

Holl-04 Absolute Overgave 1 of 2 (Absolute Surrender 1 of 2)

by Art Katz

Art Katz emphasizes the necessity of absolute surrender to the Spirit, highlighting the tension between flesh and spirit and the role of suffering in spiritual growth.

Duration: 1:18:10

Scripture: John 2:23

Topics: "Holland"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of approaching the word of God with reverence and a heavenly mindset. He warns against treating it as a mere lecture or taking notes without truly listening. The preacher highlights the significance of obedience to God's commands, using the example of failing in just one point of the law. He challenges the audience to examine their level of commitment and pursuit of perfection in their spiritual journey. The sermon concludes with a reference to Matthew 16, where Jesus asks his disciples about his identity, highlighting the need for a moment-by-moment diligence in walking in the spirit.

Transcript

Our hearts are grateful, Lord, for your precious work thus far. Of all that has come down to us from heaven. We pray for its continuance, my God.

That you shall have performed a perfect work. Let this morning's peace be fit in perfectly. Give us anointed and hearing ears.

And anoint this life for the speaking of it. May our understanding be opened. May we receive as it were light from heaven.

We don't know how to express our gratitude. That we can be so privileged a people as this. To have such a living God.

Who attends to us in this way. That we might be fashioned by Him. And represent Him in this earth.

Bless us this morning, my God. That we might be a blessing in the earth. Until the day of your coming.

In Jesus' holy name we pray. Amen. Before we read from Matthew 16.

I want to read a few familiar verses in Galatians, the fifth chapter. We all know them probably by heart. 5, 16 and 17.

This I say then. Walk in the Spirit. And you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

The cross is effectual. But it's not automatic. It's something that's done once and for all.

But needs moment and moment to be activated by our faith. Do you like the word walk? I don't know what's happening to me as I get older in the Lord. The more simple the thing is.

The more absolutely fundamental. The more foundational. The more ecstatic I become.

Imagine drooling and salivating over the word walk. To make a pun, it's so pedestrian. But it is also so inclusive.

Where can you get without walking? Not to the bathroom. Certainly not to the bedroom. Or to the place of meeting.

Or to the place of ministry. Walking is all inclusive. There's not an aspect of life and being that is not made possible by walking.

So when God says walk in the Spirit, He means walk in the Spirit. There's not a step that you dare take. That should not be in the Spirit and prompted by the Spirit.

And if you'll be that consistent to walk in the Spirit, you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Wouldn't it be wonderful if God had waved a magical wand over us last night? Say that again. Excuse me.

And we should never again be harassed by the problems of the flesh. We're made instantly spiritual. But that's not the way it is.

There is a continual tension until the day that the Lord shall take us out of the earth. Between the flesh and the Spirit. It requires continual choosing to ignore the claims of the flesh and to choose the way of the Spirit.

Art, have you got one word that will sum all that up? I do. Suffering. To choose the Spirit over the flesh is to suffer.

Because everything that is in the flesh is demanding and crying for its gratification. It is so attentive to the voice of the world. Come, lie with me.

But it says of Joseph, But he refused. He refused. He exercised his will and chose to deny the flesh and to walk in the Spirit.

And it cost him. It always does. That's the way of the cross, children.

That's the cross. It's the suffering of the denial of flesh that we may walk in the way that is contrary to the whole spirit world. That we may be in the world but not of it.

That we might be living in Holland. Our citizenship is in heaven. Consistent walking in the Spirit moment by moment will make you heavenly.

It will change your face. It will bring a new radiance. It will show where your true residence is.

All it requires is consistency. Continual right choosing moment by moment. It's only for lovers.

You can't do this out of some grim sense of obligation. Well, I guess I ought to. I guess I should.

I'm a disciple. You'll fail. There's only one motive that will compel you to pursue heaven.

That's where the Lord is. Because to do this in the flesh is to offend him. And to deny yourself in this moment is to please him.

And to trust him to be the overcomer in you in that moment. There's a war on between the flesh and the spirit. That's what the next verse says.

