

A Godly Pattern

by Bill McLeod

As Christians, we must strive to be examples of God's character and values, living lives of integrity and faith, and being careful with our words, in order to increase our faith and bring glory to God.

Duration: 57:00

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Mark 11:22, 1 Timothy 4:12, 2 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 4:12, James 1:22, 1 Peter 4:12

Topics: "Godly Pattern"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the trials and sufferings that believers may face in their lives. He emphasizes the importance of having faith and not complaining, as everything is in the hands of God. The speaker also highlights the verse that states that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed in believers. He encourages listeners to be content with food and clothing and to not neglect the needs of others. The sermon concludes with the reminder that believers are constantly being watched and should strive to live in a way that reflects their faith.

Transcript

I'd like to read from 1 Timothy 4, 12, read from 12 to the end. Let no man despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things, give yourself wholly to them, that your profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto yourself and unto the doctrine.

Continue in them, for in doing this you will both save yourself and them that hear you. Verse 12 again, let no man despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conversation, that is in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Let's just pray.

Father, we ask you to be our teacher by your spirit. We were brought up yesterday, the Bible says, and know nothing. We agree to that.

We know it's true. And Father, we need light from you. We trust you for it.

In Christ's name, Amen. Apostle Paul, an older preacher, was writing to a younger preacher and exhorting him along certain lines, as we know, 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy. He says, let no man despise your youth.

That's not my problem. They may despise me because of my age. When they find out I'm 73, what can he say? You know, today, if you're past 30, you've lost half of your marbles, and if you're past 70, you've lost all of them.

I mean, that's how they feel. If they get a resume, they ask a lot of questions that the Bible doesn't ask, and the questions the Bible doesn't ask, they don't even consider. I mean, when calling a pastor.

Ordaining councils, I've sat on them, I've moderated some ordaining councils, and the questions the Bible asks about a pastor, you know, they're never asked. Somehow, it's all taken for granted, 1 Timothy 3. And of course, it's wrong. You know, there's an old saying, marry in haste and repent at leisure, and churches have had to do the same thing, if you know what I mean, in calling a pastor.

The questions they want to know, of course, are these, where did you get your training? Well, I'm finished right there. I never got any. That is, not in formal schools.

Of course, Moody wouldn't have made it either. Finney wouldn't have made it. Charles Spurgeon wouldn't have made it.

They never had any training either. That is no formal training. We all have training, but in different ways.

And there are other things considered as well. Let no man despise your youth. When Gypsy Smith, before he became an evangelist, he pastored a Methodist church in England, his first church.

He sat on the platform, the opening meeting. They were considering him as a pastor, and he sat there about ten minutes past starting time and said nothing, just looking the congregation over. And finally somebody said, young man, don't you realize it's ten minutes past starting time? He said, yes, I'm aware of that.

He said, did you ever hear of a doctor prescribing a remedy without diagnosing the case? So whoever it was sat down. A few minutes later a lady got up and said, you are altogether too young for us. Lady, he said, stick around, I'll be older.

And, you know, at the end of the first year so many people have been saved, the church had grown dramatically, nobody was asking these kind of questions any longer. Would you believe it, I had a crusade in Washington several years ago, and before I got there I discovered that the pastor was 75 and the youth pastor was 81. And I thought to myself, now, you know, we're going to have about 30 people, old people with moths on their eyebrows, I mean, with this kind of a leadership.

I couldn't have been more wrong. I mean, they had a fantastic church. Lots of young people, lots of young married couples, and these two guys, I mean, it did my heart good, you know.

They really had it going. It's the first time in 50 years in the ministry I saw anything like this, but it was sort of encouraging. Moses never got started until he was 80.

Apparently in some things God doesn't look at us the way we do. Let no man despise your youth. But this meant that Timothy somehow had to gain respect.

It wasn't going to come naturally because he was young. We have a tendency to write people off if they're young, they don't have much to say. So somehow he had to gain respect.

And Christian workers, we have to gain respect. It doesn't come because we've got a lot of training and so on. My wife and I once saw the resume of a pastor who had just been kicked out of his church, asked to resign, to put it more politely.

And he had, I mean, the training he had, there was just no end to it, and degrees and degrees and degrees and degrees, the whole thing. I'm not opposed to that in the slightest. He couldn't find a church because his track record wasn't there.

He had the training, but somehow he couldn't. The people didn't respect him. And it's something we have to gain.

Whether we're a Christian worker or not, we have to gain respect before we can expect people to listen to what we have to say. That's not true in all circumstances, I know. Let no man despise your youth, but be an example.

