

# Pt 9 Our Quality of Life

by Alan Redpath

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding and displaying the righteousness of the kingdom in our lives.*

**Duration:** 43:48

**Topics:** "Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by discussing the power and control that a householder in scripture had, comparing it to the role of a householder in the queen's household. The speaker then uses the analogy of the moon reflecting the brightness of the sun to describe how Christians are meant to reflect Jesus and his glory. The speaker emphasizes the importance of Christians reflecting Christ rather than relying on programs or committees. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the ultimate goal for believers, which is to shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father, freed from evil and touched by the glory of heaven.

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## Transcript

Open your Bibles at Matthew chapter 13. We began reading at verse 47 this morning. Perhaps we'll do the same now.

Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a net which was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. When it was full, it was drawn to shore and then sat down and sorted the good into vessels that cast through the bad away. So it will be at the end of the age the angels shall come out and sever or separate the wicked from the righteous or the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire.

There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Jesus said to them, Have you understood all this or all these things? They said to him, Yes, Lord. And he said to them, Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the Kingdom of Heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old.

Now, just before we turn to the last of those verses, let me remind you, they didn't quite finish the parable there of the net. We saw, if you've got in your notes correctly, that this speaks of the function of the Church today and then as one of the parables which is emphasizing the end of the age, it speaks of the fact of severance in verse 48, when the boundary is set, the fact of severance and the finality of separation. Now, that's the one I just want to touch on now before I move into the last part, the last verse, the finality of separation.

Verse 50, The angels are doing this and shall cast through them into a furnace of fire. It's quite amazing really to think that one day the hands that were nailed to a cross will call out his angels to do this, a furnace of fire. Is that literal flame, I wonder? I really don't know.

But it's a picture that our Lord drew here and elsewhere and however terrifying it may be, let's not try to escape the fact that the sin of rejecting Jesus is so awful that nothing less than hell is demanded. May I just repeat that? The sin of rejecting Christ is so awful that nothing less than hell is demanded. The only picture of hell in the Bible is given to us by the one who came to save us from it in Luke chapter 16.

Don't trouble to look it up now. Luke chapter 16, verse 19. And the picture he gives there is of humanity with all faculties in their position, physically, mentally, everything there, but no power at all to satisfy them.

I don't believe that the flame someone is enduring in hell is something that hasn't been experienced on earth beforehand. I don't believe it's first of all felt in hell. Whoever experiences it there has fanned that flame when he's on earth.

He's fed it and felt the flame of pride, selfishness and added fuel to it. I think probably that many times he's tried to stamp it out. Many times he's tried to ease the intensity by satisfying its craving.

But in hell, the picture that Jesus gives us, is that flame burns all the more fiercely but does nothing to satisfy it. There, as the story tells us, men will weep and gnash their teeth. But I, of course, couldn't finish the picture there.

Do you know this lovely hymn? It was sung when I was a youth. I don't know if it's sung now or do you know it? It is a thing most wonderful, almost too wonderful to be that God's own son should come from heaven and die to save a child like me. I sometimes think about the cross and shut my eyes and try to see the cruel nails and crown of thorns and Jesus crucified for me.

It is most wonderful to know his love for me so strong and so pure, so sure. But it's more wonderful to know my love for him so faint and poor. And yet, yet I want to love thee, Lord.

Light the flame within my heart. And I will love thee more and more until I see thee as thou art. Thank the Lord.

There's another flame that can be lit in your heart and mine. The flame of love for Jesus. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

He can put out the flame of hell and light the flame of heaven before it's too late. And I hope that all of us are asking him to do that. In the light of the searching truth in this parable of certain severance one day we need to let his love flood our hearts and our lives be poured out in his service.

Yes? Verse 43. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. That's the ultimate.

Freed from all association with evil. Touched with the glory of heaven. Caught by seeing the very face of Jesus.

One day a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. But you don't need to wait till heaven where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. There is freedom.

And we all with open face beholding as in a mirror or reflecting as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are changed into his likeness from glory to glory. That's it. Oh, that's a terrific word.

Reflecting. There's nobody else can do that but a Christian. I was walking in Central Africa with my daughter years ago.

And she was a missionary there was, almost is now. And it was a lovely night full moon star shining sort of night that you know when you're out there with somebody you want to hold hands. It was my daughter I was with.

And as we it was as we walked along the moon was terrific. Full moon star shining and she said to me Daddy isn't the moon shining brightly? And I said to her yes it is wonderful but I said what fools are we? You know. She said what do you mean? Well you know that the moon can't shine.

It's just a lump of lackluster material. It's got no capacity to shine but it's in orbit in relation to the sun. And it's turned it's face heavenward and it's catching the reflection of the brightness of the sun and shining it out into the darkness of the world.

