

Yielding

by Alan Redpath

The sermon emphasizes the importance of yielding to God's pressure and surrendering to His will, even when it's difficult, in order to experience true victory and holiness.

Duration: 1:02:26

Scripture: 1 Chronicles 21:15-27, Psalm 51:17, Isaiah 66:2, Matthew 6:33, John 1:33, Romans 12:1, James 4:10

Topics: "Yielding"

Description

In this sermon, Dr. Alan Redpath discusses the story of David in 1 Chronicles 21. David realizes that his sin has caused innocent people to suffer, and he falls on his face before God, pleading for mercy. The sermon emphasizes the importance of yielding our lives completely to Jesus and making a total commitment to Him. Dr. Redpath also reflects on a recent graduation service where he witnessed young people speaking with divine authority, attributing it to their submission and surrender to God. The sermon encourages listeners to make a personal transaction with God and deal with the basic issue of surrendering to Him.

Transcript

Dr. Alan Redpath entitled this message, The Uttermost Yielding of Our Life to Jesus. The scripture is 1 Chronicles chapter 21 verses 15 to 27. It's a long time, my dear friends, since I remember a meeting at which my own heart was so challenged and blessed as at the graduation service last night.

I was deeply moved. I just had to go right away back to my room. As I listened to these young folks speaking, I thought about my own family, some other parents I'm sure must have done.

And I sensed in each one of them, though from a different angle, in each case I was conscious of a note of divine authority. There was the sense of the authority of the Holy Spirit. And I asked myself, what has done this, what has brought this about, what is it that enables these young folks to be able to stand and speak with that unction? And there's only one answer to that question, it's the one word, submission.

Somewhere along the line, these young folks who have graduated, I trust it may be true of all of them, but I felt in my heart it was very true of those who represented the graduate class last night, I trust it may be true of you all, somewhere along the road there's been a crisis and they faced it before God and there's been submission. And in a real measure in their hearts, the Lord has answered them by fire from heaven upon the burnt offering. May that ever be increasingly their portion as they go out to serve the Lord, it's an

issue which will be tested constantly.

You never face a crisis with God for the last time. You never reach a stage in Christian experience when you can say, you've graduated from that school. You never reach a point when God has done with you.

You're never able to come to a place when you say, well now I'm through with all this now, I've arrived. I remember once speaking at an anniversary service in a lovely church in Southampton, and then after the service a fellow came up to me with his face aglow, almost, almost a light indeed, and he flung his arms round me and said, hallelujah brother. Now you know an Englishman reacts in a very peculiar way to that, and I retreated about two yards and said very weakly, hallelujah, and I hoped it was all right.

And he said to me, he said to me, brother I was, my dear old boy, you've got further in two years than I've got in twenty-five. And if I read my Bible right, you've got further in two years than the Apostle Paul got in a life, sir, least of the Apostles, less than the least of all the saints, chief of sinners. This was Paul's graduation through life.

And the strange paradox of Christian living is that the closer you get to God, the more filthy you feel yourself to be. The nearer you are to the Lord, the more corrupt. I'm absolutely staggered as I go through life to recognize as I walk with the Lord the utter corruption of the flesh.

How often I used to sing that chorus, let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me, all his wondrous compassion and purity, O thou spirit divine, all my nature refine. No, O thou spirit divine, make all thy nature mine. That's the only answer.

We've been listening this morning to a very great world. We've been listening to a great principle that has, your beloved principle whispered to me as Christians were a going concern. We certainly are.

This is the outwardness of it all. How thrilled I was at the background of the Keswick Convention story. Been my privilege to be there several times and I'm looking forward in the will of God if Jesus tarries to be back there next year.

Do you know there's a missionary prayer meeting every morning there at seven o'clock and another prayer meeting and the combined attendance of the two of them is well over 2,000 people. And you go around the whole world in prayer in a year, in the week, and people in that congregation stand up and name the name of missionaries that are serving God in all different countries in the world. It's a moving experience.

This is the outwardness of the life of holiness. We're not saved in order to sort of be put into wonderful packages and say how holy we are. We're saved in order that through us this fire might burn and glow to the uttermost parts of the earth.

We're a going concern. If the fire falls you just have to move. But I want to speak to you a little bit about the inwardness following what Dr. Maxwell said just a moment ago.