You know, conduct speaks louder than words, and sometimes we nullify what we say by the way we live. And our example can preach louder sometimes than our sermons do. I know a pastor in western Canada.

He started several churches. When you meet him, he doesn't have any charisma, whatever that is, and when he preaches, it's not any big deal, but every church he started, it just grows and grows and grows. I had meetings with him one time, and he said, you know, I can't explain it, he said, we're growing on the average of 30 people a month.

I don't even know where they come from. People, I think it was his example more than anything else. He just loved people.

He just loved everybody. And he was faithful, and he set a godly example in every respect and aspect of his walk with God. And it spoke louder than the sermons could.

I remember hearing a preacher one time in Akron, Ohio years ago. He only had grade 5 education. He murdered the Queen's English every time he spoke.

His preaching was like the book of Proverbs. All text, no context. He preached like this, Now watch it, you people, and he'd say something great.

Now watch it, you people, he'd say something else that was great, totally unrelated, you know. And this is how the sermon went. His printed sermons were dull.

But when the guy preached, there was a power there. It was totally different. And he met a fellow named Knotley Nash, I think it was, and they shook hands, and he said to this fellow, he challenged him, he said, Listen, let's build, for the glory of God, let's build the biggest Sunday school in the world, and they did.

For years they had the biggest Sunday school in the world. I think God had tried with others and couldn't get through to the public on them, so he got this guy who didn't know anything, but who obviously had some administrative gifts, obviously. The church had 16,000 members, and my wife and I were there.

We were not there for a crusade, we were there as observers. The church now has 22,000 members. They have to build a larger building.

When we were there, it just seated 5,000, it seats 7,000 now, and the son of this fellow is now the pastor. Anyway, for it to be an example. In 1 Timothy 1, Paul spoke about this matter of example.

He said that, In me first, Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. So Paul, as you know, if you read 2 Corinthians 11 and other places in the New Testament, you know how Paul went through a lot of problems. He was mobbed, left for dead, stoned, beaten, shipwrecked, spent a day and a half drifting in the ocean, it says, in perils among false brethren.

I mean, it's a terrible catalog of bad things that happened. But he said he was a pattern. God intended him to be a pattern to those who should hereafter believe on him.

And certainly he's been a challenge to me, and I'm sure to thousands, no doubt millions of other people. When Paul wrote to Titus, another younger preacher, chapter 2, verse 7, he told him to be a pattern of good works. This was something different again, a pattern of good works.

In doctrine, showing uncorruptness, purity, uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity. Like it says in Ephesians chapter 5, neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not befitting, but rather giving of thanks. There's nothing wrong with a little humor, but you know sometimes we get caught up in this and it's all humor.

And sometimes you have a speaker who spends ten minutes telling jokes. They call it breaking the ice. You know what it really does, people? It builds ice.

It's not the way to do it. I can't imagine the apostle Paul standing up and cracking jokes for attendance. Can you? Why can't I do? A pattern, doctrine, uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

You know, Spurgeon in his younger days, he said himself he was very bombastic at times. Someone asked a liberal preacher in London what he thought of Spurgeon. He said he's a very saucy dog.

And he had that reputation of being a very saucy dog. But he had a grandfather who helped him. And when he had been a little too bombastic, he'd come home and find a Bible stuck on his bed or beside his bed and a pen in Titus 2, 7. Sound speech that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

Oh, Spurgeon said, he really helped me. And then a lady one time, she came to reproach him because he'd used a little humor. He didn't use a lot of it, but he used some.

And he said, lady, if you knew how much I held back, you'd feel sorry for me. All right. A pattern.

Ever think of it that way? Your life, a pattern that others see? In 1 Corinthians 4, Paul said, we are made a spectacle. And the Greek word there is the word from which we get the English word theater. We're made a theater, that is we're on stage, to the world, to angels, to men.

I think he means Christian men. The world sees it. Christians see it.

Demons see it. Good angels see it. We're on stage whether we like it or not.

We're being watched. So it matters how we live. What we say.

Where we go. How we spend our money. How we spend our time.

It says in Hebrews 12, make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame, that's the sinner, be turned out of the way. In Isaiah it says, they've made them crooked paths, whosoever goes therein shall not know peace. And sometimes sinners following Christians get so tangled up because the Christian walks in crooked paths that they just never make it.

They get turned away totally. I've known a few cases like that over the years and possibly you have as well. Well, let's make sure that we are not like that.

