26) how the world looks at it. To be successful in the world's eyes, you need a lot of money, power, fame, (4:34) titles, and material possessions.

Look at the people we look up to in life. Pro athletes, musicians, (4:41) movie stars, billionaires, politicians, and other celebrities, many of whom have sold their soul to (4:48) get where they're at. And a lot of them admit it too.

Not many people are looking to the everyday (4:55) normal Christian, struggling to get by, working a nine to five job, wishing that they were them. (5:02) The world looks down on Christians. Since the start of the church, (5:07) members have been persecuted and treated in some cases like the scum of the earth.

(5:12) 1 Corinthians 4, 13. Up to this moment, we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the (5:19) world. And that's coming from Paul, who's arguably the greatest Christian who ever lived.

(5:27) Fortunately, things are better for us now. I mean, they had it a lot worse in their day. (5:33) You know, they were persecuted, attacked, beaten, even killed for being Christians.

(5:42) So I'm sure some people in this country would like that to happen. But so far, (5:47) we still have a lot of freedom. You know, it's not in fashion to live the Christian life.

(5:54) People are most likely going to make fun of you and think you're weird if you read the Bible. (6:00) They might even call you a Jesus freak. I don't know if you ever saw those t-shirts.

(6:07) So you're definitely going to get picked on at times if you're a Christian. (6:13) They might even think you're from another planet if you not only read the Bible, but do what it (6:17) says. So it's one thing to be baptized into the church and read the Bible once in a while.

(6:24) But it's a whole lot harder to actually live the Christian life. (6:27) So if you actually live the Christian life like you're supposed to, people look at you strange. (6:34) They'll think you are from another planet.

So it is hard to live the Christian life and walk the (6:41) walk instead of just talking the talk. I've

made plenty of mistakes in my life and keep, you know, (6:49) making mistakes. But as long as we keep getting up, keep chugging along, we'll make it in the end.

(6:57) So the bottom line is if you're not rich, don't smoke, do drugs, fornicate, swear, tell lies, (7:04) and make fun of others, you probably won't be a part of the popular group at any stage in your (7:09) life. You might be laughed at, teased, bullied, or even spit on and slapped in the face like Christ (7:17) was. But in the end, you'll get the last laugh if you're a Christian and live a faithful life.

(7:25) Imagine what the Pharisees must have thought of the people that persecuted Jesus and went (7:31) against them when they had to face Him when they died. They had to realize that He really is the (7:37) King. You know, it's not going to be a lasting matter on the day of judgment.

God is going to (7:45) separate the sinners from the saints and toss those that didn't obey His Word into an unquenchable (7:51) fire. His whittling fork is in His hand, and He will clear the threshing floor, (7:58) gathering His wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire, (8:03) to Matthew 3, 12. Well, this is not just a silly game we're playing on earth.

(8:11) We have to take things serious because the consequences are eternal. You may get some (8:18) pleasure, wealth, and fame in this life, but nothing is worth losing your soul over. (8:25) Not even if you gain the whole world.

What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, (8:32) yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? Matthew 16, 26. (8:40) So there's nothing in this world worth losing your soul over. Not even if you gain the whole (8:45) world.

If you conquer the whole world and gain everything in it, it's still not worth it. (8:51) So the world looks at success a lot differently than God does. (8:56) Everything that the world holds in high regard, God despises.

Luke 16, 15. (9:04) For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. (9:10) So the definition of abomination is extreme disgust and hatred, loathing.

(9:17) So we can see that everything that the world considers good, you know, successful, God loathes, (9:23) He despises. So for anybody who's trying to get rich and famous or strive for some kind (9:30) of powerful position in the world, your focus is on the wrong things. Like I said before, (9:37) most people believe that who has the most toys wins, the most possessions, or possibly the most (9:44) power, the fame.

But God says the exact opposite. So if you want, you can turn to Luke 12, (9:55) verse 13 with me. I'm going to read quite a few verses, so if you want to follow along.

(10:04) That's Luke 12, starting with verse 13. Then one from the crowd said to him, (10:22) Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me. (10:28) But he said to him, Man, who made me a judge or an arbiter over you? And he said to them, (10:35) Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of things (10:41) he possesses.