How much overflow have I got? Now I want to take this Old Testament illustration of this New Testament truth. The Lord answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of the burnt altar. This is, I don't know whether you know it or not, I trust you do, this is the answer of God to the cry of your heart today.

This is the immediate, I was going to say the inevitable response of heaven to the uttermost yielding of our lives to Jesus Christ. Fire from heaven. The flame of God in the fall.

I want you to notice how this took place. First, I find in this chapter the pressure to which David yielded. In the 16th verse you find that David lifted up his eyes and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and heaven having a drawn sword in his hand.

The sword of God was drawn against David in judgment. The angel of the Lord held it in his hand as he stood by the threshing floor of Onan the Jebusite. Here in the city of Jerusalem where God had planned a Bethlehem, a Calvary, a Pentecost.

Here in the place which was going to be the focal movement, evangelism, revelation, redemption. Here in this place for which God had such a tremendous purpose, David had sinned. The first verse of the chapter tells us that Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to sin.

Oh, what a familiar picture that is. Satan stood up against the people of God. But he didn't bother himself about people on the outward fringe.

He went straight for the leader. And he provoked David to sin. He wasn't concerned so much about the multitude.

He could score his most telling victory. He could do his most foul deed. He could do the worst and most fiendish damage, not by gradual infiltration from the crowd, but by a direct assault at the very heart.

And the devil has always followed those tactics. And he provoked David to sin. It didn't seem very much.

It was a sin of numbering the people. It was a serious sin in the sight of God, because it was a sin which denoted a departure from a confidence in God and a trust in the arm of the flesh. It denoted the ugly thing, the basic thing of pride, which is at the root of all other sin.

And in spite of all the protests of Joab, David persisted in carrying the thing through until there came a messenger of God to him and said, all right, you don't sin and get away with it. I'll give you three alternatives. Three years famine, three months in your hands of the enemy, three days in my hand for pestilence and destruction.

And David, what a tremendous verse, verse 13 is, Lord, I'm in a great strait, but, but Lord, I can't fall into the hand of the enemy. Lord, I must fall into your hands at this moment. Lord, it's my only hope, Lord, I've sinned against you.

I've done this thing, I've been sinful, I've been guilty of pride, the root of all other sin. But Lord, there's only one hand in which I dare trust myself, it's your hand, keep me there. I fall into your hand, do what you will with me.

I'll choose three days in the hand of God. And David stood back and he watched. God drew his sword in judgment.

David saw 70,000 people perish and the pressure of God was so intense upon him as he watched it all. And he began to see that his sin had affected the whole population, that he hadn't sinned privately, but people who were completely innocent were suffering on his account. And this thing hit him and the pressure of it all was so terrific that he couldn't stand it and he fell on his face before God and pleaded for

mercy.

Beloved friends, do you know anything about the thing I'm talking about? I'll tell you I do. I wonder if you came to Prairie Bible Institute, perhaps as a student, or you came to this conference this week, and you have been going through not days or weeks or months, but literally years when the sword of the Lord has been drawn against you. Oh, you've been keeping up the preaching.

Oh, you've been trotting out the sermon. You've been going on doing your Christian work. You've been studying at school.

You've been keeping up the show. Oh, you've been putting on the front. You've been keeping going, but I tell you, every time you've got away from the crowd and you've got alone on your knees, you've opened your Bible and then you've had to close it again because the Spirit of God has spoken to you and the sword of the Lord has been against you and God has been hitting, hitting, hitting, and the pressure of God upon you has been so tremendous in this past week.

Does it mean like that with you? Do I speak to a beloved minister in the gospel today here? A beloved missionary on service? The days of your youthfulness have gone, and you're in the thick of the fight, and you're right in the firing line, and sometimes the pressure's almost too great to take. You listen to those young people last night, did any of you say, I'd give anything to be able to start again? You look back over five, ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty years of ministry, do you remember a time when you slipped? When you became proud? When you ceased to trust God? When you put confidence in the flesh? And when you began to boast in yourself and you discovered that you were using the name of Jesus just to make a reputation for yourself? You got proud, and hard, and cold, and self entered right into the picture, and the sword of the Lord was immediately drawn against you. But fool that you were, and fool that I have been, you resisted and we resisted the pressure of the Spirit, until we began to see who other people began to suffer.

