

# God Is in Control

by Billy Strachan

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*God is in control, even when we don't understand it, and He can use anyone, regardless of their background or circumstances, to accomplish His plan.*

**Duration:** 47:49

**Scripture:** Genesis 45:5, Proverbs 3:5, Romans 8:28, James 1:5

**Topics:** "Sovereignty", "God's Sovereignty", "Trust in God's Plan"

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## Description

Billy Strachan emphasizes that God is in control of our lives, even amidst trials and unforeseen difficulties. He encourages believers to seek wisdom in faith during tough times, reminding them that many challenges are actually God's way of directing their paths for His purpose. Using the story of Joseph, Strachan illustrates how God can turn what seems like misfortune into a blessing, urging listeners to trust in God's plan and timing. He warns against double-mindedness, encouraging a steadfast faith that accepts God's will, even when circumstances appear adverse. Ultimately, Strachan reassures that God uses every situation for our growth and His glory.

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## Transcript

We said yesterday in our discussions on James chapter 1 that you are faced, you are faced with outward trials, the unforeseen unplanned difficulties that are going to come into any 24-hour period that you did not want, you did not plan, and you did not consider to be compatible with good godly Christian living. But if you will ask for wisdom in the midst of that, you'll get it, a wisdom to understand why and what lesson there is behind this event. But you have to ask in faith, nothing wavering.

There is no room for double-mindedness in this business. And one is apt to end up shouting, as did these early Christians when problems hit them, that it was either the devil's fault or somebody else's fault. Well, in actual fact, much of the problems and pressures and troubles that come to you are not necessarily problems, pressures, and troubles.

Very often it is God directing and adjusting your life so that you find yourself in the right place at the right time for that perfect will. You can see examples of this throughout the scripture where you're apt to think everything's going wrong. From Joseph, who at 17 was the only one in the family that really had a perception of spirit things.

Even though he was a spoiled brat, even though his father made him the favorite when he wasn't even the firstborn. And he was a bit of a snitch. He was always running home to tell daddy what his brothers were doing.

And it's no wonder they developed a hate for him. And yet, the one thing that was in Joseph's credit, as was in his father's credit, who was a bit of a crook himself and a con artist, was that they saw the value in spiritual things because it generally is the most hopeless and worst of people that sees the need for anything that God's got to change the situation. And God told him at 17 he was going to make him a blessing to the family, and he ran home and told them what was the result that threw him out.

He's liable to say, where are you God? What's going on? And finding that God had nothing to say. He could grin his teeth and hope that tomorrow it would be better. I'll rejoice.

To get up the next day to discover they ripped his coat off, dipped it in blood, sold him as a slave to Egypt. And he gets there to Egypt and gets a bit of a job. And he finds that one day his boss's wife tries to seduce him.

And would you credit it? A kid at 17 years of age refused to go to bed with his boss's wife and preferred to go to jail for three years. And he was sent to jail for having done nothing wrong for three years. And then the very people he helped in jail, one of them who promised to help him, got out of jail, never even bothered, got what he wanted, his freedom, good interpretation, the dream, and got his life.

And it wasn't until much later that when the king had a problem with a dream that he remembered Joseph stuck down there in the prison for nothing, told the king about him and he came out and interpreted the dream. And with, before he knew what had happened, he ends up being the chancellor of the exchequer of the Egyptian government, minister of food supply and prime minister, a great political figure next in line of importance in Egypt to the very pharaoh himself. It was when a famine hits 20 years later, he's now 37 and at 37 years of age, living in a foreign country with a foreign wife, he suddenly sees his brothers march into the room looking for food.

And he recognized them. And on the second visit, because he made them go back and bring back brother Benjamin. And when they came back, we're reading Genesis 45.

Then Joseph couldn't contain himself any further. And he cried, cause every man to go out of the room from me. And there stood no man with him while Joseph made himself known to his brethren.

