

Adam and Eve & the Fall

by A.W. Tozer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing and responding to God's presence and voice in our lives, and the consequences of hiding from Him due to sin.

Duration: 47:05

Scripture: Genesis 3:8, Exodus 3:4, Psalm 19:1, Isaiah 6:8, Matthew 6:33, John 10:27, Revelation 3:20

Topics: "The Fall"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the different voices that we encounter in life. He mentions the harsh voice of duty, the accusing voice of our conscience, and the voice of fear that permeates the world. However, he emphasizes that there is another voice, a gentle and inviting voice, that calls us to come to Jesus Christ and leave behind the foolishness of sin. The preacher believes in a friendly heavens and a seeking presence of God, and encourages the listeners to come to God's side and listen to His friendly voice.

Transcript

In the book of Genesis, the third chapter, I read a few verses. It said the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, as God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden.

And the woman said unto the serpent, Yea, ye may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden. That of the fruit of the tree which is in midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.

For God doth know that in a day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened. And ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and the tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed piglets together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.

And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him, Where art thou? Now, the setting of the little message tonight. Here was the perfect pair, Mr. and Mrs. Universe.

The perfect pair dwelling in the perfect environment. And then came the disobedience when, as Milton said, in an evil hour she stretched forth her hand, and took of the fruit, and did eat, and gave unto her husband, and he did eat. And the fall came, that great moral disaster that theologians call the fall.

The scientists deny it ever happened, but everybody that has the sense he was born with knows it happened, because the debris is still in his own heart. Now, here they were, this beauty pair, bowed down with care. And God appeared.

The Lord God was walking as if he didn't know what had happened. He didn't know, that is, he walked around there as if he didn't know, but he knew all right. And this beauty pair hid from the presence of God.

Now, tonight, I hope I may be forgiven, I hope the engineer may be forgiven, that he doesn't take that tweak out of my voice. If it ain't fair, brother, it just ain't fair, you're putting it there with your carrot. I hope I may be forgiven tonight if I knew some of the same basic elements that went into last night's sermon, and I do it without hesitation or apology, only with an explanation.

So when you hear it, you won't say the old man is tripping, he's repeating himself. But at the cost of being repetitious, let me say that there are certain truths that keep recurring throughout the entire Bible, throughout all Christian theology, throughout all hymnology, throughout all the great sermons of this century. Certain simple truths, not very many, half a dozen maybe, or we're expected to say ten or a dozen, no more than that.

They keep recurring, all this. Like the primary colors in a painting. You see, all colors are made up out of a few colors.

All the various shades that you see everywhere are compounded out of very few colors. Some say three, some say five, some say seven. They're called the primary colors, and if you gazed upon the most beautiful garden in the world with a hundred kinds of flowers in all of their beauty, you would see only five or at most seven colors there compounded.

You wouldn't recognize those colors, you would stand breathless in the presence of this wonderland of shades of color, and yet all those shades are made out of those half dozen or less colors. Now it is so that everything that can be said ever from this platform, every truth that ever can be taught by any Bible teacher in the world, there are certain primary colors that make up the painting, certain basic truths which are woven in as ingredients in the truth. And one of those basic truths, of those primary colors, is what we call the divine eminence.

I have quoted before in your presence, for I very frequently quote it to warm my own heart and my congregation as well, I have quoted what the old archbishop said about God. He said, God is above all things, and beneath all things, and outside of all things, and inside of all things. He is above, but he's not pushed up.

He's below, but he's not pressed down. He's outside, but he's not excluded. He's inside, but he's not confined.

He is above all things, pre-guiding, and he's beneath all things, sustaining, and he's outside of all things, embracing, and he's inside of all things, too. Now that's the eminence of God as stated by Prince Theologian. And I rather like it, brother.

That puts God where you are, and that's what I love. Now, that is one of the primary colors, the eminence of God, that God is here. I can't think of any truth that I could assert or declare that would have any more potential glory and good for you tonight than just to remind you of the eminence of God, that God is here.

Old David celebrated the eminence or the omnipresence of God. He said, God is every place. He said, if I hide in the darkness, God's there, and if I go into the light, God's there, and if I go up into heaven, God's there, and if I even go down into hell, even, I'll find God.