So that's a direct contrast to what the world thinks. Then he went on to tell them (10:50) the parable of the rich fool, Luke 12, 16-21. So I'm just continuing on.

He spoke the parable to (11:01) them saying, The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.

And he thought within himself (11:07) saying, What shall I do since I have no room to store my crops? So he said, I will do this. I (11:14) will pull down my barns and build granaries.

And there I will store all my crops and goods. (11:21) And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have many goods laid out for you for many years. (11:28) Take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

But God said to him, Fool, this night your soul will be (11:35) required of you. Then whose will those things be which you have provided? So is he who lays up (11:42) treasure for himself and is not rich towards God? So how foolish is it to work your whole life as (11:51) hard as you can, 18 hours a day, building up all this wealth and stockpiling. And then you die and (11:57) somebody else gets to spend it and enjoy it.

I had a boss one time who this reminds me of, who, (12:05) you know, he had a small business, but he still probably was a millionaire. And all he cared (12:09) about was money. He worked probably 16 hours a day and almost every day.

And that's all he cared (12:16) about. Even when I visited him later in life and he had cancer and was about to die, he still only (12:22) cared about money and what the economy was doing. You know, and it's a sad life to just focus on (12:29) that, even when you're, you know, close to death.

And that's what a lot of the world does. (12:36) So he continued to teach his apostles, explaining to them what is really important in life. (12:43) Let's continue out with Luke 12, 22 through 31.

Then he said to the disciples, (12:52) therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, nor about the body, (12:58) what you will put on. Life is more than food and body is more than clothing. (13:05) Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouses nor barns, (13:12) and God feeds them.

Of how much more value are you than the birds, (13:19) and which of you by worry can add one cubit to the stature? If you are not able to do the least, (13:26) why are you anxious for the rest? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. (13:30) They neither toil nor spin, and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not a reed like (13:37) one of these. If God's angels so close the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown (13:46) into the oven, how much more will he close you, O you of little faith? And do not seek what you (13:53) should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind.

For all these things a nation (13:59) seek after, and your father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God and all (14:06) these things shall be added to you. He says don't worry about what you're going to wear, about money, (14:13) about your clothes.

If you worry about the kingdom of God and focus on that, (14:17) all those things will be added to you. And like you know John said, it is difficult. (14:26) You know, it's difficult to do that sometimes, to focus on, you know, to not worry about things.

(14:33) So if we follow God's word and put his kingdom first, he will provide for us. (14:38) Many of us are focusing on building wealth in the wrong area. (14:43) We need to build treasures in heaven, not on earth.

Luke 12, 32-34, (14:51) Do not fear, little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. (14:57) Sell what you have and give alms. Provide yourselves money bags, which do not

grow old, (15:02) a treasure in the heaven that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor mob destroys.

(15:10) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. So you get to choose what you want to (15:17) focus on in life, and who you serve. You can serve money or you can serve God.

Matthew 6, 24, (15:28) No one can serve two masters. For he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be (15:34) loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

But if you serve money, (15:42) your life might be a little better, but you'll spend eternity in hell. (15:48) On the other hand, if you focus on God and his will, you may struggle a bit more in life, (15:55) but you'll be with God in paradise for eternity. You think about Lazarus and the rich man.

(16:03) You know, who do you think was better off in the end? Who do you think won in life? (16:08) The rich man had a great life, but Lazarus had nothing. He had, he begged outside, you know, his gate (16:17) and he had sores. But in the end, Lazarus went to heaven, and the rich man wished he had lived a (16:22) different life.

So you have to decide what's most important to you. Living comfortably and doing (16:30) what you want for the few years you live on earth, or spending eternity in heaven. (16:38) But what if you were the most powerful being that ever existed, that ruled the universe, (16:47) and anything on earth that you desired you could have? You could be anybody that you wanted to be.

(16:54) You could have unlimited wealth, possessions, and any title you wanted. (17:00) Don't you think that would be pretty awesome, to be able to be anything, do anything, have any amount (17:06) of money? How many of us would choose to be kings or queens, you know, maybe a rock star, or the (17:14) richest person on earth? The possibilities are endless. But what if I told you this exact scenario (17:23) has happened, and all-powerful, all-knowing, almighty God came to earth and lived among us.