That's a Christian. Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in his wonderful face and the things of earth grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.

Nobody but a Christian can reflect Jesus. That's what the church has to do. Not think up a new program not have masses of committees but reflect Christ.

That's what this parable is about. But now wait a minute. Let me just turn with you to the last verse.

Reflecting Christ the function of the church. But here we have this one about the householder and it's not surprising really that the last of these eight parables gives us the responsibility of the Christian in the world in which we live. You notice that this parable which is only in the space of one verse immediately follows a question which our Lord put to the disciples and their answer.

Have you understood this or have you understood all these things and they say to him yes Lord now that's very significant because the responsibility with which they're charged is the outcome of truth that has been revealed. This is for all of us. Let me give it to you again.

The responsibility with which they were charged is the outcome of truth revealed and understood. The right to serve the Lord is always based upon revelation from his word. Apart from that it's presumption.

The right to serve the Lord is based upon revelation from the word. Otherwise it's presumption. A very wonderful thing here's me diverting again happened in Edinburgh some time ago at a church where a well-known Scottish preacher was minister Alexander White and one day he had a young fellow in to speak for him and this fellow was absolutely thrilled that he'd been asked to preach in this tremendous church in Edinburgh.

It was full, big church, big crowd and he went in and then it came time for him to preach so he came to the pulpit steps and he rushed up ran fast up the pulpit and then he began to preach. Did you know that in ten minutes he'd lost his voice. Absolute disaster.

It had gone. Couldn't say a thing. So he had to sit down and afterwards when the service was over he just came down looking absolutely miserable.

Could hardly walk and said to this famous preacher Alexander White, Sir, why do you think that happened? Why did that happen to me today? And he gave a wonderful answer in Scottish and not altogether good at it Scottish people would understand I hope you all do. Alexander White looked at him and said well if you'd come up to that pulpit the way you went down you'd have come down the way you went up. Got that? If you came up to that pulpit the way you came down absolutely in despair and humiliated if you'd come up that way then you'd have come down the way you went up absolutely thrilled and full of joy.

There's something in that worth thinking through. The right to serve the Lord is based upon revelation from his word which has been understood. Get me? If one day the Lord leads you for preaching or teaching the word of God it's got to burn in your own heart first you don't understand it.

Like a lesson on homiletics I had from a negro preacher a black preacher he said we've asked how he did it prepared his well he said I reads myself full then I thinks myself clear then I prays myself hot then I lets myself loose you can't beat that. You no need a course on homiletics you wait upon like that on the Lord till the fire burns in your heart then it's infectious the right to serve is based upon revelation from God's word which you've understood. Have you understood these things?

Now Jesus didn't mean sort of have you understood them like a child will learn a lesson not that an arithmetic or anything else what he did meaning was have you grasped the significance of this have you felt the pressure upon what you've heard in your heart have you taken the burden of it to your heart have you understood are you convinced to an extent to which the things you've heard are going to shape your life for the future have you understood all these things not a few not the majority but all of them there's a tremendous difference between understanding with the mind and the understanding with the heart what a privilege it is to have a friend who understands isn't it with whom he can share let me test you on this just go over in your mind these parables again have you understood

that the great majority of people whom God has sown into the world are unproductive have you understood that there's an enemy who seeks to sow terrors and do his deadly work at the heart of the church have you understood that the visible church has had an abnormal growth and taken into itself that which is even and the tendency of all of us Christians is to grow just like that have you understood that the life, your life of communion and fellowship which God intends us to have for all of his children have you understood that that's been marred by the corruption of sin these are the things which are the root of a Christian's warfare have you understood have you understood that beneath the corruption and sinfulness of your heart and mine there's a treasure upon which God's heart is set and

he sees the possibility of recovery and total salvation have you understood that have you understood that we're partners in the great task of evangelism worldwide fishing for souls have you understood and the Lord Jesus faced that little handful of his followers as I believe he faces us and with what yearning he asks us have these things grasped you have you listened to them merely as rather interesting or perhaps unusual or perhaps in your mind possibly controversial lectures have they left you unmoved and as you've been months here at Capery some of you have you understood or are we still just exactly what we were last September have I understood have I understood the subtlety of the damage of the devil have I understood through them all how much Jesus loves you how much he's sacrificed

for you how much he counts upon you to be his ambassador well the disciples answered yes Lord future events realise tell us that they hadn't really completely understood but it was the only material he had to

work with most of you so he took them at their word and he just does that today don't you find sometimes what poor stuff we are really we're all he has and the extent to which he can use us anywhere depends upon these things having gripped our hearts and given us a great desire to accept responsibility and serve him now what is that responsibility first here you need to get your pen and get ready and go I mean not leave but ready to go excuse me oh I'm watching the clock alright don't worry 12.35 prompt because lunch is at 12.45 right today good job I knew that listen here I come