Every place I can't escape from God. And then Solomon, you'll remember, celebrates it. He said, God said to Solomon, am I God far off? Or said the one with the old testament, am I God far off and not a god in thy hands? And David said that in him we live and move and have our being.

God is here, and that is the most wonderful and revolutionary fact that I could announce to you tonight. It's worthy of the angel of the annunciation, that there is an invisible but real presence here tonight, pressing down upon us. And this great reality is the absolute that gives meaning to all other meanings.

If you take that fact out of human consciousness or human thought, you have pulled the kingpin down out of the arch, and all of human thought will tumble to the ground. Now, this presence is the seeking presence. It says that Adam heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.

And this was not before the fall, this was after the fall. This was not among archangels, but with two sinners, and he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And this was after the shameful collapse of their moral lives.

God knew they had sinned, and he wanted them to know that he knew. So he appeared, and there was a voice there. A schoolmarm could, I suppose, find grammatical fault with the verse here.

The Bible has a wonderful way of breaking all the rules, and I rather enjoy it myself because I've been a rule-breaker since I can remember. It says here that they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. Now, there isn't a teacher of English anyplace in Pennsylvania that would give a kid an F on that, because it said they heard the voice of the Lord walking.

And of course they didn't hear the voice of the Lord walking, but they heard the voice of the Lord who was walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And they shook that back to poor little Junior and said, Who was in there? I'll flunk you. But thank God for the good old King James Version and the good old Bible that just says it, and then you either like it or else something happens to you.

It says here that there was a presence, that God was there, and there was a voice. A presence and a voice. If I only had some way of rubbing that into you, like an alcohol rub, if I could get that rubbed into your brain, there is a presence, there is a voice.

Not my presence, not my voice, not Copp's presence, not his voice, not Brother Thomas' presence, not his voice, but a presence and a voice. In the cool of the day, here in Bethel against the hillside, there is a voice, and I'm happy to tell you that it's a friendly voice. I preach a friendly heaven, ladies and gentlemen.

I never have been able to get righteously wrought up and frightfully and gloomily indignant with the human race. Of course we're a bunch of sinners, of course we are, and unless we repent, we'll all likewise perish. But I have never been able to get any white knuckles from squeezing that fish out, reminding people they were going to hell.

I have believed in a friendly heaven. I believe that the blood of the everlasting covenant has swept the last vestige of antagonism out of the sky, and that God is on the side of the man that'll come unto God's side. And that the voice that's sound from heaven is a friendly voice, and the presence unseen that is here tonight is a seeking presence, a seeking presence and a friendly voice.

Now, there are lots of voices in the world. There's the hard voice of duty. I remember hearing of one Englishman that said he thought he'd commit suicide.

He said, I am so sick of just living. He said, you get up in the morning and you put on your socks. And then he said, you run around a while and at night you come and take your socks off.

Then he said in the morning, you put on your socks. He said, I'm so sick of taking off my socks and putting on my socks. He said, I just want to die.

Well, all that had happened to him was that he'd sort of made putting on his socks and taking them off a symbol of duty. There were things that were pressing in upon him and forcing him to do. The alarm clock that gets you out whether you want to get out or not, and the school bell that rings little Junior to school whether he wants to go.

And so he goes, not as Shakespeare said, with a shining morning face. I like Shakespeare, but I've never been able to understand why he made that mistake. Whoever heard of a kid going to school with a shining morning face? They come home that way, but they don't go that way.

Now, these are duties. There's a harsh voice. Duties are harsh things.

It tells the woman, get those dishes washed. It tells the woman, have that baby. It tells the woman, get over there and get that ironing done.

Get that washing done. It tells the man, get that day's work put in. Tells the engineer, bring in on time.

Tells the soldier, stand that attention there, or take that hill. The strong, ugly, harsh voice of duty. It's every place in the world, but that isn't the voice I'm talking about.

And then there's an accusing voice, the voice of our own conscience, telling us that we've sinned. That accusing voice that makes us sick and white when we hear it occasionally. And there's the harsh voice of nameless fear, the hard voice of fear.

The world is full of fear, ladies and gentlemen. We're scared to dwell. Our noses quiver like a bunny rabbit with fear.