(17:32) He didn't choose to live a life that many of us would have chosen, chosen to live though. (17:37) Jesus came to earth giving up everything he had to live a sinless life, fulfill the law, (17:44) and ultimately sacrifice his own life, dying for our sins in a brutal manner. (17:51) He could have been anything he wanted, a king, a great conqueror, or even the richest man on earth.

(17:59) But he chose to be homeless without a penny to his name. (18:04) Luke 9, 58, and Jesus said to him, foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, (18:12) but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. So we look down on homeless people.

(18:18) A lot of us despise homeless people, but Jesus was homeless. He didn't have anywhere to lay his head. (18:24) I mean, people took care of him, but he still, you know, a lot of times he slept outside.

(18:30) He even had to tell Peter to get money from a fish because he didn't have any to pay taxes. (18:39) Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook and take the first fish that comes up. (18:49) When you have opened its mouth, you'll find a piece of money.

(18:53) Take that and give it to them for me and you, Matthew 17, 27. (18:58) That's another example why we shouldn't worry about money or finances. (19:04) God here just told one of his apostles to just pick a fish up and take the money out of it.

(19:10) So how easy is it for him to provide us, for us financially? (19:16) And maybe that's why people didn't accept him, because they wanted a king and a conqueror like David. (19:21) But Jesus was, wasn't like that at all. He was a conqueror in the spiritual world.

(19:28) Jesus was even offered the whole world by Satan, but he turned it down. (19:34) Matthew 4, 8 through 11. (19:37) Again, the devil took him up on an exceedingly high mountain (19:40) and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

(19:44) And he said to him, all these things I will give you if you fall down and worship me. (19:49) Then Jesus said, away with you, Satan, for it is written, (19:54) you shall worship your God, the Lord, your God, and serve him only. (19:59) And the devil left him and behold, angels came and ministered to him.

(20:04) So he was offered the whole world. (20:07) Which, you know, truthfully, he was, he's, the Lord is king anyway in heaven and earth. (20:14) He's given the devil power in this world to give it to who he pleases.

(20:19) But why would he give up everything in heaven for this world? (20:23) You know, Jesus knew that on earth, the most important things aren't wealth, (20:28) titles, and power, but worshipping the Lord and doing what he says. (20:34) John 6, 38, for I have come down to heaven, (20:39) not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. (20:46) So Jesus didn't do his own will.

(20:49) You know, he didn't, he asked Jesus that they could pass the cup from him (20:53) so he didn't have to be crucified. (20:57) But in the end, he said, your will be done, Lord. (21:03) So how many of us sell our souls for so much less and don't even think twice about it? (21:09) You know, we're not even offered anything close to the world, (21:12) and we risk selling our souls, even as Christians.

(21:16) The simple pleasures in life, we risk selling our eternal birthright. (21:21) Like Esau sold his earthly birthright for a bowl of stew. (21:25) So some of those sins we commit, you know, just for a moment of pleasure, (21:31) we're risking our soul over.

(21:34) We need to play the long game if we want to win in the end, (21:38) and avoid losing our souls for those momentary pleasures. (21:43) The wisest person to ever live had everything in life you can imagine. (21:50) King Solomon had fabulous wealth, power, a thousand women, (21:54) and more possessions and property than you can imagine.

(21:58) So for any guy or, you know, even women, he had everything. (22:04) Everything he wanted. (22:05) Everything, you know, in abundance that you can't even imagine.

(22:10) Even all his silverware and dining utensils are made of gold. (22:15) So he did everything in life his heart desired in search of pleasure and happiness. (22:21) But he eventually realized that all worldly pursuits were nothing but vanity.

(22:27) So all the worldly pursuits he went after were all meaningless. (22:32) With all his wisdom, knowledge, and worldly experience, (22:36) he came to one conclusion at the end. (22:40) Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter.

(22:44) Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is man's all. (22:48) For God will bring every

work into judgment, (22:50) including every sacred thing, whether good or evil. (22:55) Ecclesiastes 12, 13, and 14.

