

# Brokenness Study #6 - After Brokenness What Then?

by Charles Stanley

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*The sermon emphasizes that brokenness is essential for spiritual growth and aligning our lives with God's purpose.*

**Duration:** 50:42

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, John 12:24, Romans 6:14, Romans 6:18

**Topics:** "Brokenness"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of brokenness and its significance in a person's life. He explains that humans have a body, soul, and spirit, and that before being broken, there is a constant struggle and friction within oneself. The speaker emphasizes that surrendering and laying everything down before God is not a loss, but a victory. He then explores the aftermath of brokenness, stating that it gives individuals a new perspective on God's purpose for their lives. The sermon concludes with a reference to John 12:24, where Jesus explains that unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it cannot bear much fruit.

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## Transcript

Our greatest enemy is not from without. It is that old self-life, that spirit within us, that desires to act independently of God. And unless that spirit of independence is broken, here's what you can expect, and I want you to listen carefully.

It's going to hinder your relationship to God. It's going to dull your sensitivity to God. It's going to delay God's purpose in your life.

It's going to deny you of the peace and joy that you're looking for in life. It's going to diminish your effect, the good effect that you could have upon others. And not only that, but it is going to give Satan a greater place of opportunity in your life for a greater stronghold than ever before.

And it's going to deprive you, deny you of the blessings that God has in store for you, you would have had, had you obeyed him in your life. Now, brokenness always involves repentance over sin, the sin of rebellion, and it always involves the submission of our spirit to him. So therefore, it is oftentimes very painful, especially if I have held on to something, some area, some relationship, some thing, some desire,

some ambition, some goal in my life that is not of God, sometimes it's very painful to let that go.

But God breaks us in order to bless us. And I want you to turn, if you will, today, this is our last message in the series on Brokenness, the Way to Blessing, and the title of this message is After Brokenness, What Then? Chapter 12 of the book of John, this was the text in the very first message on brokenness, the principle. The 24th verse, it's all wrapped up in this one verse.

Jesus said it this way. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.

After brokenness, what then? And if you recall, we said in the very beginning that Jesus has used a beautiful illustration here, something of nature. You can take one grain of wheat, as long as it lays on the barn floor, there it is, is one grain. But when you take that grain and you place it in the earth and you cover it, then its environment, the moisture, the heat, begin to work on that outer shell of that grain.

Before long, the outer shell is broken. And when it is broken, that kernel of life begins to protrude its way up through the earth, through the soil, and before long you have one stalk of wheat. On that stalk, let's say there are anywhere from 50 to 100 grains.

If you took those 50 or 100 grains, laid them on the barn floor, there'd only be 50 or 100 grains. But if you took each one of those and placed it in the earth and let it also die and be broken, out of each kernel will come new life. And out of each kernel of new life will become a new stalk and more grains.

You could have 100 million bushels of grain, out of one little grain, if you kept on replanting every single grain. Notice what Jesus said in this verse. He says, Except the grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abides alone.

But if it dies, if it's broken, it bears much fruit. Now, I want to say what I have said every week and said it on purpose to repeat so that you will never forget it, that God breaks us in order to bring us to spiritual maturity and supernatural ministries in our lives, and that his process is always the same. It just takes longer for some people, shorter for others.

He targets the areas that you and I are still unsubmitive in. He arranges the circumstances by which he's going to break us. He chooses the tools with which he's going to break us, and then he controls the pressure and the timing it'll take to bring us into submission to his will.

If we, by our strong determination, self-will, and insistent rebellion toward him, refuse to yield no matter what God does, he'll put us on the shelf. But my friend, that is the most costly decision you ever make. But let's say that you do yield, you do surrender, and that you are broken.

What can you expect when God breaks you? Pain and suffering, yes, at times, depending upon what it is that God is dealing with. But after brokenness, what then? So I want you to jot down three things primarily, but there'll be many others that you might want to jot down for your own help. It's one thing to listen to a sermon, it's something else to chew on it, to meditate on it.