For the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. And these are contrary the one to the other. Nobody told me about this when I got saved.

Well, better you should learn about it later than never. This is not for sissies who can't take the tension of the conflict between flesh and spirit. This is not for sissies who want a conflict between the flesh and the spirit.

They want it all solved in one fell swoop, in one moment of time. That they might be relieved of the tension. But it is not so to be.

The life of a disciple in the earth is lived in a continual tension and a conflict between flesh and spirit. If he is going to be a superb representative of heaven he has chosen rightly, moment by moment. Isn't that what life is? It's the sum total of all our moments.

May we cherish them. May we love them. May we have the perspective of God Himself.

To recognize what is hanging in the balance in every moment's choosing. That we might walk consistently. That alone and nothing else is what it means to be spiritual.

Remember what it says of Moses? He chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season. And that's what it's all about. He chose to suffer.

Let's stop right there. Have you settled the issue? The issue of the cross is choosing to suffer. I don't want to make this sound masochistic.

What's wrong with cats? He's so occupied with suffering. We'll have to schedule some time for him on a psychiatrist's couch. There's something morose about suffering.

I believe we shouldn't be occupied with suffering. The key is to acknowledge the centrality of suffering. But not to be depressed about it.

But to rejoice for the privilege. But not to be depressed about it. Of preferring to suffer with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season.

Art, these are hard and radical alternatives. Is there not anything in between? No. There's nothing in between.

It's the one or the other. It's a continual choosing. There's a Christian mystical poet who wrote this beautiful line.

He said, what is bliss in heaven bliss, ecstatic joy is first pain on earth. Let's settle the issue, fellas. We're pilgrims and sojourners.

This is not our home. We're passing through. This is an inhospitable earth for those who believe.

It's a world which is at enmity with God. It is ruled over by the prince of darkness. Its values and its goals are contrary to heaven.

It is based on darkness and hiddenness and conceit and the like. It appeals to the lusts and the ambitions of men. It exalts man over God.

It is contrary to heaven. How must it be then for those who represent heaven in such a place? Painful. But if they love him it takes the sting out.

They're willing to suffer with the people of God. It's only for a season that they might eternally have bliss with him. The Christian who falls is one who does not understand these things and is not prepared for the tension that he must face between flesh and spirit.

And as you walk consistently in the spirit you'll find that flesh has less and less power of appeal to you. The things of heaven become increasingly real. The delight for the things that are invisible far exceed that which is visible and tangible.

In a word you have your citizenship in heaven if you be led of the spirit. It's more painful at the beginning because we're not used to such choices. Our whole previous life has been lived so indulgently.

And indeed what characterizes Christianity in the modern world and especially in America today is a continuing self-indulgence. And they shall be unprepared for what the realities of this age shall be as we come into the final hour. So these are just the preliminary statements.

And now in Matthew 16 we'll examine an actual episode that we might better understand what this walking in the spirit means. And how much it is a moment-by-moment matter that requires the diligence of love. It begins in the 13th verse of the 16th chapter when Jesus asks his disciples, Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? You know how men are full of opinions.

You're Jesus Christ's superstar. You're the inspiration for rock'n'roll musicals. There's a whole cheap Jesus culture which you have originated.

This question now as then is the question. Who that man say he is, is the question. There's no greater question for the contemplation of men anywhere than this.

And so they gave him a variety of answers that men of their generation were giving. Some say you're John the Baptist or Elijah or Jeremiah. And then the Lord in the precious way that he has not content with general academic questions.

Put his finger right in their chest. Who do you say that I am? That's what I like it. I'm a former academician. Two university degrees and a teaching career. But I'm not excited for general abstract and academic questions. But I love it when the Lord becomes intensely personal.

The specific God speaking to specific men specifically. And your faces have brightened immeasurably from last night. To the degree to which you specifically responded.

Who do men say that I am? Who do you say that I am? Do you think that you'll come to that answer once and for all? Be careful if you think you have. We should never come to the end of this question. Who do you say that I am? Oh, we can use the technical descriptions.