The sinner may be watching you or watching me and taking what inspiration he can get from our life. Let's walk straight. I remember hearing, I think it was Ralph one time in a meeting where a fellow got up to share and the rules of the sharing were no preaching and if you can't find the landing field we'll help you come down.

And he couldn't quite find the landing field and then he was stopped. I forget exactly how that was done but we have quite ways of doing that. And so he said, well, I'm just flying so high and Ralph said, we don't care how high you fly as long as you walk the straight path and you come down.

And Ralph didn't know that was a shaft from God because this particular man shortly after was disciplined by his own church on a rather serious charge. Anyway. Be an example to the believers in words.

It says, let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth but that which is good to the use of edifying that it may minister grace to the ears. Now corrupt means rotten. Don't let anything rotten come out of your mouth that will hurt somebody else.

It says the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31 that in her tongue was the law of kindness. Her tongue was guided by the law of kindness. She was careful what she said lest she should hurt some other person intentionally or unintentionally.

Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt that you may know how you ought to answer every man. So we should think before we speak and think in terms of trying to say something that will help somebody else. They said Harry Ironside, he's dead now which means he's more alive than ever.

He was pastor of the Moody Church in Chicago for many years. Under his ministry they often had to have double services to get the people in. The church seats almost 5,000.

It's not quite that way today. I think when Herman Lutzer took over they were down to around 800. They've come up over 2,000 for Sunday mornings I know.

I'm not sure where it's at now. But Ironside had a happy facility of turning conversations into spiritual channels. They said he worked at it constantly.

If he's in a home having coffee with a bunch of Christians he was always trying to get the conversation around the spiritual things, things that would edify and not waste time. One of my nephews, my youngest brother's oldest son, pastor of the church I attend in Winnipeg, is dying of cancer. They say he probably has no longer than two weeks to live.

Forty-six years of age. Two children, a wife that's not well. If you think of him, pray for them.

His name is Gary. His wife's name is Dorothy. I mention him because just recently he met with two of the board members and said something like this.

I thought I had 20 or 30 years more to serve God. I don't have. He said, Brethren, tell the board, give it all you've got.

Give it all you've got while you can because you never know what the future holds. None of us know. In words, be careful what you say.

Jesus in Matthew 15 said, It's not that which goes in your mouth that pollutes you, it's what comes out of your mouth that defiles you. What we say defiles you, he said, because it comes from the heart. What you say comes from the heart.

See, out of the fullness of the heart, the mouth speaks. And so we speak what we are. Sometimes we can camouflage that to an extent, but basically we speak what we are.

And further along that same line, sin is really an extension of myself. I sin because of what I am. I love to blame it on my wife or my husband, my kids or my parents, my neighbor or my job.

But Jeremiah 3.13 says, Only acknowledge your iniquity that you have transgressed against the Lord your God. Only admit it, God says. Only acknowledge it.

Stop blaming it on something else. You know, hold you to chapter 5. There's an interesting insight there along these lines. It says, they, that's Israel, they'll go with their flocks and with their herds.

They're going to sacrifice to God. They'll go with their flocks and their herds to seek the Lord, but they shall not find Him. He has withdrawn Himself from them.

I read that, I say to myself, why? I read further in chapter 5 and I find out in the last verse. God said, I will go and return to my place until they acknowledge their offense and seek my face. They were seeking the face of God.

They were not admitting their failures. They were not admitting their sins. So they never got through.

And that's, that's still true, of course, today. Why is this in the Bible? Romans 15, Paul said about the Old Testament Scriptures, whatever things were written before were written for our instruction, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. So Hosea 5, 6 and 15, that was written for us today.

Now, my reading says until they be guilty. That's what the Hebrew says, until they are guilty. So I'll go and return to my place until they're guilty and acknowledge their offense.

That's what God has said. In words, a pattern, in word and conduct, it says in Hebrew 13, let your conduct be without covetousness and be content with such things as you have for He has said I will never leave you nor forsake you so that we may boldly say the Lord is my helper and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. Are you content with what you have? Having food and raiment, let us be there with content.

Oh, wait a minute, this is North America. We've got to have more than that. Really? In James chapter 2 it says, Harken, that means listen, Harken, my beloved brethren, has not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which He has promised to them that love Him? Why are poor people

rich in faith? Dear people, they're rich in faith because they have to be in order to survive.

It is never a bad thing to be poor. Never. It's there that we learn how to trust God.

And you pray and God answers and your faith is increased. In North America, in our evangelical culture, we try to avoid problems of any kind. The political system is built on that.