We're shamed and we're afraid in the universe. Here we are, orphans in the wide world with the vast forces roaring up and down that can tear us apart and hurl us back to the earth again, back to our native dust. And men are afraid.

They try to laugh it off, and they hire Bob Hope and some others to try to make us laugh, but we're a bunch of scared cats. And it's more than something to laugh about. It is a terrible thing, and it's causing us to get old before our time, and it's putting men in insane asylum.

It's driving them to suicide. Sheer fear, the voice of fear, the haunting, ghostly voice that is sounding that makes men afraid. But there's a wonderful voice because there is a wonderful presence.

The only reason the Bible has any meaning is because there is a voice and a presence. If God Almighty had stayed a million, million miles beyond the high imperium and had thrown our Bible down through it and then lapsed into silence, the Bible wouldn't have had any more meaning than any other book. You might as well read Mother Goose's Bible, except for the fact there is a presence here, making the Bible warm.

There is a voice here breathing through the Bible and speaking to us in the Bible, and when we read the text, the voice speaks to our heart and the presence is here, and it's a warm and a friendly voice, an inviting voice. The voice of God is not the voice of justice hunting us down. If there had been no Calvary, no blood, no atonement, he might have had to come as a voice of vengeance.

But because there was a lamb on a tree, his voice is the voice of invitation. He says, come and draw near and believe and rest, and so on. These happy, warm, inviting words.

Down in the South, you go up to the door and somebody will come out and invite you to come and set a spell. The voice of God is a warm, hospitable voice like that, and says, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden. You go through your Bible, if you will, or if you have a contortance, and see how many times the word come is found.

I like the old church bell in the street. I always think the church bell says, Come, come, come, come, come. The man who wrote The Church in the Wildwood must have had that idea, because you musicians will remember that the bell rings, come, come, come, come, come, come.

I always forget how many comes when I'm singing it and come in in the wrong place. But there are a lot of comes there, and the bells and God's people are ringing, and they're all saying the same thing, they're saying, Come. I'd like to say this, and I suppose I'll get accused here of being mystical if not downright nutty, but I believe the voice of God is a very musical voice.

It must be a musical voice, because God is the great musician. He put the 1-2-3-4 beat in the universe, and he put the rhythm in the universe. It's all there, and it's only sin that makes the world such a harsh and unmusical place.

If we could hear the voice of God, we'd hear something very wonderful and musical. I don't think that we'd ever want to hear a symphony orchestra again, and I'm sure we'd never want to hear banjo. If we heard the voice of God, for there's all of the beauty of the sunshine and all of the sound of the sea, it says in Revelation that Jesus' voice was like the voice of many waters.

Have you stood on the shore at night and listened to the booming of the surf as the restless waves come splashing in and beat over the rocks? There's something wonderfully musical about it. I always have pictures to have of Jesus I never cared for, but I remember one painting of Jesus that I rather liked. It showed him sitting on the shore of the sea on a rock, looking out, brooding smoothly over the lake.

I think he must have done that sometimes and listened to the voice of nature. Some people don't like birds, and artists up in Chicago went down with some small artists into what they call Brown County in Indiana, a very wonderful place. One of the artists, after the second day, almost had a nervous breakdown.

He said, I can't stand these birds. He said, I just can't stand them now, that's all. He said, in the morning, last thing at night, all day long, he'd keep, keep, chatter, keep, keep.

He said, they're driving me crazy. He said, goodbye, and he packed his suitcase and went back to Chicago where he could hear diesel engines and elevated trains. He had trained his poor buseers to the music of the clack, clack of an elevated train, and the horrible, hoarse, devilish sound of the diesel engine.

I don't know why they ever put that horn on a diesel engine. The diesel engine is all right, but why did they have to borrow a pop gun from the devil and put it on for a whistle? That's what I'd like to know. You'd think it was the devil with a bad cold trying to blow his nose.

And yet, that fellow liked it better than he liked to hear a robin thing with a dew on the grass. Because he's a diseased man, ladies and gentlemen. There's something beautiful in nature, and any man who'd rather hear a record than hear a rooster crow ought to have his head examined.