And this whole series is not the kind of series you run out and do something immediately because, you see, this whole series isn't something you do, it's something God will do in your life for his good and for yours. The first thing that I want you to notice that happens when a person is broken is this, you get a new view of God's purpose for your life. You get a new view of God's purpose for your life.

Now what is the view that most people have of their life? And I want you to be open when I say this because otherwise you're going to be prone to be very defensive and say, well, oh, I wouldn't think that at all. But here is the most prominent view and the popular view that people have and don't even realize they have it. And that is that God really exists for us.

God exists for us. We pray, we want him to answer our prayers, we want him to heal our body, we want him to prosper our finances, we want him to bless our relationships, we want him to help us on our job, we want him to give us a promotion, we want him to help us, and on and on and on we go so that God for all practical purposes is a divine errand boy responding to the commands and requests and pleas and cries of us. But the truth is that for many people, God isn't God, we play God.

And for all practical purposes, though theologically, we say that God is sovereign. And in our minds, we know that we are his children, he's our God. But the truth is, we treat him for all practical purposes as if he existed in our behalf.

God, I want you to bless me here and I want you to do this. And we send him up multitudes of requests all the time. And the truth is, we are the ones who are at the center of our life.

And for most people and every lost person and far, far too many Christians, the truth is the world revolves around me, my needs, my desires, my requests, what pleases me, what makes me happy, what makes me peaceful, what satisfies me, what gratifies me, what makes me feel good. The truth is that's the way the world lives. And that's the way many Christians live.

So when it comes to practical theology and practical interpretation for God, our attitude is God is existing up there somewhere in our behalf. And when I need him, I want him to be Johnny on the spot to meet my needs right now. You think of most of the theology you listen to.

It is a self-centered, self-seeking kind of Christian life. God, I want you to heal me. God, prosper me.

God, bless me. God, protect me. God, do this.

Me, me, me, me, me, me, me. And God is simply the vehicle by which it happens. The truth is that God is at the center of the universe.

And the truth is that all of us are moving around God. He is the one. He is the sovereign.

Christ Jesus is the Lord. He's not our errand boy. He's not somebody out there waiting for you to punch in the next request so that he can jump to it and send his angels to meet five more prayer requests that you have so that you'll keep your faith and still believe in him as God.

God is in need of nothing. We treat him like an errand boy. And he's to do what we say.

Oh, we come on in verse sanctimonious. Oh, God, our gracious heavenly father, great creator of the ends of the earth, great giver of all gifts. And then we start giving him commands.

Do this, do this, do this, and do the other. For all practical purposes, God exists for us. We're at the center of the universe.

And what really matters is how does life and the situations and circumstances and environment affect me, not how do they affect the will and purpose and plan of God? You know what you call that in the Bible? It's

real simple. It's called idolatry. Now, if I should say to you this morning that you have another God in your life, you may say, well, who are you to say that I have a God in my life? So I'm not calling you by name.

I'm just saying in general. Many of you are living in idolatry. No, nobody can show you a wooden, silver, a gold, or emerald God.

And somebody says, well, what do you call the name of the God in my life? It's real simple. Your name. Because, you see, you've become your own God.

All of life revolves around you. What really matters in life is how I feel, how I am affected. Listen, when you are broken, my friend, what really matters is what does God think? What pleases the Lord God? My focus changes.

And what happens is this. All of a sudden, it's not how do I feel? What do I think? How can I please God? What pleases the Lord? What's his priority in my life today? What's his schedule today? What is his will? What is his purpose? Is my life glorifying to God? Is God accomplishing his purpose today? Is God being honored by our life? What a difference. Priorities begin to change.

Not my schedule and my plans and my goals and my dreams, but Lord, what do you want to accomplish today? You see, the whole focus changes. All the priorities change. Once God breaks us, what happens is our will becomes submissive to his will.

And when our will becomes submissive to his will, his purposes take priority in our life. When his will becomes priority in my life, it's no longer what pleases me, but what is honorable to God. So I want to ask you this morning, who's God in your life? Oh, you say, I don't worship myself.