They're trying to erode away everything they can that would stand in a person's way. Forgetting that we need these things. Do you remember what it says in 1 Peter chapter 1? About the Lord Jesus whom having not seen you love, in whom though now you see Him not yet believing, you rejoice with joy and speak unto Him full of glory.

But in the same context He says, Now for a season, if need be, you are in heaviness to manifold temptations. Let the trial of your faith, being much more precious than the gold of parishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. You know we pray, God give me more faith, so God gives us more trials.

Hey God, what's going on here? I ask for more faith, so God gives me more trials. People are through trials and their faith is increased. I don't know of any other way.

I know faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. As a young Christian I came across this verse in Mark 11, Have faith in God. I don't know why, it really spoke to my heart.

So I was reading a Bible too for the first time. At the top of every page, I still have this Bible at home somewhere, I wrote across the top the page, Have faith in God. I did that for every page in the Bible.

But I can't honestly say that writing that down like that did anything for me. So I remembered the verse of course, Have faith in God. And we have to have the Bible to increase our faith.

That's part of it, but it certainly isn't all. Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy.

I think of my nephew. He got sick last January, dear people. He had headaches so bad, he would just curl up in the bed in a fetal position and hope to survive.

Day after day, everything he ate, he had to throw up. He got pains in his legs, he would shriek with a pained cry. I haven't yet heard a word of complaint from him or his wife.

He knows it's all in the hands of God. And a lot of us have been learning watching him. You know, the trial of our faith.

Much more precious than a gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire. And it may be. Yours may be.

Mine may be. We've had lots of trials in the past. But you know, I think of that verse that says, The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.

Not worthy to be compared. I never heard of anybody getting to heaven early and then complaining. Did you? Of course not.

We do the complaining down here. But to go back where I just started a few moments ago, having food and clothing, let us be there with contempt. Listen, you know something? I can give your total biography in four words.

Do you believe it? You can give me mine in four words. Do you know what they are? Nothing in, nothing out. 1 Timothy 6. We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

And did you know that's based on a verse in Ecclesiastes that says basically the same thing? I mean, people, that's our total biography. Nothing in, nothing out. So, let's live for God.

Only what's done for Christ will last. Bodily exercise profits for a little time. But godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and also of that which is to come.

Exercise yourself, it says, rather unto godliness. There are people that have exercised their heart's most covetous practices, and Peter calls them cursed children. Let's not be that.

A man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things which he possesses. Even in our evangelical circles, dear people, we tend to think of a person who has made a million dollars as being a real success. I mean, why do we do this? This is from the world.

Here's a person who may be a thousand dollars in the red. He may mean more to God than a person with a million dollars in the bank. A man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things which he possesses.

And that's true for you. It's true for me. Let me say something else.

If you aren't content with what you have now, you won't be content no matter what God gives you. The eye is not filled with seeing, and the ear is not filled with hearing. And he that loves abundance will never be satisfied with increase.

It says that. You want more? You'll always want more. I heard about a lady in Scotland, very poor.

She didn't have much to eat, just a little crust of bread. And she held this up like this, and she said, Dear God, all this? And heaven too? Oh, I thought that was great. I mean, it spoke to my heart.

Full spirit in love. You know, the Bible just exhausts language in talking about love. It says we're to walk in love.

Ephesians chapter 5. Let love be without hypocrisy. In Romans chapter 12. Keep yourselves in the love of God.

In the book of Jude. Follow after love. 1 Corinthians chapter 14.

The Lord direct your hearts into love of God, and into a patience waiting for Christ. This I pray that your love may abound yet more and more. In all knowledge and all judgment.

In Philippians chapter 1. Seeing you have purified your souls and obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto, and the word there means motion toward. Unto what? Unto unfamed love of the brethren. See that you love one another with a pure heart, fervently being born again.

We sometimes think, you know, that when you talk about a Christian being filled with the love of God, that should happen long after conversion, a real deep and powerful work of the Spirit. But in 1 Peter 1.22, it's linked to being born again. Let's look at it again.

Seeing you have purified your souls and obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfaded love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart, fervently being born again. People, it should start automatically, see. How does faith work? Faith works by love, Galatians 5.6. As a matter of fact, faith and love occur together 22 times, at least as I found that many times, and maybe more.

Faith and love. Remember, without ceasing, your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and the sight of God and our Father. Your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all towards each other abounds.

A pattern. In love. Are we really that? Why is it, you know, when the door slams shut behind us in the house, that the growling starts? And the complaining, and the criticizing, and all the rest of it.

Now kids watch that, they pick up the vibrations, and they turn out to be the same as we are, and we wonder why. We prayed so much for them. How come they turned out like me? Well, because you were the example they had.