Messiah, Savior, Lord, Healer, Baptizer. But does that exhaust what he is? May this be a living question for us. One to which we never come to the end.

But one that we are passionately pursuing. That we may be able to say who He is. And to the degree that you shall see Him.

So also shall you see yourself. These two are always related together. You'll see that in just a moment.

Well, of course, who is going to answer the question first? Our friend Peter. I know, I know. The Son of the Living God.

He's like a kid in the classroom waving his hand in the teacher's face. A for the day. You answered correctly.

And that's not a light thing. Because Jesus said, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona. This is the beginning of blessedness.

Recognizing who He is. Blessed art thou. You'll not be able to bless mankind.

To any greater degree. Then you can answer that question. If you can answer it only technically.

If you're just merely a phraseological question. If you call Him Savior and Redeemer because you know correctly that that's true. But you have not in fact experienced the depths of His salvation and redemption.

You'll only be a blessing in that proportion. Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona. It's the beginning of true blessedness.

Would to God that my Jewish people could come to this recognition. That's why I'll not let them get away with anything. Oh art, I think that Jesus was a wonderful teacher.

I say, what do you want, a medal? Or some will even go further. I think He was even a prophet. I tremble for you then the more.

That you're willing to acknowledge that. And you have not fallen on your face before Him. Who exercised all of the prerogatives of God.

The privileges and the authority of God. And forgave Him their sins. And allowed Orthodox Jews to fall at His feet and cry out, my Lord and my God.

And He did not rebuke them. For you, your eternal trembling will be the worst. You think that you're complimenting the Lord by acknowledging He's a prophet? If you'll not acknowledge all that He is.

Your partial truth is a lie. For which you shall eternally wail. For the truth is the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Or it's not the truth. Don't you let my Jewish people get away with it. And the Dutch are just as guilty.

With their little sentimental partial acknowledgment of who Jesus is. And what shall we say about the body of Christ at large? Who technically use the word Lord. But have not come to the reality of it in point.

All of this is a betrayal of the question. Who do men say that I am? And who do you say that I am? Blessed art thou. It's the beginning of blessedness.

And your blessedness will increase. And your capacity to bless others. In proportion as you can answer this question.

In spirit and in truth. For flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. That's the key right there.

It comes by revelation from heaven. And that's the source of any true knowing. Can I just read you something quickly from the Gospel of John? I stumbled on it the other day and it caught my attention.

It's the last two verses of the second chapter of John. That when Jesus was in Jerusalem at the Passover and the feast day, many believed in his name when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them.

Because he knew all men. For he needed not that any should testify of men. For he knew what was in men.

They saw his evident miracles. A demonstration of his power. And they believed on him.

For what they saw with their natural eyes. But he didn't trust himself unto them. He did not commit himself unto them.

Because there's believing and believing. And that's not true believing. Only what Peter saw is believing.

That which is revealed from heaven by the Father. I wonder of these two categories of believing. How many have come to the acknowledgement of Jesus through the revelation from the Father in heaven? And how many from natural things that they could not deny or contradict? Jesus will commit himself only to one of these two.

And only one of these two can stand until the end of the age. Those who have received the revelation from heaven. That's why I'm a little reserved about modern day ministries to the Jewish people.

See, look what it says here in the prophets. And see what it says here in the New Testament. Jesus is the fulfillment of these things.

I guess that's right. I can't deny it. That's what it says.

Where do I sign up? Yeah, I'll accept that. They're saved. In a sense.

But they're never converted. They're Jewish problem children thereafter. And a nuisance to their congregation.

Because you cannot come to Jesus by virtue of biblical bookkeeping. By reason of? By reason of biblical bookkeeping. Only by the revelation which comes from the Father in heaven.

Not by the will of man. Or flesh or blood. But of God.

The Lord is just beginning to open my understanding about this. Because I have put usually so much premium on the will of man. I have not sufficiently appreciated the sovereignty of God.