Listen, if you spend most of your time thinking about yourself and your decisions are based on how you feel, how it prospers you and what makes you happy and you peaceful and you quiet and all the rest of the things, who's really God in your life? You see, when our stubborn, rebellious, indifferent, idolatrous will is broken, and that's what brokenness is all about, that is this self-life living independently and acting independently of God, when God begins to work in our life, all of a sudden all that changes and God becomes first. You wake up in the morning thinking about him. He's on your mind all during the day.

When decisions come, you check with him. And when offers are made, you check with him. When opportunities open, you ask him.

Because you see, life revolves around him, not you. And when brokenness comes, that is the first result. We get a new view of God's purpose in our life.

We are existing for him. Our life's purpose is to glorify him. Our life's work is to honor him.

Our energy is to be from him. It is his life, not our life. He is the sovereign of the universe, not I. This is his life, not mine.

We are his purchased possession, not our own. He bought us with his blood. We didn't buy him with anything.

He purchased you with his own blooded calvary. We are the purchased possession of God, purchased by him to be used by him, to honor him, to glorify him. God and God alone must be the center of all of life and surely our life.

And then when you're broken, all of a sudden, God takes on a whole new perspective. It's all of God and none of us. Second thing that happens as a result of brokenness, a new freedom in our spirit.

A new freedom in our spirit. And many of you need a new freedom in your spirit because you see, you don't realize it, but you are bound up in all kinds of emotional bondage, guilt, fear, rejection, anxiety, hostility, anger, you name it, it's all there. When God breaks you, my friend, it's amazing what happens.

Now listen, brokenness always involves sin. It is the sin of rebellion. It is always that.

Now if somebody walked up to you and said, well, you're just rebellious, you'd probably say, well, who are you to say that I'm rebellious? Here's what I want to ask you. Many of you have been here through all six of these messages. Many of you have listened to all of them.

You recall in the very first message I said, what is that you're holding on to that God has said, you've got to let that go. You've got to give that up. And five weeks later, you're still holding on to it.

That's what you call a rebellious will. God says, let it go. And you say, no, I'm not going to let it go.

That is rebellion. Now, rebellion may be very subtle, but rebellion is still rebellion. Rebellion says, I'm going to have my way, whether you like it or God or anybody else likes it.

Now what we say is, oh, Heavenly Father, I want to thank you in Jesus' name. Lord, you know I make mistakes. God, you know everybody has their problems and their little sins.

And I thank you that you understand mine. My friend, that won't cover up rebellion. There it is, still glaring at me.

Am I still going to insist on having my way? Am I still going to hold on to what God said you've got to let go? That's rebellion. I've got to have it my way. Now, let me show you what happens here.

We said a new freedom in your spirit. The first thing you begin to experience once you're broken in your spirit is this. Remember, he breaks your will.

But in your spirit, here's what happens. You begin to feel this unusual harmony going on inside of you that you never felt before. Now, let me tell you why that's true.

Remember we said we have a body, soul, and a spirit. This body with its five senses is the way we relate to the world, to our environment, with all of its senses, all of its desires, all of its needs, all of its appetites. And then there is the soul of man, his mind, will, emotion, his conscience, his consciousness.

And then there is his spirit. Now, before you are broken, there is this continuous struggle and friction that goes on. And here's the struggle and friction.

These five senses of ours have needs. We have needs for beauty. We have a desire for beauty, a desire for food, appetites for food, a desire, appetite for knowledge, a desire, appetite for sex.

There are many desires, all are legitimate. When you and I are living in rebellion and playing God in our life and living in a subtle form of idolatry, that's what it is, then these senses get out of control, these desires get out of control. But when we are broken and our will is brought into submission to his will, here's what happens.

This body takes its rightful place. That is, these desires and appetites, legitimate as they are, are brought into submission to what? To the Spirit of God. Our emotions are brought into submission to the Spirit.

Then the Spirit within us controls our mind, our will, our emotion, our conscience, our consciousness, and also is in control of our body, so that the body and the whole set of emotion, mind, will, and emotion, and the Spirit are all now working in harmony with each other. What happens? The war is over. The struggle within is over.