And what else? It's not always true. Moody had a son that became a liberal preacher, and Torrey took him to task publicly. Billy Sunday had a son who died a drunkard.

John Wesley's wife used to drag him around the floor by the hair, and I'm not exaggerating, she actually did. And so, you know, there are exceptions to every rule. Walk in love.

1 Corinthians 16, verse 14, it says, Let all your things be done with love. Everything. Everything.

What do we do in Christian circles? We think that love is strictly for emergencies, like, you know, relatives calling that we didn't invite, and they let you know on the phone they're coming to stay for three days, and you say to them, how in the world can we put up with those, you know, those clods, for three days? See, you practice smiling in front of the mirror, you know, and, well, you put on this front, and they come, and you make it, you know, you make it. You're nice to them for three days. You pray day and night, God, give me love, give me love, give me patience.

And then they go, and you thank God, they're gone. People, this is what we do see. Love is not for emergencies.

Your people are supposed to be a way of life. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, the whole week. Year out, year in, year out.

Walk in love. I say again, let all your things be done with love, and let love be without hypocrisy. Genuine love seeks not her own.

That guides me whenever I think of love. Love seeks not her own. I was at Life Action a couple of years ago.

Ralph was there, too. I don't think he was there when this happened, but I spoke on love. And a fellow went home from this meeting, and he decided to really do it, see.

So he's going along, and he saw a guy left his car lights on, he was in there at a hamburger, and he roared by, and then it hit him. Oh, hey, wait a minute, this guy's lights are on. His battery might be dead, so he hurried around, came back in, the guy's door was open, and so he turned the lights off.

Felt better. He's driving along, and he sees a camper pulled over off the road, and there's a couple of ladies sitting in it. So he pulls in, and anything wrong? And the lady says, yeah, my mother, she seems to be going into a coma, she's a diabetic, and I just don't know what to do.

He says, ladies, stay here, I'll get help. So he roars away and gets help, you know, takes care of that. He starts, and this all happened one afternoon, or one evening, I'm not sure, was it the next day, whenever.

He was driving along, and he saw a huge camper sitting there, and a couple of people in it, and so he pulls in alongside, can I help you? And again, it was two ladies, and this lady said, well, I'm lost. He said, you know, we've come down here for a family reunion, and out of nowhere, I can't find my relatives. He said, do you have a phone? Yeah, I've got a phone number.

He said, give me the phone, you just stay right here, I'll go and get you help. So he goes a couple of miles down the highway, and there's a telephone booth there, and there was two booths like, you know, and so he's in here, and he's phoning this number, and the girl in the next booth was watching, and she saw the number down, and she said, who are you phoning? And he felt like saying, well, what's it to you? Well, he said, I met a couple of people down the highway, they're lost, two ladies, and they gave him this, ah, it's my mother, I'm looking for her. So she goes tearing down, and he felt so good about it.

I guess it was in the morning session I preached on this, because it was in the evening when he gave his testimony, and he was talking about this one lady in the car, I guess the second time he stopped, and he said, and she was an old lady, she must have been, oh, close to 70, and a voice spoke up and said, 68, dearie, and she happened to be in the meeting, and he didn't know it, but he said he just felt so good to interrupt his schedule to help somebody else, you know. Love seeks not her own. I mean, most of us would sail by, wouldn't we? Well, sure, of course, I mean, there's the telephone a mile down the road, why not take it down to the telephone, you know? This is how we, you know.

Like, for example, in the wintertime, there's a blizzard, Canada, we know all about this, and you hear somebody's stuck in a snowbank, and you look out the front window, you and your wife, and it's your neighbor, stuck right in front of your house. And his wife is driving, and he's pushing, the kids are out there, they're shoveling and pushing, and you look at your wife, I wonder how long it'll take them. Ah, it took them 18 minutes.

18 minutes. Well, spring comes, the snow, of course, is gone, and you're having special meetings in the church in June, and so you decide to go and invite some of your neighbors, so you call on this guy, and boy, is he crusty and cold. You walk back, muttering to yourself, man, all right, what's wrong with that guy? Woo, is he ever angry? Well, he's headed for hell.

Sure, sure, he's headed for hell. The problem is, when this neighbor was stuck in the snowbank, he saw this guy and his wife looking out the window, and he doesn't believe in the reality of the Christianity. You know? And he's got a right to make that kind of a judgment.

Because we're supposed to be different than the world. We're supposed to be ready to put ourselves out there and help other people. I mean, it's... Do you read the Peanuts comic strip? I read it whenever I can.