And anybody that would rather hear Toscanese play the Fifth Symphony of Beethoven rather than hear a cricket at night ought to have his head examined if he had to hear it. Because everything that God made, he made beautiful and good in its time. And when God speaks, it's a musical voice, people's voices.

They may be nasal or adenoidal or guttural or scrapey or high or too low, but all the voice of God, how beautiful it is. Dr. Simpson said that one time, he had been reading an old book. He didn't say what book, but I think I know.

I could tell you people some things if I wanted to. I think I knew what he'd been reading, because I run on to reports in my own reading. He said he was reading a book one time, the gist of which was that God is waiting to speak in the depths of your soul if you get quiet enough to listen to him.

So he said, I decided to try it, that I knelt down all by myself. He said, I began to listen in my own heart to see if I could hear God speak. And he said, I never knew before how nervous I was.

He said, I never knew how noisy the world was and how noisy I was. But he said, little by little, I put it all away and put it all for me, and I began to listen. And pretty soon I began to hear.

And then he launched into one of those poetic descriptions of his that I can't imitate, that's a great, lovely, fragrant, beautiful musical voice of God. It was things like that that made A.D. Simpson, Simpson. He was hearing God speak in his heart.

My friend, that voice is in his tabernacle tonight, not in mine, not in my rather nasal voice that sounds like Truman's. My voice is more or less distorted by this good gadget here. That's not musical, but there is a voice, and you won't hear it if it doesn't come out of my mouth, if you'll bow the Goodyear, which is your Goodyear, bow your Goodyear down a little toward your chest and listen.

I think you'll hear God speaking, because there's a presence, and that presence is speaking, and it's a speaking presence and an inviting voice. And God is here tonight with that presence and with that voice.

Now, there are some people who hide from the presence.

You will see that the Adam and Eve hid from the presence of God. Sin made them ashamed. They had gotten into their sin together, and now neither one could help the other one.

She was their feminine arch, couldn't help Adam, and he with his masculine strength couldn't help Eve. They had gotten in together, and now they had to each one get out alone. And I might soften and develop that thought a little.

Listen, young fellow, you're going to get into sin with that girl, but when you get out, you're going to get in all out, all by yourself. If you ever get out, she can't help you. And listen, you old man, you're part of a business firm and there's a bit of chicanery going on and a crooked deal, and you're going to sign a paper that will make you a party to a crooked deal.

You get in with the company, but when you get out, if you ever do, you'll get out all by yourself. That's the terrible irony of sin. You sin with a crowd, but you crawl out of a mire if you ever crawl out all by yourself.

Nobody can help you out. Adam took courage from Eve and Eve took courage from Adam, and they held hands and pinned together. And now they couldn't help each other, and so they got scared and fled from the presence and the voice into the garden, or into among the trees of the garden.

Such painful confusion as it all was. So they hid from the presence and they hid from the voice. I was thinking down in my room, that would be the biography of some of you dear people.

You're hiding from the presence and shrinking from the voice, and you've been doing it a long time. If anybody could write your life, I could write your life, and I think for a lot of you I could convince that you might not say you have a life that's worth writing. It's good that some of these young evangelists, 16-year-old evangelists, write their lives.

All they can say is, I was born. But you have a little more. You've been hiding from a presence and shrinking from a voice, and those are the two major truths in your life.

And they have been because there's another major truth, and that is that you've sinned and you're ashamed. There's something about sin that makes us ashamed, and particularly ashamed when God is near, and we sense that God is near. When God is in this place, it was then that Jacob was ashamed, and it was then that Isaiah was ashamed, it was then that Daniel sat down at Soni, it was then that John threw himself like dead on the ground when the presence of God moved down.

Oh, if we could only recapture a sense of God's presence. You never need to pray for God to come, although if you do pray for God to come, God won't get mad. Theologians sometimes get mad about things that God smiles about.

God will know what you mean. When you say, O God, come into our midst, you don't mean, God, come into our midst, you mean, O God, make me conscious of thy presence in the midst. When a blind man says, O God, let the sun shine, he means, O God, heal my eyes so I can see the sunshine.

A deaf man can't hear the birds sing, and so a sinner can't sense the presence of God. That's the terrible woe of it. So we walk the world, orphans, without any sense of the divine presence.