And he wept aloud and the Egyptians in the house of Pharaoh heard it. And Joseph said unto his brothers, I am Joseph. Does my father yet live? And his brothers couldn't answer him for they were troubled at his presence.

I bet you they were. The real interpretation of that word trouble is terrified. And Joseph said unto his brothers, come near to me, I pray you.

And they came near and he said, I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. Now, therefore, be not bereaved nor angry with yourself that you sold me here for God sent me. He sent me before you to preserve your life.

You were just the instrument in his hand. And that's why I said yesterday in closing, some of you are saying, God, why don't you use me? But you see your terms of reference for being used by God is always

up on a platform or in a meeting or preaching or leading people to Christ at the side of a platform or to be noticed, to be a missionary. And little do you realize that in your commitment to Christ, to be a means of blessing to anybody, that blessing isn't always necessarily quote in Scripture.

Very often you find that you're being used in a way that you would never have planned it. And that is maybe not to look at somebody this morning. It might be to upset somebody this morning.

It might be just your own natural temperament that's going to upset somebody this morning and yet God will use it. Never be afraid of being who you are and just saying, Lord, here I am, do what you like with it. And he will.

And I know from sitting on missionary committees that I often wondered what good am I? I joined committees as the youngest man. Some of the other members of the trusteeship or committees are older. And I remember the first occasion going to sit on missionary candidates committees to evaluate a person for going to the mission field.

And I seem to end up being the awkward beggar. They won't send a person unless they get a unanimous vote. And I just seem to get the funny idea sometimes in interviewing some of those people that you're not ready yet.

And I would say no. And I once thought I was saying no too often. And I was having a meal with one of the committee members of one of the societies that I work for.

And I said to him, sometimes I think I ought to resign. He says, why? I said, well, I'm the youngest in the committee. These guys are all older and they're much more wise than I am.

And I just seem to keep putting my foot in it all the time. I just keep to seem to being an awkward beggar all the time. And he says, don't leave.

I said, why? He said, you know, you've saved us thousands of pounds. I said, what do you mean? He said, well, so far in the committee, we've never had anybody as awkward as you. And a missionary candidate comes in and some of these old fellas that are on the committee that have never even been in the mission field, never seen the world, never been out of the town.

They sit there and the first question to a candidate is, do you pray? Mind you, I heard that one of the first meetings I went to. And when they brought the candidate in to interview him, I was staggered. I thought, well, I'll keep my mouth shut.

I'm the new boy. I'll let these senior men do the questioning. I've never known how to question a candidate before.

And so of course he said to the young candidate, do you pray? And I looked at him and I thought, what a crazy thing to ask. I would presume that the guy's gotten as far as a missionary committee with a view to go into the mission field, the guy already prayed. So that's a wasted question.

And so the fella said, oh yes, every morning. And I thought, oh boy, you know, and then the next guy says, do you read your Bible? And I thought I could, I could hammer you. What's that got to do with being a missionary? I'd have presumed if he's gotten this far, he does read his Bible.

And they went on with stuff like this, you know? And so when it was finished, I was sweating, you know? And I said, excuse me, but am I allowed to ask questions? And he said, well, yes, of course. I said, what do you want to be a missionary for? And the kid said, the room woke up as much as, goodness me, you mustn't ask a thing like that. We might lose the sucker, the candidate.

And I asked him that question, the kid turned around and quite looked at me. And so he says, well, as a matter of fact, I couldn't get a job anywhere else. And I said to him, great.

Thank you. That's all I need to ask. So when he went out of the room for deliberations, I said, if it's a unanimous vote, isn't it? And he said, yes.

I said, he's not going over my dead body. I suggest we send him a letter telling him that he goes out and finds a secular job, holds it down for three years and brings us back a testimonial from his non-Christian foreman and his non-Christian employer. And if that's good enough, we might consider him for the mission field.