Schultz, the author, is not a born-again believer. He's a religious person. He's always trying to get religious ideas across.

And I remember seeing one cartoon, Snoopy the dog was up a tree, and there was a path here, and Snoopy was just glowering at the people down below. And I discovered, I had a book about these things, and this represented an evangelist. You see, Schultz hates evangelists.

He thinks they're looping on people, trying to scare them into the kingdom of God. But even a stop clock is right twice a day. And he's not always wrong.

And one time they had a picture, you know, of Snoopy the dog in a heavy, wet snowstorm. He's here with one foot off the ground. He's shaking and trembling like this.

He's obviously, he's cold, he's wet, he's cheerless and friendless and all the rest of this. And the kids gather around, they put their hands on his head, and they say, depart in peace, be warmed and filled. And then they all walk away.

And that's a take off from the book of James. If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be warmed and filled. Notwithstanding, you give them not the things that are needful to the body.

What is the problem? What's that all about? So Schultz was right. In word, in conduct, in love, in spirit. Did you ever notice Jacob's testimony to Pharaoh in Genesis 47? Pharaoh said, how old are you? And he said, few and evil for the days of my life be.

I haven't attained the days of the years of the pilgrims of my fathers. It's been awful, Pharaoh. Who will tell you? I had to run away from home.

One of my brothers was threatening to kill me. He didn't tell him why. I worked for a guy named Laban.

Oh man, 14 years. I had to work 14 years to get my two wives. He changed my wages 10 times.

In the night time, the frost got me. In the day time, the drought got me. He said, it was terrible.

I've had an awful time serving God. And I'm only 130 years old. I say to myself, you know what the next verse says? He blessed Pharaoh.

Rather, he just cursed him. He blessed Pharaoh. You know, I don't know, I could be wrong.

I wonder if after he was gone, Pharaoh tried to shake the blessing off, you know. Because this guy, you know. I mean, Jacob was a real believer, yes.

But the Bible says, fervent in spirit. Billy Bray, this famous Cornish miner that was so used of God in England years ago, he was always praising God, you know, no matter what happened. And somebody said, oh, come on, Billy.

You know, it's not always this nice way, you know. Is it? Well, he said, I've had some vinegar, but with a teaspoon, I get honey with a ladle. Sure, we get both.

What does it say? Rejoice when people persecute you. Leap for joy. We don't.

We give up. Somebody said something against us or about us. And we just give up.

Somebody lies about us. Listen, in 2 Corinthians 6, it says, In all things, approving ourselves as the ministers of God. And I don't think he means ministers in the sense in which we think.

He's just talking about people who serve God. Every Christian is supposed to be serving the God. In all things, approving ourselves as the ministers of God.

He mentions quite a few things there. He mentions by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report, but as deceivers and yet true. We like the true part and the honorable part.

But brother, we don't like the other part, you know. Joseph was accused of rape and thrown in jail. I was in a penitentiary in St. Cloud, Minnesota one time with a Christian superintendent.

He said, there's 1,200 prisoners here and we have a strange jail. He said, you know, he said, there isn't a single guilty person here. Just ask them.

Everybody's been framed. Everybody. So Joseph is in jail and someone says, Hey, Joe, why did you wind up here? Well, I was accused of raping a portifier's wife by a neighbor.

Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. We know. We know.

Yeah, I was accused of stealing. I never did an argument. So he had to live with that kind of a shadow on him, you know.

If you were accused of rape and thrown into jail, would you lose your faith in God? No, brother, listen. God got you into jail so he could do something with you in the jail. You gotta, you know, it says be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good.

You've gotta get on top of these things. And before we conclude, we'll say something about that. In spirit.

It says serving in spirit in Romans chapter 12, doesn't it? Serving in spirit. Serving the Lord. In Colossians chapter 3 it says, Whatever you do, do it heartily.

As unto the Lord, not as unto man. Matter what. Even if nobody's watching.

Be happy. The Lord's watching. His eyes are on us.

Thou, God, seest me. I think it was Billy Graham's wife, Ruth, that she has this sign over her sink or she used to have and it said Divine Worship conducted here three times a day. You know, she did the dishes three times a day.

I like that. In spirit. When people look at you or me as a Christian, do they really see any enthusiasm? Do they complain because we had to take a job at the church because we couldn't find somebody to do this job? So I told the pastor, well, if you absolutely, positively can't find anybody, give me a call.

I'll think about it. This is how it works. That's how it went in our church.

I used to talk about this in the nomination committee. How's it going? Oh, pastor, it is terrible. This is what he said to me.