Brother, brother, you've been out seeking other people's children for Christ, and have you lost your own, have you? The sword of the Lord was drawn against, but the stiff-necked eye went up, and refused to give in, and God began to put the pressure on. And did you see that darling boy go wrong? Did you see that precious little daughter of yours slip into the world? Did you see that child not come right through in obedience? Did you see them get worldly, and careless, and indifferent, did you? And you watched it, and in your heart you knew it was your own fault, but you weren't man enough, humble enough, to get on your face before God, and plead for mercy. But you went on, and you went on in your leadership, and you preached your sermons, and you went out to the mission field, and you did your Christian work, and you said, oh what a pity it is about my children, about my family, that they're not so keen as they ought to do pray for them, and all the time the root of it was in your own soul.

And then the damage began to go a bit further, and you saw your fellow missionaries becoming a bit indifferent, and you saw your church congregation getting very dead and cold, and you saw the people being inattentive, and you saw a lack of real fruit in your testimony, and all the time whenever you went back to your Bible, and back to the place of prayer, God spoke to you about it, and you knew that he was putting on the pressure. Oh what a battle it was. I don't talk to you about these things easily, I don't preach at you, I've been through this myself.

I know what it is. But oh brother and sister, has Prairie Bible Institute this week been a week when the pressure has been so great that you couldn't take it another minute, and like David you fell on your face

before the Lord, broken. God forbid that you should go on another day until the Holy Ghost has just smashed you up at the feet of Jesus.

This is where this conference has got to get. It was a burden on my heart when I came here last Monday and preached to you on John the Baptist and his ministry of fire, it's a burden on my heart yet, that through all this tremendous, wonderful, thrilling week in which God has spoken to us through many different ways, the end of it might be that someone who came here stubborn, resisting the Spirit of God, in spite of all the evidences of failure in his testimony, might end the week a heap of ashes at the feet of Jesus, broken. God forbid that you and I should get out into the mission field and into the ministry, and just carry through the years the controversy with God.

In the area of your life, beloved listener, where God has planned the Bethlehem, where God intends there to be a Calvary, where God means there to be a Pentecost, there's been controversy, and you know it. But all hallelujah, my praise the Lord, if somebody here could almost give three leaps for joy and say, yes, Mr. Preacher, that was true, but this morning on Saturday, April the 18th, 1959, I'm through! The battle's won, and God is on the throne, and Jesus is victorious, and I tell you, I've got a joy in my heart that I haven't known all my life. Is that true of someone here? Oh, I tell you, I think that God's mercy with the unbeliever is even outmatched with his, by his patience with his people.

I look back upon my life and think what a stubborn old Englishman I've been so many times in my dealings with God, and the amazing thing is his patience that he's never just put me on one side and said, all right, if you won't listen, be through, be finished. Oh, but he's been so tender. I can speak to you of today with a full heart about a love that will not let me go, a pressure to which David yielded.

Have you yielded to it? Second, the price which David paid. Now look, I've found this in my life, and I'm so glad that it's scriptural, because I find it here in this passage. No sooner do you give in on the real basic issue on your life, crowds of people will come round you and say, now listen brother, just take it easy.

Don't let this thing go too far. Don't, don't, don't be too extreme about it. Don't be fanatical about this.

And they'll want somehow to find a way by which the consequences of your brokenness might be made much more comfortable for you. And this is exactly what happened to David. The 18th verse tells us in this chapter that the angel of the Lord commanded the prophet to tell David that he should go and set up an altar unto the Lord in the threshing floor of Ornon the Jebusite.

In other words, sacrifice was got, had got to lead to worship. Surrender, the crisis, had got to lead to a moment and an attitude of worship. Now may I just say this to you very quickly in passing, that there is no crisis through which you may pass with God, I don't care how deep, that will stand you the test of 24 hours unless the attitude in the crisis becomes the attitude every moment of your life.

See, somebody telling me that I believe in a second blessing, yes I do, because I believe in a million. I've had a second, third, fourth, fifth, and lots more, and any day without one is a miserable day to me. But I want to tell you this, my friend, that if you say to me that you've entered a realm of grace and experience in the which puts you in a position where now there's no more to be done, you're in the wrong track altogether.

No crisis can ever come to you, and no word can come to you in heaven from this conference that will stand the test of five minutes unless the crisis moment becomes a life of worship. In the crisis I'm broken,

I've got to say broken. In the crisis of yielding to the pressure of the Holy Spirit, that's the end of me.