Why should God get the rubbish that nobody wants to employ? And I remember doing it, but I thought afterwards, oh, you're just a stick in the mud. You're just a nuisance. And this guy said, no, don't.

He said, you know, you've saved us thousands because we're no longer sending people to the field that last half a term, come back and leave the mission field. Now we're sending people out to stay out. Because do you know that even today, because of this funny lie that goes around, that the real evidence of commitment to Christ is to go to the Far East or to go to South America, to be a missionary in a foreign country, that out of every 10 applicants to the mission field that go to the mission field, seven of them come back and never go back again after the first term of office.

Out of the three that go back, two of them should have had the guts to stay home, but were too proud to admit it. One goes out and doesn't want to come back because they're where God put them. And you'd be amazed at the money that's been spent training people, getting them out there.

And then after a difficulty, after two and a half years of finding that the problems are just the same out there as they are in Soho, Greenwich Village, Berkeley, Copenhagen, they suddenly discover that life is not any more holy and they come back and they quit. And to me, it's always easier to sit and put up a red light to prospective missionaries and change it to green. Everybody knows after a red light comes a green one, but I tell you what everybody hates and that's seeing a green light and then try to put on the red one.

You always put your foot down when you see yellow coming up because you know the next one's red. Nobody likes to be stopped, but everybody loves being started. So I'd rather keep them at red for a while and then give them green when you're convinced.

And so sometimes I've discovered that my own awkward, cursed nature, I'd love to be a smoothing, polishing, loving, syrupy gushing kind of Christian that everybody loves. But all the tools in the box for shaping a man of God aren't for polishing. Some of them are rasps and I never chose to be like this, but I just happen to be a chisel or something.

It's not my problem. I can't make myself what I'm not. And so sometimes the greatest office that some of you will have is to sit in a committee and be awkward.

Sit in a committee as treasurer and say you're not getting any money and find that that's God's will. And years later, people will look back with thankfulness that somebody awkward that God could use. Somebody whose personality just didn't agree with people and it stopped a person from going in the wrong direction because we do pray thy will be done.

And God says, okay, to get my will done, I might have to adjust a few circumstances, get a few awkward people around that won't just let your papers go through, won't let things go ahead, hold things back so that I get you where I want you. And so one has to learn that although human instruments are instruments of awkwardness at time to stick you down a hole, to shift you to another area behind it all, if we're thankful and we're taking the risk of faith, we'll know that it was God. They were merely the instruments of God.

He says, God sent me before you to preserve your life for these two years have the famine been in the land. And yet there are five years in which there shall neither be eating or harvest. And God sent me.

You didn't. I thought you did when you ripped my coat off, stuck me in a hole, sent me to Egypt. I thought you did for 20 years.

I thought you did. But now I see God sent me before you to preserve your posterity in the earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it wasn't you that sent me here, but God.

It wasn't you that sent me here. It was God. I thought it was the enemy.

I thought it was you. Now it's taken me 20 years to look back and say, that was God. And the trouble with you guys is you won't wait 20 seconds to look back.

You want to know now, was that God or wasn't it? Hey, why not give him 20 years? Give him 20 years to show you what's going on. I've had that here. Come back all ready to be a big teacher in the school.

Never got teaching out in that field, delivering lambs out of ewes, washing dishes, printing in the print shop, cooking in the kitchen, papering and decorating bedrooms, folding pieces of paper for hours on end, sweeping, cement mixing, wall building, gardening, all of that. While younger people were coming in with netty suits and little suitcases and speaking and going off again. And they never only came in and did that.

They enjoyed coming in and stabbing me with saying, well, Dr. Strachan, when are you going to teach? And that hurt. That hurt. But when you wait 19 years and take over the school and sit down with your first committee meeting and start looking around the room and you suddenly realize you've been through every department.

And that's why the others never went through any departments. God wasn't leading them to this position of leadership. And so you find that you went through a tough time for 19 years, everybody laughing at you.