That strife is over. Why? Because Romans 6, notice there if you will, Romans 6, one of Paul's most important chapters he ever wrote, 6, 7, and 8, says in the 6th chapter, verse 14, for sin, that is the power of sin, shall not be master over you. Listen, that is the will of God, that sin would not reign over you.

Verse 18, and having been freed, set free from sin's enslaving power, reigning power. Now listen, when you and I were saved, the truth is, and I want you to listen very carefully, this is the key. When you and I were saved, the truth is, sin's power was broken.

Now, if I did not realize that, I'm going to go on in my own strength, trying to suppress these desires to get out of control. And so we go on in our life, struggling with them, trying to suppress this one, and trying to keep this one down, and always trying to deal with these legitimate appetites that God has given us. But when we come to brokenness, and this independent will within us is humble and submits to the will of God, and there is nothing left out there that we are holding on to, no thing, no desire, no purpose, no plan, no appetite, no relationship, when it's all yielded and surrendered, and my will and my desires and my dreams are all laid down, what happens is that body, soul, and spirit begin to function in the most beautiful, harmonious way, because now the spirit is in control.

I've made a decision to give up all my rights and to say, God, every appetite, every desire, every dream, every goal, I'm going to trust you to meet those in your own time, and therefore I yield. You know what happens? And this is why I believe personally, when a person is spiritually right with God, now listen carefully to what I'm saying, they have a greater potential for good health than those who live in rebellion toward God, because if the body and the soul and the spirit are functioning properly together, and there is harmony and no friction, then naturally there's going to be a better response in the whole physiological being. So one of the first things that happens is that there is a harmony between spirit, soul, and body.

There's a second thing that happens. We begin to experience naturally from that an inner quietness and peace. You know why? Because I've laid down my rights, laid down my demands, this is what I must have, this is the way it's got to be, and see, all of that causes war and turmoil and frustration.

And you see, my friends, some of you who are listening, you're going to have it your way. Well, you can, but oh, if you knew the price that you would pay. Oh, you're not going to pay it today.

You see, that's the subtlety of sin. You pay for it tomorrow, and next week, and next month, and next year, after year, after year, after year, after year, after year, after year. Playing God, worshiping yourself, making God your errand boy, having it your way, doing your own thing is absolutely disastrous for a lifetime.

And you see, there's so many folks who run to the pill bottle, and to the booze bottle, and to this affair, and to that experience, trying to find peace and joy. My friend, it's not out there, it's on the inside. And until the Lord Jesus Christ sits upon the throne of your heart and he starts calling the plays, there's always going to be this struggle, this tearing between, this emotional will, rebellion.

The will says one thing, the spirit says something else. The will says, I'm having it my way. God says, I want it my way.

God says, this is best. The will says, this is best. And so there's no inner peace, no inner quietness.

But you see, once you give up your rights, once you lay down your demands, what happens? The war is over. And there's an inner quietness and inner peace that begins to develop in your life. A third thing that happens to a person's spirit is this.

There is a spirit of meekness. That does not mean weakness, but it means your will has been broken, you have humbled yourself before God, and now you become teachable. You become open, you become transparent, no longer defensive.

A spirit of meekness, openness, teachableness, a spirit of humility, now able to listen, now able to learn, not spending your time defending yourself. And he says in this passage of scripture, if you'll notice, he says, and when this grain of wheat dies, it does what? It bears much fruit. It bears much fruit.

Where's the fruit coming from? It's coming from within. You think about the competitive spirit that exists among Christians. I've got to have one of those because she has one.

And so what happens? We let the world and its whole program of greed and idolatry flood right over into our lives. And so we get this competitive spirit. If she gets promoted, I've got to get promoted.

If he has one of these, I've got to have one. And on and on we go. A competitive spirit.

Did you know that when you lay down all your rights, you're not in competition with anybody? You know why? Because it's just one of you. You don't have to be in competition with anybody else. You don't have to look better, dress better, drive better, live better, make more money, more prestige, more prominence, more recognition.