There was a suddenly that came for Paul. A light from heaven. Not when he wanted it.

When God chose to give it. The angel came to Mary in the sixth month. Not a moment before nor after.

How exquisite is the timing of God. How much do we need to have our appreciation increased for that. I think it really gets to the heart of this whole egocentric Christianity that characterizes the modern world.

It has put the emphasis on the wrong thing. Why don't you accept Jesus? Don't keep him waiting any longer. As if the issue is going to be decided by a piece of dust.

Well, I'll think about it. I don't know if I'm ready yet. Mere man keeping God waiting.

Isn't it really more the other? See if it shall please God. To give you light from heaven. That you might believe.

Plead with him. That your moment shall come. For it is not with you.

But it is with him. And when it does come from him. You shall be eternally grateful.

But if it came from you. It shall affect your attitude for the rest of your Christian life. It shall put the premium on man.

And not on God. But of him. And through him.

And to him. Are all things. To whom be glory.

Forever. We need to have our vision adjusted. Our face needs to be adjusted a little bit.

Flesh and blood did not reveal this to you. But my Father who is in heaven. The same was true for John the Baptist.

He grew up with Jesus as a cousin. They probably played together as kids. You don't have to be clever to see that this Jesus was an unusual child.

Who at the age of twelve was confounding the doctors in the temple. I don't think that he was ever one of the boys. He always had an unusual disposition about him.

John himself was filled with the spirit from his mother's womb. And Johannes himself was filled with the spirit of the time that he was in the lap of his mother. And yet, despite all those factors, the identification of Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God had to wait for that which came in the waters of baptism in Jordan.

He upon whom you shall see the heavens open and the dove, the Spirit of God, descend as a dove. He is the one. This is not to be based on your natural identification.

This glorious thing is not going to rest on your natural ability or perception. But when you see the heavens open, this God is so single-minded about heaven. He must be a terrible egotist.

He insists that heaven be the origin of everything. Everything. He will not allow anything to originate from the earth.

Or from natural man. Everything from above. How single-minded he is.

Are you? Let that question be like the shot that was heard around the world. Are you heavenly-minded? Are you that insistent that every single thing has its origin from heaven? That you will never even so much as for a moment condescend to that which is from the earth. That's what Paul meant when he said, we have our citizenship in heaven.

Can you imagine what such a church would be? Whose eyes are always set on that which is above. Continually looking up to Him from whom cometh their salvation. Despising that which comes from the earth.

Will not employ carnal means. Will justly be suspicious of their own natural man, their own humanity. Merely because something sounds good.

Merely because something looks good. Because it looks like it's going to work. Because it looks like it's going to work.

Because it brings results. Because it looks like it's going to serve the purposes of God. That is not a reason to employ it.

It's filthy expediency. And that's a word I don't care how long it takes to find. We're going to get the Dutch word for that.

What's expediency? Anybody know? Expediency. Doing that which is convenient. Because it serves the purpose.

And brings the desired effect. Like Art, you have just described contemporary Christianity. Exact.

Very expedient. Whenever it serves the purpose. You don't have to be too scrupulous whether it really came from God or not.

Listen, it serves the purposes of the kingdom. Blesses the people. Sends them home happy.

Increases the numbers. Gives us a nice program. Good offerings.

I'm sure God blesses it. I hope that such an attitude is not with any one of you. But that you have resolved with utter determination.

Moment by moment. Despite the seductive and powerful opportunities that are on the earth. Even that which seems to advance the purposes of God.

Not to employ it. Except that it has had its origin in heaven. This and nothing less than this.

Is walking in the Spirit. The time I get finished with you guys. You'll wonder if you were ever saved.

That's how little we have understood. What fidelity to the Holy Spirit means. And the quality of obedience that God is after in His saints.

And how dense and how dull we are. And have so little discernment of the things which are spiritual. And have the origin from heaven.

And how little we have understood. That the heart of priestliness. Is caught up in one word.