And then one day you sit down and you're the leader. And you find that there's not one person in this place from the gardener to the cook, to the shepherd, to the person cutting down trees, to the person printing in the print shop, typing in an office, sticking stamps on envelopes, folding pieces of paper, decorating rooms that can come up and say to me, what would you know, Strachan? You just sit in your office talking to students or running around the world preaching. You don't know what it's like to be in a kitchen all day over a steaming hot stove.

Yes, I do. Yes, I do. You don't know what it's like to be out there in the frost shoveling cow muck.

Hey, I've been up to here in sewage. In fact, I've been under it. They still say the smell still lingers with me yet.

But you know, I look back with thankfulness. I couldn't understand it. I couldn't understand why I was being treated the way I was being treated.

But it was because God knew where he was taking me. Nobody else did. And they all thought I was the dog's body, the doormat.

But it was God. God was preparing me for a job that I would know every pain connected to every place. And remember, I too was a student.

I understand students, and I understand student life, and I understand student hurts, and I understand students temperaments, and I understand students feelings. Why? Because I've sat where you've sat in this very school and being a student. I'm still here because I'm still paying off my fees.

I must be finished soon. But they tell me it'll be another year or two. But I know what you go through.

Don't think that man wouldn't know. He doesn't know what it's like to be where we are at this desk five hours a day. Oh, yes.

Well, he doesn't know what it's like to feel tired when a guy's lecturing and fall asleep. Rubbish. There's one I just didn't get.

I mean, I was too young for Bible school as a Christian. I was 22 when I came, but I was too young a Christian. I don't remember a thing of the lectures.

Not a sausage. I couldn't even take notes. By the time I'd stopped to discover whether I could spell a word or not, he'd passed.

He'd gone. And I wasn't like Israel. I couldn't just stand up and shout, hey, wait.

So I mean, I just sat there and I just looked. So I was accused of being so unspiritual by everybody around me, but I listened. In fact, I think I got more going into my heart than they did putting down on paper.

But I just listened. Well, there was one guy I just couldn't get a thing. So one of the gifts that I've had in my life, and my family will confirm it for you, is that I happened to sleep with my eyes open.

I had some of the greatest fellowship of dreams while I was in class. And I remember that lecturer taking me on an outreach team right after Bible school. And we were sleeping, all of us, the team of guys, in the basement of a Salvation Army citadel in Burnley in Lancashire.

And there was about six of us in three double beds in a kitchen. I cooked a whole three-course meal in a brown kettle. I didn't have any pans the first couple of days, and so I cooked a whole three-course meal.

And he was a converted Jew. And so when he sat down to his first lunch, he was halfway through it, and he was at the custard stage. When he said, I looked around the little kitchen and said, who on earth did you make this? I said, is it good? Does it taste nice? He said, well, yes.

I said, then just get on with it and don't ask questions. But I think I gave the show away when I poured the tea and a lump of mince fell out the spout into the cup. But apparently there was one night, one morning

that they'd gotten up and I was still fast asleep.

But he'd come, he'd been speaking to me, and then he finally came over and had said something and looked at me. And he had said to the other student, is he alive or dead? I said, he's lying over his eyes. He's like absolutely.

And the student, his name was Jim somebody or other. He had been in the same room with me all winter. And he came over and says, oh, he's just like that all the time, day and night.

He says, he's fast asleep. And he covered my head up with a sheet. He says, he'll wake up in a minute or two.

I've even had my eyes poked out by people who thought I was pretending. And the one guy came up and did that thinking that I would shut my eye at the last minute and stuck his fingers straight in my eye. No, I woke up.

What's the matter? The classic was my wife and I go to Mr. Van Dorn's for an evening and he put on some lovely music and started chatting. And eventually Grace said, it's no use. You better talk to me.

He's been asleep. So after a bit, after a bit, I said to him, yes. And he looked at me and says, you just shut up.

You didn't hear that. You see, we've had a wonderful conversation for about 20 minutes. You've been out like a door.