None of that's important anymore. You know why? Because that's not what you're living for. He's the center of your life.

And that war is over. You say, well, if you lay it all down, you lost. Oh, you surrendered and you threw up the white flag.

And when you threw it up to surrender, you just won. You can't lose laying it all down before God. But I want to tell you that some of you listening and watching and some of you seated right here, you're seated right here.

And the war is going on in you, even while I'm talking and you're defending yourself. And you'll say, I wish you'd be quiet and get on to another point. I had a fellow came down the aisle some few weeks ago.

That's exactly what he told me. He said, I want to stand up and tell you, shut up, shut up, shut up. You know why? It wasn't what I was saying.

It was just the truth getting down there on the bottom level where it can't be covered up anymore. And you have to deal with it. The spirit of meekness says I give up my rights.

This is an age of rights. But my friend, I don't have any rights. If I'm God, I do.

If he's God, I don't have any more. You know what I discovered? It's amazing how he can take care of all my needs. It's amazing how the inner quietness and peace and the spirit of meekness is there.

You know why? Because I'm not troubled about whether these sensual needs I have are met or not. Appetites of food, beauty, and knowledge, and sex, and all the rest, these are appetites God knows how to satisfy in the right fashion. But as long as I'm going to have it my way, listen, if I insist on having it my way and living independently of the will of God, these desires are going to get out of control.

And when they get out of control, there's disaster. God breaks us not to destroy us, but to protect us, to preserve us, and to accomplish his greater, higher purposes within our life. Then there is also the spirit of forgiveness.

It flows more quickly when there's brokenness. You know what happens when you're broken? You don't demand somebody to pay off their debt, emotional debt they owe you because they mistreated you. It is amazing what you can forgive.

And it's amazing how you're not troubled about forgiving it. In other words, you're not getting on your knees and saying, God, I was mistreated. Lord, you know how I've been hurt, but God, I'm going to forgive them anyway.

No. When you're broken, my friend, you know what happens? It's like what they say and what they do just goes right on across you, passes right on through, and it's just like it never happened. You know why? You belong to him.

Whatever they do, they're doing it to you. They're doing it to him. Christ is your life, and that begins to become a living reality.

And all of a sudden, the things that used to hurt you don't hurt you anymore. The things that used to trouble you and irritate you don't irritate you and trouble you anymore. It's amazing what happens to your patience.

It's amazing what happens to your ability to just listen to it and let it go right on by. There was a time when it came in this ear, down in your deep level, and you finally got rid of it, but now it just sort of goes right on through, and you think, well, Lord. And so you don't have to deal with this spirit of antagonism of whether you're going to be able to forgive or not forgive.

It just moves on through. You know why? Because you laid down your rights, and this body and this soul are now under the control, under the submissive control of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is now upon the throne of your life. He's making the decisions, and He's the one who's receiving and giving, and it is His life.

He didn't hold grudges. But you see, before that can happen, that old stubborn rebellious will of ours has to be broken. The power of sin's reign must be acknowledged as broken, and it only happens when I finally submit my will to Him to say, Lord, not what I want, but what You want.

But when He says in this passage, listen, it remains by itself alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit. What else happens there? And that is, not only do we have an eager spirit to forgive, but there's a freedom in our relationship to each other. Now, I mentioned this last Sunday on purpose to drop it on you so you could think about it consciously or subconsciously all week, so I could come back and say it again,

because hearing it one time won't do it.

Now, think about this. When a person has been broken, and their body, and their soul, and their spirit is now working in harmony together in submission to the Lord Jesus Christ, look how that frees us to relate to other people much better. You see, now I'm not struggling in my relationship with someone else to get all I can get out of them and to drain all I can emotionally out of them to satisfy myself and to build myself up, because you see, I already have all I need in Christ.

Now, that's not some preacher's casual saying. That is living reality. When Jesus Christ is freed within you to exert His life through you, you have, there is a sense of confidence, I have what I need.