I tell you that to live in a world like this, even to live in a city like Chicago or New York or Pittsburgh or Philadelphia, and have the presence of God put velvet on all the hard pavement and put peace and quiet in all the rocky towns, to have God with you, to know that God is there and to sit with you to bed at night and to be able to smile in your sleep and know that God is there and to have God all around you, I tell you it's a wonderful thing, and it's real, and it's just as real as the air that breathes. For just as the atmosphere touches on you, all parts of your body, 14 pounds to the square inch at sea level, so the presence of God pressures in on your spirit. And you can live in the world and not be conscious of that atmospheric pressure until you're reminded of it, and so you can live in the world and not be conscious of the presence of God there to help you.

Now, I want to call attention to you that self-condemnation that drove Adam and Eve from the presence of God is a very good trance. To be condemned, to condemn yourself, it's a very good trance. It's a wonderful moment in the life of a man when he says, Oh God, I accuse myself! Oh God, I did it! It's a wonderful moment in a man's life when self-condemnation hits him.

And I think that one of the difficulties with us is that we can't get conviction on people anymore. People come to God without having any conviction of their own iniquity, and the result is they never get very deeply saved. They're poorly born.

Now, I'd like to think that you can be saved even though you're not very well saved. I'd like to think that, you know. I wish I could think it, and I'm not sure but what I'd do in a kind of an oblique way, hope that there are some people that will get to heaven by the skin of their dentures.

But I'm not sure, brethren, I'm not sure. But I believe that we'd get converted more wonderfully if we got convicted more deeply. But we're afraid to get people convicted.

I preached at council one year. I preached about Salome and Herod and Herodias and that dancing girl, you know, the old man and John the Baptist preaching his head off. I preached that, and I preached sin.

I told people they were sinners. And an Alliance preacher, now as big as life and twice as noisy, came up to me afterwards and said, You never should have done it. You make people feel they're sinners.

He said, Why, nobody will come tonight. They feel they're criminals. And in spite of that, somebody gave an order call, and they came flopping down to the front.

I tell you, we need to know we're sinners. We need to find that out. We need to know it, and we need to have it borne in upon us.

Up around Chicago, everybody's a theological sinner, but nobody's actually a sinner. All those good Calvinists up there are theological sinners. You just beat a bush anywhere, and there'll be a Calvinist with a Bible under his arm, hop out and say, All our righteousness is absolutely right.

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. But if you turn on him and say, I don't believe you're quite right, brother, your text's wrong, he'll get quite mad. He's a sinner, all right, but he's only a theological sinner until you prick him, and then he becomes a sinner indeed.

We need to know that we're sinners indeed, ladies and gentlemen. No theological man ever went to Heaven who was a theological sinner, who just went to God and said, God, I read in the Bible that I'm a sinner, and if I'm a sinner, I suppose I ought to get saved. Will you please save me? Nobody ever got that

way.

You can't do it that way, brethren. God Almighty knows that your emotions are tied up with our good and our bad, and he knows that if you're not emotionally smitten, you'll never be emotionally lifted. He knows that if you make a man sick to his stomach of a sin, he'll quit it.

But if you're only convincing theologically that he's a sinner, he'll sneak around back to the building and commit it again. After our trouble in these terrible days, we want to make religion easy for people, and so we never bring any self-condemnation down on them. Now, when self-condemnation hits you and you know you're a sinner, you can do one of two things.

You can let that self-condemnation drive you to the wounds in Jesus' side for cleansing, or you can let that self-condemnation drive you into the wilderness to hide from God. As people react those two different ways to self-condemnation, when Peter self-condemned, he was literally, when Judas felt it, he committed suicide. You can go one way or the other.

Self-condemnation is a good friend, because it tells you how bad off you are. It's also a dangerous mattress if you let it drive you from God. If a man says, now I am so bad I don't think God would ever have anything to do with me, self-condemnation has become his enemy, then not his friend.

I remember once a woman, a young woman, a nurse, came to see me and she said, just to tell her I'm backslidden. She said, I have backslidden completely because she said I have been among doctors and I find they're sad, very pleasant. She said, they're no good and I have lost my spiritual life.