I start clinging like a little child, and I must go on clinging like a little child. And Jacob was to set up a malter in the floor, this threshing floor of Ornan. Well he went to find Ornan, of course here this inhabitant of Jerusalem was glad to meet him, and offered him the whole thing free.

Come on now David, I'll make it easy for you. You don't want to pay anything for this, you just take the easy road. Don't, don't, don't, don't pay all this money, it's too expensive, it'll cost you too much to go through with this.

You face this with God, that's okay, but now listen, just let's take this easy. I'll just do the providing, you just, you just sit back, here's your whole everything for the, for the altar, all easy for you. No, said David, no, verse 24, I will verily buy it for the full price, for I will not take that which is thine for the Lord, nor offer burnt offerings without cost.

Listen, where did this happen? Second book of Chronicles and the third chapter in the first verse tells us that it was on Mount Moriah, and that's a place in the Bible which is always associated with cost and with victory. It was at Mount Moriah that Abraham offered Isaac and gave him up to the Lord. It was there that Solomon built a temple.

It was there that Satan took Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple and tempted him. It was there that Jesus won the battle against the devil face to face. It was here that David paid the price of his burnt offering.

It's a wonderful time when you and I go, first of all, up Mount Calvary, and I imagine that this has been to many of you the Mount of Transfiguration, but say friend, have you tried to escape the Mount Moriah experience? Have you been there? The devil will tempt you to take the easy way out. Do you know what Satan always tries to do? He wants you to deal with secondary issues, with the fruits of something, not with the basic root of it all. He wants you just to deal with some other things, like that terrific, terrific statement concerning Herod in the New Testament, who when he heard John the Baptist preach, we're told, did many things.

Sure he did. Smoked a bit less, drank a bit less, cut out all sorts of things in his life were wrong, but the one basic thing in his life that was at the root of the whole wretched story of his failure, he refused to deal with. And one day he met Jesus face to face, and Jesus had nothing to say to him.

Have you found when you've been facing something pretty deep in your life that Satan has whispered to you about secondary issues, deal with this and that, but don't touch that? Just leave this one thing in your life, it won't do you any harm, you know, nobody knows about it. Just leave it there. You enjoy it, you know, a little bit of indulgence on the quiet, just leave that there.

Oh yes, quit smoking, fine, stop that. Stop using bad language, yes, do that. Get out of bad company, yes, clean yourself up, patch yourself up, do that, get, choose your right friends, do all that.

Ah, but the one deep-rooted thing that drives you to do all these other things, Satan says, leave it alone. I don't ask you to look into my face, but I do ask that you and I would look into the face of the Lord Jesus right now. Have you faced the real issue in your life? Have you? You know what it is, the thing you're thinking about right now.

Have you faced it? Have you been up Mount Moriah? Have you said to the Lord, I will not offer burnt offerings of that which cost me nothing? And if you've been through that, you've been torn in about 50 pieces, absolutely torn apart, because this is something that you have resisted God about for years and years. He's spoken to you about it over and over again. You've had your quiet time, you've been to church, you've been to conferences, you've stood up in response to invitations, you've come forward, course of time you've raised your hand, and the outcome of it has been you've gone back to reform a little bit, and to read a different type of book, and to watch television a little less frequently, or listen to your radio a bit less frequently, and you've cleaned up this bit of your life and cleaned up that, but all the time you have done that and excused yourself for dealing with the real thing, and you've allowed yourself to get away with this, and Satan has just said to you, well now you do all these things, look what a fine Christian you're becoming now, see, getting much better now, aren't you, really doing fine, you've quit smoking, haven't smoked for ages, and you can go around give your testimony and say, well praise the Lord, He's taken away the desire to smoke, I've got total victory there, isn't that wonderful, and everybody thinks you're grand, and all the time it's sheer hypocrisy, because in your soul there's a basic sin which you've cherished.

Oh God grant that He would take this congregation, the preacher and us all, up this Mount Moriah experience where we've yielded to the pressure, and Satan has not been allowed to tempt us to deal with secondary things, but by the grace of God, having faced the issue, fallen as it were before the Lord, we haven't gone out from that experience to be tripped up by the devil, and to allow him to put us off with dealing with some secondary issue. Brother, I want to suggest to you that there's a very big gap sometimes, a very big gap, and a very big difference between what happens at the moment that you responded to the message of the preacher, and in your soul you've been flat on your face before God, between what happens then, and what happens 30 minutes afterwards when you're alone. If the vows that I have always made, and you have made in public, if the response of the raised hand, if the response of the open surrender, the commitment to Christ, the coming forward of the meeting, had been followed by a congregation went out from a meeting like this with the hush of the Holy Ghost upon them, and they went back into their room, and down by their bedside, and they prayed, and pleaded, and trusted God for total victory.