But I mean, I sat in class. I couldn't take notes. I couldn't take notes from some guys.

I even slept in class. But with my eyes open, so they thought I was concentrating. But I mean, but here I am today.

I'm here. And I even look back with thankfulness, thankfulness that, you know, even in a workday, you can't go out there and say, well, it's all right for him. We go out there and slosh around in the rain and slosh around in the fields.

And what would he know about workday? Well, I have a workday. You wake up and you're hot. I have to chop the wood at my place.

I have to light the fires, take the ashes out each morning. I have to wash dishes. I have to go up and mend the roof, clear the gutters of the falling leaves, cut the grass and clear it all up.

So I mean, I'm not, I'm not sitting at home reading comics and playing Monopoly on a Friday. I don't take students home to do my garden. I do it myself.

I don't take teams home to decorate and paint my house. I'm still doing that. And I have to project doing these things so that because I know that as soon as school's finished, I'll be away across the other side of the world for a couple of months.

And so I mean, I've got to get all of that done at times between lectures. You're running and doing things. Uh, so don't, you know, sometimes people put up a big pity party and they think on a Friday, where is he? Probably sitting having coffee and biscuits in front of a roaring fire, reading a book.

Not in my home. We work. So, you know, I understand how you feel.

I understand how you feel. And I know there are things you would love to do that you feel would be better to do. But hey, through it all, through it all, God knows, sees, loves you.

And you might not understand today things you've gone through, but you will later. And I'm thankful. I was asked by the leader of the entire operation.

Well, was it worth it these last 19 years? And I had to admit, yes, it was worth it. Now, but not at the time I was going through it because I had no idea of direction. And remember that I had no idea of what direction I was going in.

I hadn't a clue. If you'd asked me all these 19 years, what's the will of God for your life? I would have said, I don't know. Some sort of just servant, I suppose, serving here to the day I die.

You just turn back a page or two to Hebrews 11. Have you ever noticed verse 8, by faith Abraham, when he was called to go out to a place that he should afterwards receive for an inheritance, he obeyed. He took the risk of faith and went, he obeyed, and he went out and he hadn't a clue where he was going.

That's faith, that's risk, stepping out and not having a clue where he was going, but he went. And boy, you'll look back one day with thankfulness, even though you don't understand all that you're going through now. You see it repeatedly.

It was wonderful in those days in the palace at Jerusalem to wake up and have a servant there where you could wash your hands, wash your face, another servant holding your clothes and you put them on because you were a prince in Israel. He said your prayers and you went to breakfast and it was all prepared for you. You didn't have to wash up.

God is good, God is great. You could look out the palace windows in Jerusalem and see poor beggars in the street as you were covered in beautiful clothing. Those were great days.

And it's all right having faith when it goes good, but what happens when you wake up one morning and see the armies of Nebuchadnezzar bombarding the walls, marching into the palace and arresting you, taking you off to Babylon away from your country as a prince in Israel. And they not only get you there, they give you new names. From now on you will be known as Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and Belteshazzar.

And not only that, they took them and made them eunuchs. And so there's Daniel, a teenager, Meshach, Shadrach and Abednego, teenagers. And not only are they taking off to Babylon as princes in Israel with a faith in God.

Surely if we were the ones with a great faith in God, we should have deserved, we should have earned an easy ride in life. But now they've taken out one morning and castrated. Reduced to being incapable of ever giving birth to children.

In the teenager life we will never be able to have family. Where are you God? Where are you God? And because he prayed he ended up in that old den of lions. Where are you God? But we look back and we are able to read that he was known as the beloved Daniel.

And God gave him a special relationship and a special love and a special ministry. But today we know what's coming ahead of us in the second coming. You've got the Reverend Jeffrey King coming in a couple of weeks time that will take you through these interpretations of the second coming.