Now, if I'm trusting the Lord Jesus Christ to meet my needs, physical, emotional, spiritual needs, then I don't have to wait for you to do it. I don't have to depend upon you. I don't have to hope you will.

I don't have to manipulate my circumstances or manipulate relationships. You know why? Because I've been made a whole person. And you see, that's what Jesus does.

You remember He said He came to make men whole. Now, the emphasis today is wholeness of body. Oh, you've got to be healed.

We hear all these messages about getting folks healed physically. I want to tell you something. My friend, until you are healed emotionally, you're not healed.

Until the Holy Spirit heals you from within and your emotions become whole and complete because you've surrendered them all to the Lord Jesus Christ, and that's what He does, He just makes body, soul, and spirit function so beautifully. Everything works together. If that's true, my needs are going to get met, and I don't have to be draining out of someone else and leaning on someone else emotionally, always looking and trying to drain and get.

You've seen people that always like this, always have their hand out. Now, listen, some people don't have their hands out, but they have their heart out. Their emotions are always out here on the edge looking for somebody to please fill up something.

Part of what they're trying to get filled, nobody in the world can fill because only God can bring the genuine satisfaction and contentment. You know what we do to each other? We project on other people an awesome sense of requirement that they can never fulfill. Nobody else can meet all your needs.

You know why Jesus made you to be complete and to be made whole? Only in Him. Now, as long as I'm rebellious and I insist on having it my way, then here's what happens. If I have it my way, then I am in the flesh, in the spirit of rebellion, I'm going to do it my way.

Do you know what that does? That's like throwing rocks and sand in this beautiful harmonious relationship, and all of a sudden it doesn't work anymore. Then we wonder, well, God, why are things working out in my life? I'll tell you why. Because you've still got your hand on something over here that you're not willing to let go.

Once you let it go, then what happens? He makes everything work harmoniously. You know why? Because He's in control. As long as you're playing God, it's not going to work.

I'm telling you, it's not going to work. It can't work. Because we're not whole on the inside until we've laid it all down and Jesus Christ heals us, heals us of natural emotions with which we were born, with which we grew up, with which we adopted and developed.

And He must heal us of that. And that healing only comes when I'm willing to lay down my own self-will and let Him take charge of my life. Then the healing process comes.

That's why people are miserable in their marriages, their relationships, on their job, unwilling to be broken, going to have it my way. I don't deserve that. I deserve better than that.

Since when, if the Lord God is the sovereign of your life, do you and I deserve anything, really? You may say, well, that's too idealistic. My friend, if it were just idealistic, I would not waste your time or mine, nor would I even have the courage to stand up here in front of you and tell you something that is not the truth. It works because it's the truth.

Something happens on the inside to your relationships because something has happened to your relationship to God. Remember what we said? Harmony, inner quietness, the spirit of humility, meekness, that freedom to forgive. And so what happens to relationships? They get stronger, more fulfilling, and two persons now, two different personalities, whole in Christ Jesus, while meeting each other's needs, not dependent upon or emotionally leaning on.

Oh, there'll be times when everybody feels a little something in their heart. But for all practical purposes, two whole, complete persons functioning out of the life of the indwelling presence of Jesus, who's made them both whole. That makes for great relationships.

But then, he says, if you'll notice, he says, it bears much fruit, not only good relationships, but also there is an unspeakable joy. Now, you know, many of you stand up every Sunday, and you sing in your church or in this fellowship, and you sing songs, and the difference is this, that some people are singing right out of here, just like that. They look at the page, and in their mind, they're the words, they know the tune, so they sing.

But for many people, it's not deep down out of their spirit. There's no real joy in their life. You didn't wake up this morning anticipating God to work in your life, and when we sing choruses, you wonder, why do these folks raise their hands sometimes? What's with these people, anyway? My friend, when you're broken and the Spirit of God is in control, you don't want to just lift your whole hands, you just want to lift your whole life to God, because it all belongs to Him, and you're freed, freed from sin's reign and continuous dominating, paralyzing, imprisoning power in your life.