I tell you there'd be a mighty movement of the Holy Ghost, but no sooner have I made the commitment, and stood up, no sooner have you done this, you've gone up the door, and a very fascinating alternative has presented itself, and in five minutes time the devil has undone all that you did in public. Beloved friends, I plead with you, as I would plead again with my own soul, as I think about how these things have happened in my own life in the past, I would pray God that here there may not only be the submission to total surrender, and commitment, and reduction as it were to ashes at Jesus' feet, but that somehow you might get out from a congregation, and in spite of all the loveliness of social conversation, you might get alone with God, and make the transaction complete on your face before him. Deal with the basic issue.

You don't deal with that in public, you deal with it in private. The price which David paid. May I just come to the other side of the picture quickly? The power which David received.

And the Lord answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering. Oh, I could hardly contend myself as I think about this, you know. Why, this, this is heaven's immediate answer.

Immediate answer, without any delay. In spite of all the years of rebellion and resistance. In spite of my pride.

In spite of the years of having turned away, and refused to face the issue. At the moment it faced, God is there with fire. He doesn't bargain with us, he doesn't put us on probation.

Oh no. Still the truth. It's still the truth.

Charles Wesley wrote, O thou who camest from above, a pure celestial fire to impart, kindle a flame of sacred love on the mean altar of my heart. I go to prayer meeting, and I listen to Christians, and I listen to them pray, O God, for Jesus' sake, give us Pentecost this week. I'm tempted to break in and say, my beloved Christian friend, if you would God, give God Calvary, Pentecost is inevitable.

The precious flame of God, that burns in the soul. The thing that gets you on the move to mission. The thing that gives you the authority and the unction with which these young folks spoke last night.

The thing that gives that sense of conviction that nothing can move you away from. The thing that gives you that sense of power in any situation, that you could stand in the power of God. This is not something that may happen, but something that must happen, because I tell you, it was sealed in blood by an everlasting covenant between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holiness.

Who for all time, until Jesus comes again, has covenant to give the fire of the indwelling Christ every fellow and girl who comes to him beaten, crushed, bankrupt, and broken. And the God who gives the fire is the God who can keep it burning. You've paid the price, have you? Claim this answer, the power, the power, the burning, the love, the grace, the strength, the enabling.

Claim it. It's your right because of Calvary. Don't spend your time raking around after that in the old life.

Raking it up and seeing how bad it is, or how good it is, and how you're getting on. Don't spend your time sort of raking around, looking how you are inside. You'll find nothing but sin, nothing but corruption, nothing but failure there.

But I tell you, friend, if in the name of the Lord Jesus, the Spirit of God has been pressing upon you so much that you've had to yield, and he's broken you under it, and you've paid the price, then step up to the throne of God and say, Lord Jesus, I claim the power to face the future. One last word and I'm through. The pressure to which David yielded, the price that David paid, the power that David received.

Oh, but you know, the most wonderful thing here, the peace that David enjoyed. Do you see it? Verse 27. And the Lord commanded the angel, and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereon.

You get the music of that verse? The sword in its sheath. The judgment was over, the battle was won, and the sword of God that had been drawn against this man for so long was now put back in its sheath. What a wonderful thing.

Oh, what a wonderful thing it would be if you and I left prairie this week, and in some heart where the sword has been against us for years, it's in its sheath now. Why? There's many another battle you're going to have to fight, but I tell you friend, you've been losing battle after battle in the past simply because the sword of God was against you. But when that sword is in its sheath, you go out to fight, and hallelujah, you go out to win.

You go out to win. It isn't as has been said today, that sin is impossible, but it is that sin is unnecessary. And by the grace of God, with his sword in its sheath, and the judgment of God no longer against you, you

go out under the authority of the Holy Ghost to win where hitherto you've been beaten.

Oh, just think of the difference, the recovery of lost ground that can happen in your life. Just think of it. If your children wandered away from God, friend, you yield to the Holy Spirit.