And I mean all of it will be from the writings of Daniel, even Mary and Joseph. Oh my soul does magnify the Lord. My spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

For he hath regarded the lowly state of his handmaiden. Oh from now on everybody's going to call me blessed because that holy thing that shall be born of me shall be the Savior. Oh praise God.

I'm going to give birth to the Savior. Praise God I'm with child of the Holy Ghost. Oh hallelujah.

Yes that's the song. But it only took a few weeks before Joseph came in and she looked at his face and said what's the matter with you? Nothing. Hey I know you.

I only need to look at you and there's something wrong with you. What's going on? Caesar's ordered a taxation. I'll pass it on to the customers.

What are you griping about? Yes but we've got to go to Bethlehem. I can't. God where are you? I can't go in the back of a donkey in my condition.

I could have a miscarriage. I could be mugged, robbed, murdered. And it's wintertime.

50 miles in the back of a donkey in winter in my condition. Gets within sight of Bethlehem. Joseph what hotel have we got? Joseph did you book a room? You didn't book a room.

You forgot. Honestly if you don't do anything yourself you never get it done. What'd that man say? A stable.

Oh God where are you? A stable. Everything's going wrong. No it's not.

Hurry up Mary. The shepherds are on their way. I've already told them you'll find the babe in swaddling clothes lying in the manger and you don't get those in deluxe rooms.

Only in stinky stables. And when the saviour arrived isn't it awful? He was a refugee. He was a refugee.

He wasn't even allowed to stay in his own land. Kicked out of his own home and had to go down and be a refugee and live in Egypt in exile. And when he came back at the age of 12 he knew everything.

Could confound the theologians with his theology. He could have had a talking faith if he wanted one. But he had to go back to Nazareth the slums of society and for 18 years live in the slum of society and be a carpenter.

Oh God why do I have to plane this wood? What on earth do you mean by making me God on the earth use this plane? I mean all I've got is big muscles son. If you knew the size of the beam of wood you're going to carry up a hill that they're going to nail you to you'll be thankful you pushed a plane. I'm not going to be able to send a lily up a hill to a cross.

I've custom built your muscles to carry that beam of wood as far as you'll carry it before you collapse and somebody else will finish the job. Just be thankful. Just be thankful it's me it's not the devil.

Mary it's me it's not the devil. It's not everybody against you it's me. I'm doing everything right.

I said he would be born in Bethlehem. You're living in Nazareth so I've got to kick you out of Nazareth and move you to Bethlehem so that everything will be in accordance with scripture and we are always the ones that think everything's going wrong everything's going wrong everything's going wrong and God says no everything's going right. It's all right.

Stop panicking. Stop the panic. I'll hammer this in all the way through winter.

Everything's all right. There's no need for it. It's double-mindedness because if you've double-mindedness and you pray in the morning thy will be done but the minute an adverse circumstance comes in you don't say well I asked for it.

You end up saying I've got to take the ropes back. This is not God. I've got to take the reins of my life back again.

I've got to take control of my life again and I've got to make my plans to turn this thing the way I want it to go. Too many Christians are like the little old gypsy woman that had a very famous divining stick. She used it as a walking stick but it was a divining stick.

When somebody asked her what do you divine with it she says what road I take next in life through this country as I move around and set up my little caravan site and live with my horse drawn caravan and I make flowers and close pegs and sell them but I'm always moving at the divination of the stick and they said well how do you use it? She said well you see that fork in the road? This stick tells me which road to take and she stood with her back to the fork and threw the stick over her head and looked round and if it didn't land on the road she wanted it to land on she picked it up and tried again. It had nothing to do with guidance. She had her mind made up where she was going to go and so many times we have our own guidance systems.

Oh Lord should I marry Mary? Thou shalt not. I didn't like that. Let's try that.

There must be one that says yes what I said I meant. I don't like that either. There must be a verse that says yes you can marry her.

Shall I go to Africa as a missionary? Where could we find something about Africa? Yes you can go because I want to go. Thou shalt not go. I don't like that.