I forget how many positions we have to have filled, 35 or something. I just forget now. He said, pastor, everybody tells me the same thing.

If they just can't find anybody else, give me a call. Maybe I'll be able to do it. Do you know what happened after the revival? We had our annual meeting.

I said, how's it going? Oh, he said, the phone's ringing off the wall. It's just burning up, he said. Everybody's going to say, give me a job.

I'll do anything, you know. But that ought to be normal. That ought to be normal, people.

Fervent in spirit. Whatever you do, do it heartily. That's under the law.

Some of you have read probably about people in concentration camps, some Christians who had a job for five years of cleaning toilets. Right? Cleaning toilets. And praising God all the time.

Got a job. They weren't doing that for the camp commandment. They were doing it for God.

Whatever you do, do it heartily. A pattern. A pattern, a godly pattern for other people to follow.

Spirit. Faith. Faith.

I pointed out before that faith works by love, so you can't get one without the other. Love believes all things. When you're walking in love and filled with the love of God, you can believe God for anything.

I read an interesting thing, it's sort of a sad commentary on Christian workers perhaps, but it was over in the Philippines. And there was an area where they had a bad drought. And there were almost no Christians in this area.

But the people in this area, they knew that Christians prayed and got answers to prayer, so they sent a delegation down to this church, asking that they would come and pray for rain. So what happened? The missionaries said, conferring among themselves, what if we do this and it doesn't rain? Then what? These poor people, they'll figure out God doesn't have any power. So they thought maybe it wasn't the wisest thing to do.

But the people in the church said, oh yes, we'll go and pray and God will send rain. So they went and prayed in the rain. You have a godly pastor in Manitoba, Henry Lozzerni, in a town of 3,000, he often runs 500 Sunday mornings.

God's really used him. He's a man of faith. And several years ago, they had a long drought.

And so Henry and his church decided they'd pray for rain. So they announced this Saturday, fasting and praying, everybody come, we'll pray for rain. The media heard about it.

Stonewall, where he is, about 20 miles away, the media heard and sent some reporters down. Got pictures and everything. The TV people heard about it.

They came down and got pictures of the pastor and the church and the whole thing. And of course Saturday comes, they were really flooding. What if, you know? You know what happened? They prayed and prayed all Saturday and Saturday night they got four inches of rain.

It flooded the church basement. The media were all back out again. Let me tell you something, it really outputs church on the mat.

We're afraid to venture for fear. God doesn't do it, you see. But love believes all things.

Purity, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. I know people, we live in a very evil age. In Isaiah, speaking of times way back then, 700 years or more before Christ, every mouth speaks villainy.

Everyone is a hypocrite and an evildoer. That's what he wrote. And we live in days like that now.

You know what it's like. And I'm not legalistic. Was Paul legalistic when he spoke about 35 different sins in his epistles? Does that make him legalistic? Do you know what legalism is? Legalism in the biblical sense is trying to get to heaven by a mixture of grace and works.

Now that's legalism. But that's not what we've done with the word today. We say legalism, that's where the guy says you shouldn't be going to the movies, you shouldn't be playing cards, you shouldn't be doing this, you shouldn't be doing that.

That's legalism. Or maybe it is to a certain extent, but it's not really biblical legalism. In any case, think it back.

You know, cold Christians are bound to find that verse in Ecclesiastes that says be not righteous over much. Why should you destroy yourself? See, even the Bible says Solomon, wisest man that ever lived. He said don't be too righteous, man.

I mean, it's in the Bible, isn't it? Sure it is. He said you might even die before your time. In the context.

And people, they forget the book of Ecclesiastes, it's part of the word of God. But listen, it's a totally different book than any book in the Bible. The writer is reasoning as a natural man under the sun.

When he said all is vanity and vexation of spirit, do you believe that? If you do, what are you doing here today? What am I doing here? Why are we wasting our time here if everything is vanity and vexation of spirit? But as a natural man reasoning under the sun, that's how it looks. That's how the world sees it. The world is saying life is a crude joke.

One philosopher said life is like a bird flying in out of the darkness of the night into an open window, circling twice in a warm room and going out in the darkness again. And to the natural man, that's how it is. Paul wrote and said in Titus, unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

And some people, you know, as Christians sometimes our minds get polluted. I remember a fellow one time said, oh Bill, listen, I look at everything on TV and it doesn't bother me in the slightest. I said, okay, then one of two things is true.

One, either you're lying to me, or two, you're not a normal person. Which is it? He stared at the floor a while and he said, okay, you got me. I said, haven't there been times when you were reading the Bible and all of a sudden there flashed into your mind some dirty thing you saw on TV? And he shook his head up and down.