Wake upon the Lord. Wake in Jerusalem. Is not God's one time prescription for that generation.

It is eternal and timeless counsel. But I'm too young. I'm too impatient.

I finished my three month course. I'm ready to go now. I want to do, do, do.

The cross. Bring that impatience to the cross. Wait for your thirtieth year.

No priest ever began before that. Until the impatience of youth was burned out in him. Lest he presume upon God.

And initiate some course of action out of his own impatience. And miss the spirit of God entirely. Are you listening to every word? Are you hanging on to every syllable? Do you think that this is a mere lecture? I tell you it is very instruction out of heaven.

It's coming down from above. Syllable by syllable. And we better not approach it with an earthly mentality.

With a lecture hall mentality. With a note taking mentality. But give it the reverence that it is due.

God is wanting to instruct your souls. You who have been called to the end of the age. The last days.

The final showdown. In this confrontation between kingdoms of light and darkness. It's not a time for spiritual amateurs.

Or hot shot disciples. Or half-baked believers. But seasoned.

Mature. In their thirtieth year. Priestly.

Spiritual. Men and women. Who are so heavenly minded.

That they despise earthly things. And are profoundly suspicious. And distrust their own humanity.

They are not satisfied with that which is merely good. They are single-eyed. They are passionately insistent.

On that which is perfect. Only. And will not condescend to anything less.

Art. Who is sufficient for these things? Only one. Do you love? See how important that transaction is at the cross? Do you see why the pitiful fleshly thing that we are? Even with our best good intentions.

Is hopelessly inadequate. There is only one answer. His life.

The son of obedience. And nothing else. We need all of us to come to this.

That we might say with Paul. In absolute truth. For me to live is Christ.

Nothing less will suffice. Only this can fulfill the Scripture. Be ye perfect.

As your father in heaven is perfect. Holy as he is holy. It's an impossible commandment.

No amount of determination can fulfill it. There is no disciple superb enough to fulfill it. Remember what Jesus said to someone who tried to pay him a compliment? Why callest thou me good? There is no man good.

There is no man good. But God. For of him.

And through him. And to him. Are all things.

To whom be glory forever. Amen. Has he gotten your amen? At the cross of Christ Jesus.

To him be glory forever. No glory for us. Because from him.

Through him. And to him. Are all things.

You've gotten some blessing from me? You've gotten it from him. You think that I have something impressive? Only to the degree that he is my life. You like this instruction? It comes from heaven.

You think I have some natural courage above all this? I'm a coward like all of us. But I have extraordinary boldness in him. I want to encourage you.

To cleave to that cross. And not just to bring there your defects and your vile sins. But all that is flesh.

Even that which is talented. Which you sought to employ for the kingdom. For the flesh profiteth nothing.

Art, that's an absolute statement. An absolute God gave it. When shall we believe him absolutely? Totally.

Hundred percent. At the altar. It's all simple.

But we stubbornly resist it. Just like King Saul. God said, go and destroy the Amalekites.

The prophet Samuel came to the king. Hear thou the voice of the words of the Lord. Don't just listen to the words.

They're glorious enough. Hear thou the voice of the words of his speaking. Don't let a syllable fail.

Catch the intonation of his voice. The urgency of his speaking. The urgency, the imperativeness.

Because what he's calling you to do is absolute and total. Utterly destroy and spare that. Utterly.

Isn't that a clear statement? Utterly. That is a lovely word. It makes me drool.

Utterly. Know what Watchman Neese says? At the perilous end of the age. In this final conflict with all kinds of spirits and darkness and devious things.

Excuse me. Me too. In the end of the age.

In this perilous conflict of spirit. Only one kind of Christian shall prevail. That one who has an absolute utterness toward God.

I remember when I came into full-time ministry. Out of the teaching profession. I was being trained to be a missionary to the Jews.

And the man who was in charge of this program was very indignant and irritated about what he called 100 percenters. Of course I was a young believer. And he was an impressive authority.

So I thought he was right. He asked these 100 percenters. These fanatics.