Watch that little life begin to blossom again. Everything seemed to be against you in your own home circumstances, and you absolutely staggered that your home could be like it is, even though it professes to be Christian. Yield to the pressure of God.

Pay the price on the real issue, and you go back with the sword of the Lord in its sheath, and the peace of God in your heart. And watch that home begin to recover lost ground. Watch the preciousness of it again.

Watch the love of God begin to be shed abroad in that precious family of yours. Watch it. Beloved pastor, have you found your deacons absolutely at loggerheads, and your congregation falling apart, and trouble hitting you everywhere, and things going wrong, and has it made you sour, sour? But today you've come to prairie, and you've faced the real issue.

Oh, you'll go back, and you'll see a wonderful knitting together again of love, and knitting together of the cords of love which were broken, and you'll see a little church begin to blossom. Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin. The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.

Peace, perfect peace, the future all unknown. Jesus we know, and he is on the throne. Let pray.

I don't ask for any open demonstration, but I do pray that the Holy Spirit may so have imprinted his word upon your heart, that your response will be made today, alone with him. That somehow the hush of the Spirit of God may fall upon this sanctuary, and upon this campus. And that this, the last great day of the feast as it were, that this may be a day of broken heart, of renewed life.

When the Lord begins to restore the years that the locusts have eaten, when the hardness is broken down, and Jesus is on the throne. Lord have mercy upon us, and for Jesus' sake send us out into the fight, and send us out to win. May each one of us today be able to look up into thy face, and see by faith the sword of the Lord in its sheath.

Victory. Lord may it be so, for thy name's sake. Amen.

The following was one of the radio broadcasts of the old-fashioned revival hour conducted by Charles E. Fuller. 2 Thessalonians chapter 1, verses 3 and 4. The Apostle Paul, in founding the church at Thessalonica, taught them thoroughly along the lines of basic doctrines of the Christian faith. In 1 and 2 Thessalonians especially, Paul stressed the doctrine of the second coming of Christ.

Now here briefly is what has happened. Paul preaching from the Old Testament scriptures such as Isaiah 13, Joel chapter 2, Amos chapter 5, that when the Lord would return to set up his glorious kingdom, it would be preceded by the day of the Lord, the day of untold suffering, intense persecution, and also the great tribulation and the manifestation of the man of sin. After Paul left Thessalonica, sufferings and great persecution came down upon the believers there.

False teachers arose, and taking advantage of the critical times, began to teach that the day of the Lord had passed, that all believers which had died would not have any part in the kingdom of God's dear Son. So while Paul was at Corinth, he heard of the situation at Thessalonica, and he penned 1 Thessalonians.

And in that epistle, Paul gave additional revelation on the doctrine of the Lord's return, namely, that there are and will be two stages to the Lord's return.

The first stage, the Lord coming for his own, 1 Thessalonians, and later, writing in 2 Thessalonians, the second stage, the Lord coming with his own. At the first stage, the dead in Christ shall arise first, and we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air. And then later, he comes with his own in the day of the Lord's fulfillment, as written in Isaiah and John and Amos.

Now, even after the Thessalonian believers had received such wonderful spiritual enlightenment, as seen in 1 Thessalonians, the believers continued to listen to the false teachers, and it appears that the believers began to lose interest in the blessed hope of the rapture of the dead in Christ and the living believers. Hence, Paul writes now, 2 Thessalonians, to quiet the hearts of the believers, to prove to them that the day of the Lord, with his awful fiery judgment against the ungodly, has not yet come to pass. Now, that's the theme.

And he gives two great events that must come to pass before the Lord returns with his own. So he said to them, in effect, believers of Thessalonica, don't be troubled in heart, shaken in mind. Two great events must come to pass before the day of the Lord takes place.

They're spoken of in 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2, verse 3, as follows. Here it is. Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day, the day of the Lord, shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.

So we have those two great events, the great apostasy worldwide, and the manifestation of the son of perdition, the man of sin, the antichrist, the world dictator, the lawless one, the son of iniquity. Let me repeat. Paul, it seems, is saying, believers, I tell you that the day of the Lord cannot come until these two events, the rapture of the believers in Christ, and also the apostasy, and the second coming, and then the manifestation of the man of sin.

Now please do not be troubled in mind. With this background in our minds, let us walk slowly and prayerfully through 2 Thessalonians. And as we walk through these three chapters, may our spiritual eyes be enlightened, our understanding be flooded with the penetrating beams of God's Shekinah glory, and thus be strengthened to meet the trials and the persecutions, for the Lord shall sustain us.