And my friend, that's something to be joyous about. But there's one other thing, and that is, when a person is broken, finally, there is this overwhelming, indescribable sense of completeness. It's like, Lord, what's been missing here? And you say, what is it? You can't put your finger on it.

You know what it is? I'm not even sure I can tell you what it is, except to say that that which once was yours is now His. And when it's all His, it's like He put the cap, He puts the cap of joy and contentment in a person's life. Is any of that worth you giving up that handful of dust that you call somebody or something or some dream or some ambition? That's nothing but dust compared to what I'm talking about.

You and I can lose every single thing we have, including our health and our health and our life. We can lose everything but one thing, and that's Jesus. He's the only thing you have you can't lose.

Let me ask you a question. According to the way you spend your time and your thought, is He at the center of your life, the only person you can't lose, the only thing you can't lose? Or is it these temporal things and ideas and plans and dreams and relationships and goals are these the things at the center of your life and demanding your time? You're going to lose it all. When you die, you know what you're going to take with you? Nothing.

Nothing except Jesus. That's all. But there's one third and last thing I want to share with you.

After a person is broken, not only do you and I get a new view of God's purpose for our life, a new freedom, listen, a new sense of freedom, that feeling of freedom, freedom in our spirit. But the Bible says to us also that we get a new power in our service for God. Now, why does that take place and how? Let me tell you how it takes place.

First of all, when this power of sin has been broken in our life and you and I have submitted ourselves to him through repentance and submission in every area, what happens is this. God can now release through you and from within you the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit who indwells every single believer. You know what I can't do until now? You see, as long as we're having our way, some power can get through.

But as long as we're having it our way, what we're doing is we're dictating to God how he's going to do things. As long as we're holding on to anything, we're saying, Lord, I know what you said. And you see the tragedy is it's so subtle.

You can get on your knees, you can read the Bible, you can go to church, you can give your money, but as long as you're holding on, you're in charge. As long as you're in charge, God's power will not flow through you either in your home, in your business, your vocation, in your church. It can't because what we do is we choke up the channel with the rebellious will.

But when we have yielded it, the Spirit of God begins to flow through our life. We can be trusted. New doors of opportunity begin to open and your life begins to have an impact.

You know what will happen? You can say the same words, they weigh more. You can expend the same energy, but there's more fruit. You'll expend less energy with more fruit.

God begins to deal with your life. And I've said this to you week after week. There's some things I deliberately say every single week.

It is not our life. It is the life of Christ dwelling within us. The Christian life is not what you and I do.

The Christian life is Jesus living on the inside of you. You're allowing him to live through you, his life. And that only comes when my stubborn will and my rebellious will is broken and this body and this soul are brought in this spirit, brought into submission to his spirit so that now he is God and we are no longer playing God.

A new power in our service. Why? Because what hindered the flow is no longer there to hinder it. Now we can be trusted with greater places of responsibility, greater opportunities, because God is now going to be glorified.

You see, a person can have eloquence and abilities and talents and charisma and esteem and personality and poise and all the rest and serve themselves under the guise of serving God. Get lots of credit. God has nothing to do with it.

Not one thing does he have to do with it. You know why? Because it's not him. There are people who are gifted enough in life, talented enough to weasel their way through, get lots of recognition, lots of credit.

God's nowhere to be found. The Bible speaks of humility, submission, brokenness, repentance, Christ's life, not our life. So let me ask you a question.

Do you suppose that a lot that's been going on in your life that you gave God credit for, God had nothing to do with? Do you suppose that the real truth is that you've been playing God in your life for so long that now you can't distinguish between you and God? You pray the right prayers and you're in church on Sunday, you're reading your Bible, you're giving to God, you're well-recognized, and people like you. They think you're a fine Christian. But you're guilty of the worst sin God named in all the Bible, the sin of idolatry.

You are playing God in your life and you don't even know it. I'm not being critical, I'm just saying you don't even realize what's happening. Would you be willing to tell him today that you're laying it all down and you want him to be God and that he can do anything he wants to do in your life, but you don't want to miss that harmony and a quietness and peace, spirit of humility, spirit of forgiveness, and wholesome relationships, life full of joy, feeling of completeness.