Who think that you can be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect. You gotta watch out for people like that. They have a strange gleam in their eyes.

They're very susceptible to error. And self-righteousness. I mean we all understand.

We're only human. God knows we're only human. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

I've come to respect 100 percenters. And I don't think that God will employ anyone else. He can't stand those that are lukewarm.

And if you're not hot or cold He'll spew you out of your mouth. Revival is not just to be a periodic breakthrough of God. But the continual condition of the church ever.

Ever burning for God. Ever looking to heaven. Ever claiming to the Spirit.

Ever despising the things that are from the earth. Total obedience. In its utterness toward God.

That is staggering. And contrary to the whole spirit of this church. You know what my students used to say to me every school year when the semester began? Mr. Katz.

What's the minimum amount that I need to do in order to get by? That's the American motto. Get by. Get by.

Have you thoroughly repented? And been converted? From that attitude? Or in the shallowness of your conversion? Have you brought the spirit of that into the kingdom walk? And you're still getting by. You have no insistence upon being perfect. You don't expect it.

You don't even desire it. And therefore you don't pursue it. And therefore you don't attain it.

Go and utterly destroy and spare not. Men and women. Infants and sucklings.

Oxen and sheep. Camels and donkeys. Talk about obedience.

Well Lord. I can understand that these malachites need to be wiped out. Their cup of iniquity is full.

Their filthy Canaanite practices cannot go on another day. We recognize that we need to be the instrument of your judgment. But infants and sucklings.

Those little babies. Well Lord. They're innocent.

We can put them in a children's home. And teach them Judaism. And grow them up in the faith.

Utterly destroy and spare not. All flesh. The men and the women.

And the infants and the sucklings. All. Okay Lord.

But the camels and the sheep. And the oxen and the ass. And we're going to raise my sword over a lamb.

Who looks at me with that wide-eyed innocence. And he goes, bear. Lord.

Surely there's nothing evil about these animals. It's not for you to reason about. To make you of mental discriminations.

Or to adjust the total requirement of God. According to the basis of your more exalted reasoning. When God says all.

He means all. You know that that was the end of King Saul's reign. He destroyed the Malachites.

But he spared the best of the sheep and the oxen. To make a sacrifice unto the Lord. But it says that the prophet Samuel wept all the night.

Because there's something in God's sight more precious than sacrifice. It's obedience. And if it's not total.

If it's not perfect. It's not obedience. It's rebellion.

He said because you have rejected the word of the Lord. But Lord I'm not rejecting the word. I've done most of what you've asked.

If you've not obeyed all his words. If your obedience is only partial. It's total rejection.

This is a heavenly statement. And a heavenly truth. Contrary to the spirit of the world.

You want to get to the Hall of Fame in America? The what? The Hall of Fame. It's a place for great athletes. And you've come up to bat ten times.

And you've gotten three or four hits. You're a candidate for the Hall of Fame. Four out of ten is terrific.

What shall we say about nine out of ten? Overwhelmingly impressive. From the earthly point of view. From the heavenly point of view.

It's putrid. James it says that if we fail in one point of the law. We have failed in all.

But Lord I've been obedient 99 times. Just for this little one tiny thing. That I've refused to do.

Look how consistently I've been obedient just till now. Know how Finney explains that? He says you might just have agreed with God 99 times. That what he required you wanted also to do.

But on the hundredth time. He required something that was contrary to your deepest self-interest. And that you could not and would not do.

And that revealed what your true spiritual condition was all the while. A disguised rebellion. That always stands in judgment above the word of God.

Reserving for yourself the final veto power. Of whether you will obey or not. How many of us play that game with our elders? Or with our husbands? Yeah we're submitted.

So long as we agree. But we don't understand. True submission is when you don't agree.

Even in what is required from you may well be wrong. Yet are you required to obey. Dear children.

You believe about a kingdom of heaven on earth? As present reality? Well I'm not talking about some distant ethereal thing after we die. I'm talking about why kingdom come. In the earth.