She said, I am so bad that I'm not even going to bother God about it. She said, I just don't think that God would do right if he forgave anybody that's as bad as I am. That was a tough one.

Now, if you preachers don't think that was a tough one, it was. You didn't have to convince her that she was a sinner, she knew it, but she was so self-condemned that she felt that God wouldn't do right if he forgave her. So I was thinking hard and praying hard, and finally I got enough wisdom and said, Listen, Elizabeth, you've hurt God awfully bad, haven't you? She said, Oh, I've wounded God by my sin, yes, I've wounded God.

I said, Are you willing to give him one more blow? Are you willing to smite God's heart one more time? She said, No, but how could I do it? I said, One more blow would be to walk out of his presence and not accept his forgiveness. She dropped to her knees and said, I'll never do it, I'll never do it. She said, I've hurt God so much I won't hurt him anymore.

Oh, God forgive me. And God forgave her and started all over again. So you see, self-condemnation almost ruined her.

But don't you let it drive you into the woods, and don't you let it drive you to the end of a rope or to a gas chamber. Remember that God condemns you in order that he might forgive you, and he brings conviction in order that he might pardon you. And the voice invites us into his presence.

Now, that's my message tonight, really, that there is a voice that's inviting you into his presence. If you say, I am no good, well, that's one thing in your favor anyhow. Thank God, my friend, thank God for that.

There are a lot of people strutting up and down, maybe some of them right in this campground, maybe some of them out there sitting on benches listening to me. They are so proud of themselves and feel they are somebody. They are so important to know as the fellow said they can strut sitting down.

They amount to something. They are somebody indeed. They drive a big car.

Well, it's too bad for them, because they think they are somebody and therefore they are nobody. But the man who thinks he's nobody is on his way to become somebody if only he'll take Jesus Christ at his word. Oh, what a sinner we've been.

What a sinner you are, man, with your dirty teeth. Not all the chlorophyll toothpaste in the world can get the nicotine stains off of those uppers of yours. Your mouth is dirty and your lungs are dirty, and if you had all the smoke that you run through your system in one place, you could inflate the biggest balloon on the continent.

And your tongue is dirty. Your tongue is dirty. You've cussed and black-eyed and told dirty stories, and your eyes are dirty.

You look at every woman you see, and your mind's dirty, and you think evil all the time. You're just plain dirty, and yet you take two showers a day and rub yourself with no-smell sticks, and you're absolutely fastidious when it comes to the outside, and you're full of dead men's bones in the inside. And because you smell like Mr. Colgate, you want me to think you're all right.

No, sir, not all the aftershave lotion in the world will take away the smell of pollution that God Almighty smells coming up out of your heart. But it was that kind of people that God came to when he came to the Garden. They were already reaching with iniquity, but his presence was there, and his voice was inviting them home.

And it's that fellow's like you, if you'll admit it, it's fellows like you that God's looking for tonight. Now, if you try to cover up, God will overlook you and pass you by, and you'll never hear a sound of his voice. But if you'll say, Oh God, I did it, I did it, God will draw very close to you feelingly and make you know it.

God wants a confessing people, an honest people, the people who won't hide and say, I didn't do it. The younger generation now growing up is cursed with psychology and psychiatry. They have invented other names for sin.

David said, I have sinned in my sight, but now they call it by some other name. But you can call a cat or a skunk by another name, call him a striped pussy if you want to, but he's the same foul, reeking animal he was before. You can call a stinking dead body by the name of cadaver or some other nice scientific name, but it's the same old foul thing.

You can call garbage by another name, but it's garbage still. You can call your sin by another name, but God Almighty knows it's sin, and until you've called it by its right name, God won't do very much for you. A man who's under conviction and facing going through his pastor goes to a psychiatrist, and the psychiatrist says, the trouble with you is you've got a guilt complex.

I can cure you in 17 lessons, three dollars a lesson, lie down on that couch. He lies down on his couch. Now, try to remember their back as far as you can.

I know what I'd do. If I had words in the hands of one of them, he'd say, what's the first you can remember? I'd say, when the doctor said it's a boy. But, well, we'd go to the psychiatrist now and get our backs cracked in place of going to the preacher and get our hearts wounded.