every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven now let me stop there it's quite startling that the Lord introduces that word scribe into the picture because the scribes were his enemies chapter 16 21 he declared plainly that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the priests that's the spiritual authority the elders that's the civil authority and the scribes that's the moral authority why were they his enemies where'd they sprung from well you need to study for yourself but we go back right to the time when the children of Israel returned from captivity in Babylon about 500 years before Christ and there was a new order arising and at the head of it a man called Ezra who made a pulpit of wood and from it read the law and gave the sense of it and became

the first in the order of scribes you'll find that if you want to look at it sometime Nehemiah chapter 8 verse 4 Nehemiah 8 4 and here was a great spiritual movement a Bible movement under Ezra's leadership which sought to apply the word of God the law of God to every area of life but as time passed by the scribes became more and more concerned with strict letter and built traditions around it all and added burdens and eventually they obscured from view the reality of it shut men from the kingdom because of their interpretation now here in this parable the Lord is saying something tremendous he's telling the disciples that in the light of their understanding of truth he will transfer the moral authority of the scribe to them in the light of their understanding yes we've understood it he's

going to transfer the moral authority from the scribe to them he's telling them that as men trained for the kingdom of heaven their responsibility is to be interpreters of the law of heaven to display the righteousness of the kingdom in the world beware therefore he says of the letter of the law beware of shutting people out of the kingdom by that and here's the first responsibility of a Christian taught in the things of the kingdom disciplined in the principles of life in the kingdom he's called on to display the righteousness of the kingdom kingdom living have these truths gripped you have you understood very well have you felt the pressure of them on your heart very well display it display it in your life the integrity of discipleship display it interpret to the world the law of the

kingdom by the quality of life you live let me say it again interpret to the world the law of the kingdom kingdom living by the quality of life you live for instance a new commandment I give to you said Jesus that you love one another as I have loved you display it so that others may see see how they love each other that's what impressed them in New Testament times in other words in a world of law breaking disregard of any standard of right and wrong once upon a time that was based in this country as in many others on the bible what's right and wrong now it's based on television in other words there's no standard at all wave it up do what you like and a Christian has to dare to be different and display the righteousness of the kingdom you'll find that in the sermon on the mount the

Christian is free from the law's condemnation but never from responsibility to fulfil it and that can't become in his own strength it's only possible by the life of the spirit of God within us therefore I'm responsible and you are to display the righteousness of the kingdom in my life and to just declare to other people what it means to have the rule of the kingdom every scribe who is a disciple in the kingdom is like to a

householder that's a word which has a very different meaning today the actual Greek word has the English word in it despot let me spell out for you the Greek word there if you'd like to put it down it would be impressive if you have a Greek word in your notes as long as you remember it ready ready O-I-K O-D E-S-P O-T-E-S I'll contest the Ts O-I-K O-D E-S P-O-T-E-S it

has the word despot in it it's usually used in the New Testament in relation to the absolute authority of Christ a word of absolute authority now here's a word which is a tremendous illustration of what happens to us when we're mastered by the revelation of truth when you're gripped by it when the things of the kingdom grip you and you understand them and you know the inner secrets and you're aware of ultimate issues one day at the end of the age you become a householder unfortunately side one of the Cape and Ray master copy runs out at this point and the next few sentences were lost before the cassette was turned over the speaker was making the point that a householder in scripture was virtually a despot with tremendous power and control he went on to make a comparison with our own

queen's householder who manages the running of her household that person is closely in touch with the queen is responsible for getting her wishes carried out and he has control over everything concerning her court a man in intimate touch with her queen in a position of tremendous authority responsible for carrying out the queen's rule making known her wishes and getting them put into practice and such a responsibility is one whose heart is gripped by God's truth just let me ask you to get this down my surrender to truth has placed me in closest touch with the one who is truth and therefore gives me power to pray and such a person has never any need to apologize for his faith with an open bible and a burdened heart he will declare the truth which has gripped him with authority and

conviction which reaches people everywhere there's nothing more miserable than to listen to people some people speak on the holy spirit who obviously haven't got him cold as oh but boy oh I go back in my mind a long time now when I was a while to your age three or four generations ago and a back sliding christian in business miserable a believer oh yes that's misery making him miserable do you know a funny thing my steps were directed most sunday evenings to the central hall westminster headquarters of the methodist church and there's a man there who preached every sunday and he wore a long black coat he had a great big wing collar he had long hippie hair nothing new about that it came right over his head white hair and glasses and you know he read every word he spoke read just like this