As it is in heaven. Do you believe that? Are you laboring for that? Because it's my opinion. I think it's also the Lord's.

But until that kingdom comes. We have no evangelistic message for the world. Because the apostolic cry was this.

Repent! For the kingdom of heaven is at hand. It's visible, you can see it. Here it is, a tangible reality.

I will not call the world to repentance again. Until we shall have such an actual kingdom to show. Do we have such a kingdom? Or kind of a loose band of general believers.

Agreeing together for the moment. For the purpose of mutually using the accommodations. But full deeply of self will.

Each man doing what is right in his own sight. And only momentarily condescending for the convenience of the hour. Going along together for a while.

Forgetting the scriptures entirely. That unto us a child is given. Unto us a son is given.

And the government shall be upon his shoulders. Is your government upon his shoulders? Are you in the right place for the wrong reasons? And God never asked you to come? You thought it would be a good idea. After all it's better than the other alternatives.

And people spoke highly of the school. And there are benefits to be had from the program. And so by such earthly reasonings as that.

You made a decision. Which had nothing to do with heaven. Your government was not upon his shoulder.

It was upon your own. It may agree with God's will for you. But you didn't come for the right reasons.

And for that you need to repent. Can you see how desperately there needs to be a repentance? For the believers first. For the kingdom of heaven to be at hand.

Lord we are deeply self-willed. We've taken such liberties with you. We've presumed upon you.

We've brought our earthly and worldly mentalities into the kingdom. And didn't realize how absolute a God you are. And given you a word, a kind of a title.

The attention it requires. And given you a word, the attention and the obedience it demands. And given you a word, the attention and the obedience it demands.

We have brought our earthly mentalities into the kingdom. A kind of a more or less maybe approximate. I guess so.

Sounds good. Why not? Seems to be for the purposes of God. What else shall we do? Get by.

But we have not understood what an absolute God is requiring. An absolute obedience. To his will.

Well Art, that would be very demanding. If it's to be revealed from heaven. How long will it take before he reveals it? That's his business.

Will you wait for the revelation? Yeah, but the registration begins in October or February. I don't give a rap what the earthly requirements are. If you'll go to that school with that mentality.

You'll get only the most minimal benefit. Because you bring your rebellion with you. You bring your self-will and your impatience with you.

An impatience. An unwillingness to wait. Because your self-gratification is more important than obedience to God.

And you wonder why you have continuing problems. And you wonder why you have continuing problems with lust. That's why.

You haven't asked Lord what you have for me to do. And not to move until he'll answer. Even if it kills you.

Because you love him so much. That obedience to him is much more important than your own gratification. You'll stay by the brook and be fed by the ravens.

Even until the stream dries up. But Art, we've got common sense. We must make some other preparation.

We've got to find some other source of supply. Elijah never moved. by such reckoning as that.

He would prefer to perish by a stream that had dried up. And he should initiate out of his own skull the next course of action. He never went to a school of discipleship.

Only the Lord's school. The school of obedience. And God used this one man to confront an entire generation and bring it on its face before God in repentance.

He did not move until the word of the Lord came unto him, saying Arise and get thee to Zarephath at Zidon. For I have commanded a widow woman there to feed thee. So he arose and went and did according to the word of the Lord.

He didn't live by streams. He didn't live by circumstances. He didn't live by human logic and reason.

He lived by the word of God. And there's no other way than that. He waited for that.

He'd rather die than to move without that. And that's what walking in the spirit requires. It's an obedience unto death.

Or it's not an obedience at all. If you're still clutching some flesh, if you want to spare the best of the sheep and the oxen, Lord, can I save my talents? Can I save this? Can I employ this? If you have not come with an utterness of total obedience to God, to utterly destroy and spare not, you'll have the kingdom torn from

you. And that's exactly what has happened.

The kingdom has been torn from you. Oh, we have our programs. We have our institutions.

We have our churches. But we have not the kingdom. Art, what is the place of utterly destroying and spare not? It's the cross of Christ Jesus.