He is ever ready to open the floodgates of his marvelous grace to meet our every need, for his grace is sufficient, even to the hour of martyrdom, which some of you, now listening to my very voice, may be called upon to experience as the closing days of this hour come. 2 Thessalonians 1, 3, and 4. Now note the wording. It's so sweet, it's so beautiful.

We are bound to thank God, Paul writes, always for you, brethren, as it is meek, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity or love of every one of you all toward each other abounded, so that we ourselves glory in you, in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure. My, what beautiful words Paul wrote under inspiration. How he says, we are bound, verse 3. That is, while Paul was at Corinth, having so severely being tested himself and persecuted, he was so apprehensive for the believers of Thessalonica, that it seemed to him as though his very life depended upon their remaining steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

Paul had prayed in 1 Thessalonians 3, 12, for the Lord to make the Thessalonian believers to increase and abound in love one toward another. Again in the fourth chapter of 1 Thessalonians, verse 10, to increase more and more. So Paul says unto them, we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, because of your faith, that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity and love of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth.

Notice the wording, faith growing exceedingly. I wish it underlined those three words. Here is the secret of spiritual, of a true spiritual life.

Here is the secret that unlocks the good, the perfect and acceptable will of God. Herein lies the solution to all your spiritual problems, that your faith groweth exceedingly. Like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and cast into his garden, and it grew and waxed as a great tree with the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

Is your faith growing exceedingly? Where there is growth, there is life. Note Acts 6, 7. The word of God increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. Is your faith growing exceedingly? Now since faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, to have one's faith growing exceedingly, he must let the word of God dwell in him richly, that it be saturated with the word of God.

So when the incorruptible seed, the word of God, is sown in one's heart, he passes from death unto life. That seed then should be daily watered by the word of, of the water of life, and then it will begin to grow, first the seed, second the stalk, and then the fullness of the corn, some thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold. You mean to tell me that you lack faith, fellow believers? Well, what's the trouble? Are you praying for more faith? Asking others to help you increase your faith? Well, listen to me.

Go aside into your own bedroom, shut the door, and even if you need to, get down on your knees and read the word of God. Search the word, hide it in your heart, and meditate thereupon, and the first thing you know, the floodgates of the river of life will spring forth, and souls will be blessed. Happy is the man whose faith is growing exceedingly.

Oh, I see so many believers that are so skinny and so lean in the matter of faith. God wants us to abound abundantly, to meditate upon the word day and night, and become like a tree planted by rivers of water. His leaf shall never wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

Do you want to be happy, abounding, rejoicing always, even in the face of trials and testings, even in the face of having a loved one ill? I tell you, we need to come to the word. So Paul was happy for their example. Notice this, because then he speaks of their patience and faith in the face of persecution.

What about your faith and your patience? Oh, listen to me. The time is coming when the church of Jesus Christ is going to be purified. How? By terrible persecution.

For the righteous will suffer, as the church in the early days when it was founded suffered great persecution, many going to the stake. Listen, in the closing days, as the shadows of Antichrist become darker and darker, suddenly overnight persecution will arise. And in many sections of the land today, over the lands of earth, people are giving their lives as a witness, have given their lives as martyrs.

Don't think for a moment that you're going to heaven on an easy bed of roses. For in this world we shall have persecution, and shall have tribulations and trials and afflictions. And so Paul was happy for their

patience and faith.

Show me a church that is settled in this world with no vision, no concern for the lost, no troubles. I'll show you a church that is lukewarm, that needs to be revived by a visitation of the power of the Holy Spirit. Well, may God increase your faith.

Will you be of help to those about you? Will you be able to help one especially who may be weak in the faith? We all have the responsibility to be examples unto others, and to comfort them wherewith we are comforted. So Paul said, we are bound to thank God. We owe it as a debt to others to thank God always for you brethren as it is meet, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all towards each other abounded.

So that we glory in you in the church of God for your patience and faith in all your persecution and tribulations that ye endure. What kind of a Christian are you? And to you who are outside of Christ, I plead with you at the close of this broadcast to give your heart to him, and be ready for his coming, and count it all joy when tribulations and persecutions come, because God loves you, and he loves every, he scourges every son he receives, that's a sign that he loves you. You know that? Why? Because when Lot went out and warned his sons and sons-in-law, thought that he mocked, they no doubt said to him, what? You're living just like we're living in this same place, and you have got the faith to come and tell us to get out.