I want to ask you, what have you got your hands full of that's worth missing all that for? It's not worth it. But you're going to miss God's best. And let me say something to you.

You can listen or watch and you can turn off the television, turn off the radio, turn off the tape and go your merry way. But my friend, you will suffer the consequences because God hates idolatry while he loves the one who's committing it. He has targeted your rebellious spirit.

He wants the best for you. I just want to ask you this morning what you're going to do about it. Are you willing to tell him that whatever he surfaces and whatever he identifies in your life that is hindering his purpose in your life, that you choose today to tell him, God, I lay this down.

You can lay it down by faith. I lay this down. I'm willing to be broken in order that there might be more fruit and in order that my life may glorify you.

I wish I knew how to say it better than I do. Because I love you as a fellowship and I love you for what God can do in your life. I love a lot of you folks whom I've never seen, I've never heard.

Because there's a love in my heart for folks who really want God's best but don't know how to find it. And my friend today, if you will make a decision, it's not going to happen suddenly. But it will happen.

God's right timing, God's right way, he's going to bring you to the end of yourself. And when he does, don't run, don't argue, don't blame, don't try to escape, just lay it down. Just tell him, God, no more fight, I just want what you want, whatever that takes.

Now, you see, that's where I have to stop, because I can't do anything else. The rest of it's between you and God. But I want to ask you one more time, what is that you're holding on to that's going to cost you? A life of happiness, peace, joy, contentment? That's what it's going to cost.

It's already costing some of you. In fact, it's already costing many of you, all of that. You keep holding on.

You're in a state of rebellion, that's idolatry. God hates idolatry, while he loves the idolater. How long are you going to do it? How long are you going to keep fighting with God? Do you realize that's what you're doing? You're fighting God.

I'm going to have it my way. That's playing God, expressing rebellion. You don't have any earthly idea what God will do in your life if you will give up.

It may be painful, and it may hurt. I expect it will. But I want to tell you something.

It'll be worth it. What is that you're holding on to? That you've sat through this sermon, and you have struggled, and you've groaned on the inside? I'll ask you to just take the long look. Because one of these days, ten years from now, five or maybe two or maybe one, you're going to think, Oh God, if I had just listened.

Oh God, if I just had one more chance. Oh God, if I could change my circumstances. It'll be too late.

Too late. Because you played God, and you messed it all up, thinking that you could do better than God can do. Are you willing to tell him this morning that you're getting off the throne of your life? You by faith place the Lord Jesus there, and whatever he wants to break in your life, you yield.

Now you won't know immediately. This is not one of those quick run down the aisle, get it all done things. It takes time, and God has to do the work.

We don't break ourselves. God does the breaking. But we can shorten the time by being willing.

Lord Jesus, for the many who are listening, who already know what has to be yielded, what has to be given up, what they have to die to, what they have to surrender. They already know that, Father. I want to ask you, Lord Jesus, because I love your people, that you have a greater capacity to love them than I do.

Lord, that people would be wise today, take the long look, lay it all down by faith, and let you take out of their life what should not be there, and replace it with something so much better. Some are tired, fighting, God, struggling, rebelling. Some so full of anger, God, taking its toll on their physical body like a cancer it's growing and destroying all at the same time.

There are some folks here this morning, out there, who are watching and listening, who have relationships that need to be severed, financial goals that need to be laid down, vocational ambitions that are wrecked with pride, and for some, just day to day, self-adulterous attitudes that all of life, in their home, on their job, in their social circle, must revolve around satisfying and pleasing them. Oh, God, in Jesus' name, I pray that there might be a great funeral take place here today, a whole lot of dying, God, giving up the war against you and letting you be God once and for all. And, Lord, all you want is a willing spirit.

You'll do the rest. And I want to ask you now, would you grant to these, thy children, wisdom to make that decision, courage to do it? Then wait expectantly for the process which will bless them for eternity. So be it is my prayer in Jesus' name.

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