How will I know if I have come there in fact? In total utterness toward God. And have utterly destroyed and spared not. And laid the axe to the root.

It'll show. Your faces. The brightness of your faces.

And the radiance of your countenance. And the deep peace in which you live your life. And the wonderful inward rest that you have.

The absence of all agitation and restlessness. And the enormous fruitfulness that accompanies your life and activity. And the freedom from harassment and problems of the flesh.

You know what Saul said to the prophet when he came the next day? I have obeyed the commandments of the Lord. I did most of what was required. But the prophet had wept all the night.

Because the prophet alone sees as God sees. He said, what then is the lowing of the oxen which I hear as a bleat? He said, what then is the bleating of the sheep? Are you obedient? You've come to the cross? What's this noise that I hear? What's this darkness in your face? What's this evidence of compromise in your spirit? And why is your eye not single? There's an evidence. It's the noise of the sheep and the oxen.

That there's some flesh that has not been utterly destroyed. It was the best in your sight. But that's not how God measures it.

Utterly destroyed and still not. If the cross is anything, it's a place of total death. Or it's nothing.

Can you think of a more hideous crime that we should make of that cross a plastic thing, a certain kind of shabby and shallow doctrine and wear the symbol of it around our necks and presume to celebrate it while our lives are full of destruction and the lowing of the oxen and the bleeding of the sheep? There's an utterness toward God that God is seeking in his people especially for those who make up this last generation. I picked up this magazine from your book room. It has a beautiful title, Absolute.

It's a word that drives the world to a fury. The world can't stand this word. Well, everything is relative.

You can't say that something is a sin. It depends on the circumstances. If it's love, it doesn't matter what you do.

It's relative to circumstances. You can't say murder is wrong. Absolute.

It's a plumb line from heaven. Here's the definition that is given in the dictionary. Perfect.

Complete. Whole. Not mixed.

Pure. Not conditional. Unrespected.

Positive. Certain. Definite.

Actual. Not dependent on anything else. When God will have one such man, through him he shall bring fire from heaven.

That shall bring a backslidden generation on its face. One such man, who has such an utterness toward God, to follow him. Absolutely.

It's painful. It's suffering. Your eyeballs are watching the stream dry up.

Your fleshly carnal mind is racing over time. It's thinking of all kinds of clever solutions for your predicament. Your mind is always wanting to be the primary organ.

And it's loud and claimant and strident. And despite all of these distractions, things that can be seen and things that can be felt, or things that we can think about, there is a still, small voice. Still and small.

Can you hear it? Only if you have been schooled in such obedience. It's for lovers only, who wait just for his whisper. He doesn't have to shout.

He doesn't have to command. In fact, if you shall love him passionately, in a bridal way, if he is your all, he doesn't even have to say. His gesture, the mere intimation of his spirit, and you rush to delight him.

You'll not learn that at a desk. I'm not disparaging anything in your school. I'm not minimizing anything in your school.

It's good and it's needful. But it's only a point of beginning. What I'm talking about goes far beyond.

What I'm talking about is heavenly. It's not for mechanical disciples. It's for passionate lovers of God, who are made upon him, even for the faintest intimation of his will.

It's amazing the authority that such ones have. It shall not rain nor dew, but according to my word. And it did not.

Assemble all Israel before me on Carmel and the false prophets. And they did. Then came the ultimate moment.

The false prophets have failed with their sacrifice. They leaped and danced and were frantic and nothing happened. Their cheap religion brought nothing.

And you can multiply the hecticness and nothing will happen. Come nigh unto me, Elijah. To me, God's man.

And he set up his sacrifice and watered it with repentance. And then came the ultimate moment. Lord, if I had done these things according to thy will, where does it say that the Lord said, do that? And the Lord said, get thee to Zarephath.

I have commanded a widow woman. Here it doesn't say that the Lord said. Maybe it was not even so much as a still small voice, but the faintest intimation of his will.

That's exactly how I am proceeding with you, session by session. I am proceeding with you, session by session.

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