all the time and once every five or ten minutes because he preached for about an hour and there were three thousand people there and you could hear a pin drop and about once every five or ten minutes he would look up and when he looked up you saw the glory and i would say to myself that man has got what i need the glory and that church building is almost empty these days and this country lacks desperately men like that what a privilege it was to go to chicago and after a few months to become a close friend of aw toza and what an experience it was when he called me on the phone one day and said you'll probably have a tough time at moody church they're very dispensational etc etc but he said if you'd like to come and pray with me i would love to have you i said oh wonderful would i like it

i'd love it but when and where well he said on the south shore of lake michigan any time between five o'clock and eight o'clock in the morning so i choked a bit i said well that's a bit early and he lived thirty miles from where i lived however i went and you know i would say this if he was here and there he was to tell you himself any day between april and october i'd find him from five o'clock to late in the morning flat on his face with an open bible seeking the lord three hours i didn't go very often it was early and moreover it was holy ground that man told them you should get all his books they're worth reading be sure you do all

his books especially the knowledge of the holy that's a great book oh there are those too but uh you know that man was minister of one of the largest

churches in chicago on the south side with a congregation of three thousand people and i used to hear him preach every week because he was on woody buble institute radio and you heard the words coming with authority god doesn't want cleverness he doesn't want education he doesn't want masses of degrees by degrees you can empty a church but he wants heavens fire coming through the man whose heart has been broken at the cross but who's understood who's understood all these things because in that man's life there is the authority the power of the holy spirit act one eight he shall be witnesses unto me and you shall receive power after that the holy spirit is called upon you there's really a little explanation needed about that because there are two words in the new testament which can

translate power in act one eight you have the word dunamis other places you would have authority exousia that word is confined to the lord jesus himself all authority is given unto me go ye therefore into the ends of the earth and preach he never delegates that authority to anybody it's his but you shall receive power dunamis after the spirit has come upon you big difference between the two i walked down have you circus when i got down to piccadilly traffic lights broke down and in an emergency a little fat london policeman most unusual type you don't know men like that usually well big big people but this man very fat almost as broad as he was tall he'd gone on duty temporarily

and he was this little man with one hand on his hips and the other hand up here and standing there he was in complete control.

Not a bus dare move. And I looked at him and said, not to him but to myself, you think you're no end of a guy, controlling all that lot. I would just love it if you would mind just going away from there a bit, going home and coming back and putting on a suit of clothes like mine and standing there and doing that.

In less than 30 seconds you'd be in a hospital, probably dead. Those drivers, those buses, these cars, they didn't care for a fat little London policeman. But I tell you something, they had great respect for the authority of the uniform we wore.

The respect of that, and they didn't move an inch. Well now, let me be quiet. But I tell you, people don't care a hoot about us, maybe, but I tell you also that when the word of God that is understood gets through my life, to them, they have a mighty respect for the authority.

When they see that authority practiced in you, that appeals to them. That's our job. As I say, not merely education, not merely fundamental theological praying, nor necessarily somebody with a great intellectual appetite.

The Lord tells me to my comfort that he has chosen the foolish, the weak, the things that are not, to confound those who are. It does require a heart in which God's word burns like a fire, and a spirit in you that's absolutely restless until that word triumphs in the heart of other people. If I dare be so, um, I don't know what, but perhaps lacking in tact, one of the greatest examples of that kind here at Cape Henry was Johann.

Some of you know him. Out in Israel now. Gone through absolute hell on earth in his life.

But aye, boy, is he strong for God. Because, get this down, only truth which first grips you and causes you to live by its precepts will ever grip anybody else. And I'll repeat that.

Only truth which first grips you and causes you to live by it will grip anybody else. To declare the rule of the kingdom means I'm living that way. By what a difference would happen in our churches, in our country.

We are to display the righteousness of God, of the kingdom, and declare the rule of the kingdom. And the last five minutes, I have to disperse the riches of the kingdom. A householder which brings out of his treasure things new and old.

As householders of the kingdom, we have great resources. And the thought of course here is he scatters them lavishly. We've access to an unlimited treasure store in the word of God.

And in it, there are things new and old, as the parable says. Every blessing that has come to the world has come through men who knew God, declared his authority, dispersed his riches. And the great business of the Christian is to dig into the treasure store of the word of God, and from the old things which never change, bring forth the application of them to the day in which I live.

Do remember that I'm not here, you're not here in the world now, to catch the spirit of the age. We're not here to imitate it, not here to provide Christian entertainment, or masses of church programs. As long as I think like that, I'd be a miserable failure.

But I am here and you are here to apply the truth of God's word to every circle of life. To declare as Billy Graham says a thousand times, the Bible says. The Bible says.

I'm saying it to live by it. To declare the rule of the kingdom, to disperse the riches of the kingdom. Yes, constantly.

I think the thing we best do is to get back to our Bibles and relate every bit of our life to them. I think I had better leave it at that. Well it's been great to be with you and I hope to see you again in June.

Thank you so much and for your patience.

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