You came in here to sojourn, and now you're going to be a judge. I won't take that much notice, they won't take that much notice of me. I know it, I've had it said to me, when I was in the army, I shall never forget it.

No, not till I get to the Lord's judgment bench. What a Major once said to me, Jerry said, you're doing that, don't you know that you're sinning against my immortal soul. It wasn't the thing friends, that you and I would think much of perhaps, stumble that man, and he wouldn't listen to me.

If there's anything in your life which is doubtful, cut it out, cut it out, whatever it is, or nobody will listen to you. They'll smile, pass by on the other side, and you can't blame them. So friends, both the saint and sinner, this terrific story has a message.

But also friends, it has one last message. In the 16th chapter of Ezekiel, which I referred to at the beginning of our talk, I said that the prophet Ezekiel said that in the days when Jerusalem and her daughters, that's cities, were returning to their former estate, Sodom, and its daughters, towns, would return to its former estate. I can't tell you what a desolate hole it is down there, 1292 feet below sea level, amongst that blistering heat and burning salt lake.

You say, what people go down there for now doctors? Well they're down there all right. They're down there because that lake contains vast supplies of valuable potash, bromine, magnesium, and they're down there extracting it. One of the biggest potash works in the world.

And they're not only down there for that friends, they're down there boring for oil, because I believe they rightly concede that that great reservoir of oil, which once existed under Sodom and Gomorrah, because oil migrates. They haven't got any oil yet, but they've got something which is almost as valuable, and that's natural gas. A big field of natural gas down there.

And if they get natural gas down there, as they've already got, and oil, that place will be industrialized again. It's already a place on the map. I stayed the night there quite lately.

There are two or three small hotels there already. People go down there to bathe and that sort of thing. And also to see these terrific formations, great salt cliffs, 500 feet high, solid rock salt from top to bottom.

Wonderful formations down there. And they go down there to see and to bathe. And also as I said, these industrial plants are there.

The Bible is absolutely at work. It actually, as I say, prophesied a revival of the town of Sodom. I very foolishly admitted to post a postcard to my mother in Jerusalem from the post office down there, because if I had done so, I could have showed you a postcard with the stamp Sodom.

Sodom is back on the map. A tiny place you say, yes. The tiny seeds bring many large.

Jerusalem is coming back. These old towns are being rebuilt. Christ come, let us pray.

And now gracious God and loving father, we thank thee for recording these things. They're recorded as in samples for us, types, that we might follow the good and avoid the evil. And we do pray Lord for every one of us here who belongs to thee, that we may dwell on the mountains with Abraham and not in the cities of the plain with Lot.

Oh loving father, we realise that that accounts for the powerlessness of the witness of so many of us. And loving father, perhaps it is not being pointed out to them. So we do pray that we may not dwell there and also point out the dangers of remaining living in the world while believing in Christ.

And then Lord, for our friends who are not Christians, we realise that we are living in the days of Lot, when judgement fell. We are living in the days of Noah, when judgement fell. And no matter how men may dislike it, we do pray that we may warn them to flee from the rock, to flee to our Lord Jesus Christ, there to be forever with him when he comes to take us to be with him.

And we do thank thee Lord that not till the very last of thy children have gone will the disaster fall. But we do pray that we may not use this Lord in any way to be careless, but on the contrary, they realise that we must all stand before the judgment bench of Christ very soon to give an account of ourselves. Now loving father, we do thank thee that thou art looking down into the heart of each one of us here.

Thou seest what is in my heart, thou seest what is in the heart of each one here. And if there is any lingering looking back, thou seest it. We do pray Lord that in the words of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, we may all remember Lot.

Again we thank thee that there is a place of refuge in our Lord Jesus Christ, and there is a place prepared for us in eternity. I go to prepare a place for you Lord Jesus, thou canst say, and if I go I will come again and receive you unto myself. And where I am, there ye may be.

We thank thee for that. That's our hope Lord, in this dark and doomed world. Bless us each one Lord and unite us.

May all petty differences Lord and things which don't matter be ironed out from our hearts and may we unitedly go forward as a community and as individuals to use these last times for thy glory and the salvation of our friends around us. We ask it for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

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