(23:01) So he answers a question that has puzzled many wise men for centuries. (23:07) You know, many people ask, why do I exist? (23:10) What is my purpose in life? (23:12) Why am I here? (23:15) The Christian has an answer to these questions. (23:18) But the atheist does not.

(23:21) We are here because God created us and put us here. (23:25) And our purpose in life should be to fear him and keep his commandments. (23:29) You know, we have something to look forward to.

(23:32) And atheists can't explain why we're here. (23:36) You know, they can't even explain how life got put on earth. (23:43) So the Christian has a fulfilling life.

(23:46) You know, a Christian has something to look forward to. (23:49) And the Christian, you know, lives by the truth. (23:53) The truth of how reality really is.

(23:57) So this is how you win in life. (23:59) This is how you have the best possible life to live. (24:04) God has a plan and purpose for all of us.

(24:06) For good, not for evil. (24:09) Jeremiah 29, 11. (24:11) For I know the plans I have for you, declared the Lord.

(24:16) Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. (24:20) Plans to give you hope and a future. (24:23) So God has plans for each of us.

(24:27) God's commands are not burdensome. (24:31) 1 John 5, 3. (24:33) For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. (24:37) And his commandments are not burdensome.

(24:40) But Jesus came to give us life in a more abundant way. (24:45) The thief does not come except to steal and to kill and to destroy. (24:50) I have come that you may have life and that you may have it more abundantly.

(24:56) John 10, 10. (24:58) The best life this world has to offer is a Christian life. (25:03) The world's going to try to tell you opposite.

(25:07) But if you want a meaningful, peaceful, fulfilling life, (25:12) it's only through Christianity. (25:16) Plus you get the benefit of eternal life after this life on earth. (25:23) But God created the world and everything in it.

(25:26) Don't you think he knows a little bit about how we should live our lives? (25:31) You know, a lot of times we think we know best. (25:35) Well, that usually proves wrong. (25:39) God created this world and he gives us his commands so we can live the best life possible.

(25:47) So how many of us would love to have peace, joy, and love in our lives? (25:53) This is exactly what you receive if you're a Christian (25:56) and produce the fruit of the spirit, Galatians 5, 22 through 23. (26:03) But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, (26:09) faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. (26:13) Against such there is no law.

(26:16) So all these things are better than anything the world can offer you. (26:20) What would you give to have peace, you know, and joy in your life? (26:27) Those things are priceless. (26:30) If you

have an abundant life filled with the spirit, you can't go wrong.

(26:36) So the bottom line is if you truly, you know, want to win in life, there's only one way. (26:43) There's only one way to truly win. (26:45) It's not how the world views it.

(26:49) I'm sure most of you here have played a video game at one time or another in your life. (26:56) You know, especially as kids. (26:57) I haven't played too much now.

(26:59) I always played games. (27:03) But I don't know if I can picture Joe playing, but, you know, everybody else might have at (27:08) least a few times. (27:10) But many games are very challenging and take a lot of time and effort to win.

(27:15) The good thing is the designers will always give you some kind of cheat code so you can (27:21) have a huge advantage and win the game. (27:25) What if I told you God has given you a cheat code to win in life? (27:30) God is the designer of this world and everything in it, the universe and everything else. (27:38) He makes the rules and writes the laws.

(27:42) And he has given us a secret, hidden code to conquer this world. (27:47) You could say it's hidden in plain sight because there are Bibles everywhere you look, (27:53) but people refuse to open it and read what's inside. (27:58) So it's not as the world thinks.

(28:01) You're getting the most toys, money, fame, power, and status. (28:06) God doesn't care if you're a king, queen, actor, musician, pro-athlete, or even the (28:12) president. (28:14) Unlike in America, where the rich and famous get away with every crime under the sun, (28:20) God is not a respecter of persons.

(28:23) And everybody is judged equally under the law, Acts 10, 34 through 35. (28:29) And Peter opened his mouth and said, (28:43) God is not a respecter of persons, he's a respecter of character. (28:49) It doesn't matter if you're male, female, what race, you know, anything.