I said, haven't you been praying sometimes and all of a sudden your mind was flooded with something you've seen on TV? He said, yes, I have. I suppose all of us have. There are people we've got to monitor that thing.

And if you can't, I have a friend, you know, back in Saskatoon. And his kids, he was getting after his kids for attending salacious movies, you know. And they said, well, Dad, you sit there with, you know, what's stuck in front of the TV set all the time.

What's the difference? You know what he did? He rolled over and grabbed the TV set and jerked the cord out of the wall and hollered, open that back door! So one of the kids went open and went running through the thing and he threw it right over the fence and they had, you know, concrete lanes. Well, that was that. I'm not saying you should do that.

But I wouldn't complain if you did. I've got a TV set. We like to watch the news and the documentaries.

But dear people, to keep your mind clear, clean, what are the things we're supposed to be thinking of? Remember Psalm 101, verse 3? I will set no wicked thing before my eyes. That's a verse we Christians need to think about. So we set that evil thing there.

So something dirty comes on and you put up with it and it'll be off in a little bit. Gets a little cleaner, something dirty again. And, you know, people will do it and our kids are watching.

Lots of Christian parents use a TV set as a babysitter for their kids. Somebody was telling us just, was it today or yesterday, about, they saw this program, I guess it was this morning. They saw a program, they didn't see it this morning, but they saw it some time ago.

And this guy was saying, I let my kids watch everything on TV that they want to look at except Jerry Falwell. I mean, that's the way the world is. But some of us are just as bad.

A pure heart. I know there's many Christians who feel it's impossible. You can't have a pure heart because you have a wicked heart.

Is that how you feel? Why then did Jesus say, blessed are the pure in heart? As far as he was concerned, some people had pure hearts. And basically, a pure heart is 2 Corinthians 7. At least that's the majority part of it. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

People, it's when we get serious before God in the prayer room or wherever, on our knees before, face before God, and tell God, the problem, I've got a filthy heart, I've got a debauched mind, I'm full of this garbage. Repent of it, dear people. Paul said whenever we're preaching two things, repentance towards God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

In that order, by the way. Repentance from dead wits and faith toward God, the writer of Hebrews said. In that order.

You see, we just need to repent with all our heart. You'll seek me and find me, he said, when you search me with all your heart. A pattern, impurity.

Are you that to your family, your church, whatever we're supposed to be? A pattern of good works, a pattern in doctrine, a pattern in long suffering. Whatever God may call us to go through, let no man

despise you, but be an example. Earn it in these following six ways.

Earn it to the glory of God. I want to close. The positive side of things is not really possible apart from something I read in the book of Titus chapter one.

It says, not self-willed. Not self-willed. Are you a self-willed person? You do what you want to do, and then get God to rubber stamp your plans.

It'll never work. We'll keep on stumbling and falling the rest of our life, fruitless without power, until we get to the place where we're not self-willed. Ephesians 6, the opposite side, says, doing the will of God from the heart.

In the sense of Psalm 40, which is in part a prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ, I delight to do your will, O my God. Yes, your law is within my heart. Do you delight to do the will of God? People say, most of the time I don't know what the will of God is.

Well, then turn to Psalm 143, 8 and 10. It says, Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto thee. That's verse 8. Verse 10 says, Teach me to do your will, for you are my God, your Spirit is good.

Lead me into the land of uprightness. People, don't be satisfied until you have a pure heart, until these other things are true. I mean, they're simple things.

And certainly since God has asked us to be this and do this, and live this way, His power is here to make it possible for us to live this kind of life. The only thing is, it has to be on His terms. You can't bargain with God.

Jacob tried. Dear God, if you'll do this and this and this and this and this and this and bring me home to my father's house in peace, then I'll give you a tenth of everything I possess. What a bargain.

Pray tell me, what would God want with a bunch of flea-bitten sheep and camels? You know, that's all He had to give, really. You don't bargain with God, dear people. You come, oh, listen, just doing the will of God from the heart because, Romans 12, the will of God is good and acceptable.

If it's good, it's not bad. If it's acceptable, it's something you can do. If it's perfect, you can't improve on it.

So, why not go for it? But people are so afraid that if we surrender to God, He's going to make us do something we can't do, something we don't want to do, something that's going to hurt us and our family. Do you know what it comes back to? It comes back to this very simple thing. We don't really believe the Bible is true for us today.

We frame it, we frame the promises sometimes, we admire them, but we don't live by them. Well, God bless you all.

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