Let's find this. Thou shalt not go. You're pretty persistent aren't you? I said what I said.

I don't like that either but you know that's exactly what's happening. There are those of you every morning and you're not searching the scriptures to find him. You're reading it to find a verse that will fit with your own plan so that you'll pull it out and use it as an endorsement for what you want to do.

People come to my office. Brother Billy should I or should I not marry this girl? And I've looked at her and said I don't think she's up to much. Boy we didn't ask you to talk to us like that.

What are you asking me at all for? Go and ask God. He'll tell you. How many other preachers have you asked? Well I do ask all the guest speakers and I've asked Mark and I've asked Ray and I've asked Dirk and I've asked Barbara and I've asked Carolyn.

Yes you're taking an opinion poll and if nine out of ten people in the staff say yes marry her you'll say that was the will of God. Well a load of rubbish. It might be the one that has the cheek to say no don't.

That could be the will of God. So don't take opinion poll. I don't go for opinion poll.

Of course we like it that way because if the pastor's daft enough to map your life and future and tell you to take this job marry that person then when it all goes wrong you look up to God and say it wasn't my fault I was misguided by the pastor. What a lovely let out. My marriage is breaking up but it wasn't my fault God.

It was the pastor told me to marry her. That's why I'll never say yes. I'll just always tell you go and find out.

Should a Christian wear lipstick or should they not? I looked at the girl and I said what's the matter with your knees? And she looked at her knees. She said I don't wear lipstick in my knees. I said I know that but can they bend? She said oh yes.

I said well you ever thought of kneeling down on them and saying father do you want me the way you've made me? They're all touched up. He'll tell you. You know why they call it makeup don't you? It makes up.

I don't know you know I just I just can't understand the way that some girls feel they're the worst thing on earth and that they've got to make a good outward job to catch a man. Personally if I don't if I don't see the real you I don't want the touched up stuff goodness. I mean I'm not against it.

I'm not against girls wearing makeup but you know some girls if you don't mind my saying sort of spend far too many hours on what they look like and if they spent as much time preparing their heart as they did their face they'd be spiritual giants. Spiritual giants and that's not saying girls be dowdy. God looks in the heart.

Man looks in the outside so a man does like to look at something nice. I'm all for it but it's the priority of the thing. I think sometimes you know it's just an over emphasis on making the good look good and then trapping the wrong kind of partner because they took you on the basis of what they saw not on the basis of what you are and I'll tell you this if they don't take you on the basis of what you are it's not going to work.

It's not going to work and I told the girl go and ask God. He'll tell you whether you should wear it or whether you shouldn't. He'll tell you whether to do this or do that.

He's quite good at speaking for himself and I don't believe in that hierarchical system where God talks to you young people through the leadership and through the parents and doesn't talk to you direct. I'm sorry. He talks to each of us direct.

He's big enough to speak to us personally. In the very first chapter of the book of Joshua what do we read? Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord it came to pass that the Lord spoke to a committee to be formed to make a committee that would be committed to a committee to decide whether or not somebody could be dug up out of the whole group to become the new leader because one has to have a democracy within Christianity and an opinion poll. Is that what it says? No it doesn't.

It says after the death of Moses the Lord spoke to Joshua saying arise and go you're the leader. Yes God speaks speaks to his people. He's big enough to talk to you people and tell you what you ought to do then you go and you do it and don't be double minded.

Stop taking the control back just because it looks like something's going wrong and I'll tell you I'm sick tired telling you if you ever get up in the morning and say our father which art in heaven hallowed be thy name thy kingdom come thy will for me be done on earth in me today as you've already designed it in heaven even if you're having to kneel down at night with stitches in your head you're going to say thank you I asked for it.