We need to go and know that there is a voice of self-condemnation that's a very good voice, and still it doesn't drive God away from us. God comes where condemned men are, but he never goes where men are that aren't condemned. Are you a condemned man? The voice of the Lord is drawing near, and you can hear the voice of the Lord in the garden, calling you into his presence.

And the blood of Jesus Christ has quenched the fiery sword, and now you can enter the presence of God, and he'll receive you. Now, if you'll only know it. Let's talk a minute about Samuel, then I'm done.

Remember little Samuel, the voice sounding, little Samuel. I don't know how big he was. Let's say he was seven years old.

He was so little that he still had to sleep with the light on. I don't know how big that would make him, maybe six or seven. A little chap, and God spoke to the boy, and he'd never heard that voice before, but was friendly, and he thought it was Eli.

He jumped up and went into the other room and said, This thou call me? No, he said, I didn't call you. Go back to sleep. He went back to sleep, and he called him again.

God called Samuel. A voice was calling a boy, and the boy didn't know what the voice was. He went back to the old heavy man of God, and he said, Thou didst call me? No, he said, I didn't call you, but I perceive that God is calling you, son.

So the next time you hear a voice, say, Here am I. Samuel went back, and I bet he didn't go to sleep that time. I don't know for sure, and I don't want to read anything into the text, but knowing boys, I'm pretty sure that when he found out the highest God of heaven and earth was trying to get through to him, I'm sure he didn't turn his head off. I'm quite sure he kept tuned in.

I don't think he went to sleep. He lay there, his ears all cocked in the flickering light of the candle, and a voice said, Samuel, here I am, God. And there began one of the greatest ministries that the world ever knew.

But you see, God was calling Samuel, and Samuel didn't know it till an old man told him. God's calling some of you tonight, and you didn't know it, but I've told you tonight. Now, if you have as much wisdom as Samuel, you'll listen real hard in the next five minutes, and you'll see what God is saying to you.

This presence is here, and that voice is speaking. If you listen real hard, maybe it'll mean the beginning of a life that just hasn't been lived on earth for a generation. I don't promise it, but oh, I say it'll mean a change in your life.

I haven't forgotten. I haven't forgotten how I roamed the hills of Pennsylvania, dirty mouth, lying, nasty, high-tempered, unsaved boy. I haven't forgotten that.

Nobody would have loved me then except my mother. Nobody, because they couldn't. I was too nasty.

I was a little mouse trying to get big enough to be a rat. I was a wicked boy trying to grow up and be a wicked man. Then I heard the voice of the Lord speaking to me over in the city of Akron, Ohio.

God spoke to me and said that if I'd go home and pray and take God to have mercy on me, as soon as I could be converted. Thank God I'd never read the Schofield Bible then. Thank God I'd never been to Bible school.

Thank God I'd never heard the professional evangelist, because if I had, I'd have known that that verse wasn't just sensationally for me. I'd have known it belonged to somebody else. But not knowing it, and God knowing that I didn't know it, I went home and went to my mother's attic and got on my knees and said, God, have mercy on me, a sinner, and God converted my poor old soul, my poor young soul.

Thank God nobody got to me and tried to explain that verse. If they had, probably I wouldn't have been converted today. I'd have been lost in the explanation.

I suppose you've all heard of Mel Trotter. Mel Trotter was a great Christian and a great brother. He was preaching at Biola one time, at his Bible Institute of Los Angeles, where they're pretty dispensationalistic.

He got blessed as he was talking, and he started giving his testimony. He said, Here I was, and he described himself as a terrible, dashing drug addict, certainly a drinker, and a wicked fellow bound with all kinds of bad habits, and the devil ragging him and putting his spurs into him. He was about exhausted and ready to die, and he said, I pray God, have mercy on me, a sinner, and God save me.

Well, he got blessed on it, and he had a long lifetime of blessing behind him. One of the teachers, I think it was, came up to him afterward and said, Mr. Trotter, that was a good sermon, but you were all mixed up in your exegesis. Don't you know that dispensationally, God have mercy on me, a sinner, wasn't for you? You shouldn't have prayed that prayer.