(28:55) He judges a person on their character and what they've done in life. (28:58) You can't smooth talk your way into heaven. (29:02) There's no amount of money you can pay for God to let you in.

(29:06) So sorry, Bill Gates, you can't buy your way into heaven. (29:11) If you want to win in life, there's only truly one way, (29:16) and that's to obey God's word and become a Christian. (29:20) It's the ultimate key code.

(29:23) It's almost as easy as putting in the code for getting 30 extra lights in Catra. (29:28) I don't know if any of you remember that game, but it's the ultimate code. (29:36) And we have it, we have it readily available.

(29:39) Every Christian should know this code by heart, like the back of their hand. (29:47) But for those who don't, I'll give you it right now. (29:51) First, we need to hear the word of God, Romans 10, 17.

(29:56) So let faith come by hearing and hearing by the word of God. (30:02) Then you've got to believe what you've heard. (30:05) So they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, (30:10) you and your household, Acts 16, 31.

(30:14) Then you've got to repent, you know, repent of your sins and turn the other way, Acts 17, 30.



(30:22) Truly these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent. (30:29) Then you've got to confess that Jesus is the Son of God.

(30:33) Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him and he in God, 1 John 4, 15. (30:42) Then you've got to be baptized, Mark 16, 16. (30:48) He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned.

(30:55) And finally, you have to live a faithful Christian life to the end, (31:00) Revelation 2, 10. (31:03) Do not fear any of those things which you're about to suffer. (31:07) Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you in prison, that you may be tested (31:11) and have tribulation 10 days.

(31:13) Be faithful until death and I will give you a crown of life. (31:20) So you could do all this in a short time, even today if you chose, like the Ethiopian eunuch did, (31:29) Acts 8, 36-38. (31:33) Now as they went down from the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, (31:39) See, here is water, what hinders me from being baptized? (31:43) Then Philip said, if you believe with all your heart, you may.

(31:47) And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (31:52) So he commanded the chariot to stand still. (31:56) And both the Philip and the eunuch went into the water and he baptized him.

(32:00) If you look at every conversion in the Bible, it ends in baptism. (32:04) That's when you're at the final steps of being added to the church. (32:08) Just keep in mind that becoming a Christian is the easy part, (32:12) but living a Christian life can be difficult.

(32:17) But we remain steadfast, immovable, and abiding in the work of the Lord, (32:22) we will have victory in Jesus. (32:25) 1 Corinthians 15, 57-58. (32:31) But thanks be to God who gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(32:35) Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, (32:39) always abiding in the work of the Lord, (32:42) knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. (32:47) Faith is a victory. (32:49) 1 John 5, 4. (32:51) For everyone born of God overcomes the world.

(32:54) This is a victory that overcomes the world, even our faith. (32:59) So we want to overcome this world and have victory. (33:02) We need faith.

(33:04) We need Jesus. (33:05) We need to become a Christian. (33:07) The path to victory is narrow and few find it.

(33:10) Enter by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate, (33:13) and broad is the way that leads to destruction. (33:16) And there are many who go in by it. (33:19) Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way that leads to life.

(33:23) And there are few who find it. (33:24) Matthew 7, 13-14. (33:28) So some of you here are standing at a fork in the road.

(33:32) You have a decision to make what way you want to go. (33:36) You can continue down the path of destruction, (33:39) the highway to hell, as ACDC calls it, that most of the world is on. (33:45) Or you can change your course and enter the path of life.

(33:49) God doesn't want any of us to perish, but all of us to have eternal life. (33:54) 2 Peter 3, 9.

(33:56) The Lord is not slack concerning promises, and some count slackness, (34:02) but is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, (34:06) but that all should come to repentance. (34:10) So you have the cheat code.

(34:12) You have the winning lottery ticket in your hand. (34:16) But you have to turn it in if you want to be saved. (34:19) It's up to you to decide to do that or not.

(34:23) You want to be foolish not to. (34:26) So now's the time if you aren't a Christian, (34:31) want to come forward, you know, and join the church, (34:34) or if you're struggling with sin or any other problems in life, (34:37) or if you even want to tell us some good news, now's the time to come forward.