Now that's when it gets tough to really have a faith risk God take the consequences experience when you're going to give God freedom to allow anything to enter your life today if the outcome of the anything that enters your life today is going to be a blessing to you and teach you to grow up and be strong in the Lord then if it's a broken leg by the end of the day if it's a death by the end of the day if it is putting you into less hyperactivity into a limitation in your life where for the rest of your life you have to work inside a bounds of limits that everybody else doesn't have to keep themselves limited to you have to learn to say I asked for that I wanted your will I've got it and whether everybody else can't wait for me can't slow down to let me catch up with them is of no

consequence I have to live in the bounds that you've set for me thank you thank you thank you and you'll find in the long run that you'll look back with thanks that you were just the right size shape temperament gifts and all of the things that you thought were awful circumstances trials temptations testings that poured into you hey that was God that was God he says I heard you you wanted my will so I was just making certain adjustments so that you'd get it when I was just preaching I think about seven months I was in the northeast of the country and they said well take me to meet one of our deacons I said oh was he in the service they said no and as they drove me to the home to meet him they said we want to let you know he's paralyzed from the neck down he can only move his lips that's

all he's moved in years and I thought oh no how can I make that man happy how can I be a blessing lord to a man that's paralyzed what am I going to say what scripture am I going to say how can I cheer him up I marched into his bedroom and it was like sunshine the man cheered me up I was really low I didn't know I'd never tackled a situation like that he says come on in Bill I've been hearing your ministry through the loudspeaker and I wanted to meet you come on in have a seat sit near the bed where I can see you and I said well I said this is what you call being a deacon that's a great way to get a day off isn't it I say I get lots of days off and he said thanks for talking to me like that I said well I didn't know what else to say he says yeah most of them don't half of them come in and

cry this is the only new best place for me I said what do you mean well he says I used to be a deacon active and I was doing everything and he says in one of my prayers one morning I suddenly got a glimpse of all of my activity for the church and saw that I'd never really prayed or had a prayer life and I said father teach me to pray he says the next day I was out with my boy cutting holly off a tree to decorate the church for Christmas and I only fell six feet off the tree and I lay there and I said to my son get to the ambulance I broke my neck and he says I've never moved since and he said you know something I've learned to pray this is it's the only thing I get doing he says my wife wakes me up in the morning and she cleans me and she rubs me down with spirit and puts me back in my

back and and gives me my breakfast and then I just put the sheet over my head and I start my prayer list and he says now just to shut my eyes and I can see every child I've ever remembered that came in and out of our church and I pray for them name by name then I see every adult that I remembered and pray for them name by name I see the pastors that have all been through the church and the deacons I've seen the visiting speakers that have come through I see all the missionaries and he says and it just so

happened that I was saying to the Lord because a brother recently died you've never filled that space between nine o'clock in the evening and 10 past nine who do you want me to put in there and in hearing your message I asked my wife to tell the pastor to bring you because I believe the

Lord wants me to put you into that slot so that every day between nine in the evening and 10 past from now on I'll be praying for you I was deeply moved and he says Bill the people cry for me and if they only knew I'm in the best place in the world and you know Dick Newton was in that condition I think several years when I met him and it was only about two or three years ago that he went to be with the Lord that was over 25 years he lay like that as a prayer warrior that could only move his lips and his eyes but boy he used them all down those years in prayer and so many of us as Christians we promise to pray for each other and we never do but I tell you as I traveled the world I was always confident of one thing I know somebody that's praying for me and that was Dick Newton that's when

it's tough that's when it comes out the realm of a talking faith to a walking faith when you end up saying thy will be done Lord teach us to pray would you pray like that well listen if you ever pray thy will be done quit griping because what takes place was his will stop being double-minded let's have a word of prayer father that's a dangerous word to pray because this class is just finishing right now we're about to walk out we're about to go and have tea we're about to go and open mail we're about to talk to each other and it's so dangerous to even dare to say right now thy will be done because God we've just no idea what's going to hit us it could be something nice it could be something we don't like oh God teach us to trust you and to know that you're doing everything well for thy

name's sake Amen

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