Trotter said, Well, maybe not. But he said, I didn't know it at the time. He said, Anyway, the mess I was in, God would have saved me if I'd have said, Mary had a little lamb.

He said, No, you ought not. God doesn't care about your theology, but he wants to know you've got a hungry heart. And if you've got a hungry heart tonight, man, and you've heard a voice, you can come home, and you can come home now.

I was in Chicago United Mission some years ago, preaching down among Cedro, among the bums. A young fellow with a bright face, maybe 22 years old, got up and turned around. You know they'll do when they get enthusiastic.

He turned around and faced the audience to give his testimony. He had just been converted maybe a week, and he was all boiling over with it. He said, Dear friends, God saved my soul.

Do you know how he did it? He saved my soul the day I took his name in vain. And he said, I want to exhort you, take his name in vain in your conversion. Of course, he didn't mean that, but God knew what he meant.

And I suppose the theologian there, particularly if he had a degree, probably would have fainted and they would have had to have brought him to with a good stick and a shot of ethyl gasoline, just to bring him to. But the point was, that poor fellow came up out of paganism, and he had an arm in his heart, and he believed in Jesus Christ, and God converted his soul. There will be many a theologian rightly devising the word of truth that when he breathes his last will go down where dead men go that have rejected the blood.

There will be many a poor ignorant fellow who didn't know the difference between believing in Jesus Christ and taking his name in vain. I mean, he knew better, but he didn't at that time know better. Now, after a few years have gone by and he's read his Bible, it's probably he'll ask that his own foolishness.

But the point is, he got converted. That's all. So if you will put your pride aside, who are you anyhow, man? You got a big chest? Yes, sir.

And you know, those big chests are the places where coronary thrombosis hits first. The bigger the chest, the greater the chance you have of tumbling over with a coronary case. Pull your chest in, fella.

God doesn't care about the size of your chest, but he wants to know, are you a self-condemned, sin-cursed, God-hungry man? You're very beautiful, are you, sister? Very beautiful. Indeed, I'd like to see you 50 years from now. Oh, you're so beautiful indeed.

Those eyebrows are arched beautifully, those lips, you're all done up so gorgeously. Wait till old Mother Nature and Father Time get done doing the tango on your face and see what happens to you. Well, no, no, sister, you haven't got anything to be proud of.

If you've got a pretty face on in front of your head, God gave you that, why don't you thank him? And if you've got a big chest, why don't you take a yoke on your shoulders and carry it for the Lord Jesus? And if you've got an education, why don't you put it under your feet and come to the blood? If you've got a lot of money, why don't you thank God for your money and start distributing it right away, helping the poor and supporting nations? Because what's your money anyhow? I saw a fellow two or three weeks ago, he has a Cadillac and he has a big four-port hole, no, three-port hole, do it, a cabin cruiser and a power motor. But he just wears one pair of pants, the same as I do, he doesn't wear two, and he just eats one meal at a time, the same as I do, he doesn't eat two meals at a time, he just sleeps in one bed at a time, the same as I do, just walks around in one pair of shoes, the same as I do, and I haven't got any do-it, or any Cadillac, or any cabin cruiser, or any speedboat. Well, let's put away our pride, and let's listen to the voice tonight, the gentle, sweet, inviting voice, oh, how foolish thing it is, how damnably foolish the whole business is, and how wonderfully wise it is to come to Jesus Christ and believe.

So come tonight, maybe you're a little Samuel there someplace, maybe you're a Mel Cotter there, maybe you're a Jerry McCauley there, maybe you're another Dr. Simpson there, maybe you're a Paul Rader there, you come now, but whatever you may be in potentiality, you're a singer in actuality. So come just as you are, without lines, please, throw yourself across this altar tonight, put your pride under your feet, and in one sweet, happy moment, you can pass from death to life, and Jesus Christ will become your Savior. Please get silent, please get quiet, let's listen.

Everyone, everyone, everyone, is he speaking to you, man? Is he speaking to you, woman? Get quiet, get still, this may be your hour, the day of your visitation. Pray, people, all you happy Christians who know the joyful sound, you pray, because there are a lot of people in here that aren't happy Christians, and Fr. Thomas is going to lead us in a song, and if he leads us, we all get joyful.

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