

Exhortations

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life of wisdom, humility, and obedience to God's commands, and the need to hold on to God's promises and trust in His power and provision.

Duration: 25:05

Scripture: Leviticus 17:11, Joshua 6:20, Proverbs 30:10, Proverbs 30:33, Matthew 27:46

Topics: "Exhortation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of holding onto the promises of God. He uses the analogy of four beautiful and powerful creatures: the lion, the greyhound (or horse), the he goat, and the horse leech. These creatures represent strength, grace, and persistence. The preacher also mentions four things that are never satisfied: the grave, the barren womb, the earth without water, and the fire. He warns against mocking and disobeying parents, using the imagery of ravens picking out the eyes of the disobedient. The preacher concludes by acknowledging that there are things in life that are beyond human understanding.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
Oh, let Him have the things that mold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole
And now, with today's message, here's Pastor Chuck. Now he gets into exhortations in which he exhorts us not to accuse a servant unto his master lest he curse you and you be found guilty. You have enough to do just to take care of your own welfare.

And if you have servants to take care of your own. But don't get involved in another man's servant accusing him to his master lest he curse you and you be found guilty. And there is a generation, he said, that curses their father and they do not bless their mother.

Now, in the Bible, the children are commanded to honor their mother and their father. And this is the first commandment that God gave that had a promise attached to it, that your days may be long upon the earth. But there's a generation in that time who cursed their father, did not bless their mother, rebelled against their father and their mother.

And there's always a heartache to their parents when there comes a schism within the family. The breaking of fellowship. There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes.

And yet they're not washed from their own filthiness. So often what we do, we can justify, we can rationalize. I had a right to do it.

I had every right to do it. I was right in doing it, even though it was wrong, I was right. Generation that is pure in their own eyes.

And there is a generation, oh, how lofty are their eyes. And their eyelids are lifted up. This generation that are so filled with pride.

Lofty. And then there is a generation whose teeth are as swords. And their jaw teeth as knives to devour the poor from off the earth and the needy from among men.

People who are able to kill you with their tongue. It's a sharp sword by which they cut people to pieces. And they use it to devour others.

Now the horse leech has two daughters that are always crying give, give. The horse leech was a leech that, of course, hung upon a horse and sucked the blood. And was never satisfied.

Two daughters that say give, give. So there are three things that are never satisfied. Yes, in fact, there are four that never say it is enough.

I'm satisfied. Full. Actually, there's more than four if you want to really take a look at life.

But the four things that he mentions. The grave is never satisfied. People are always dying.

The graves never satisfied. They are adding to them every day. The barren womb.

That desire to have a child. The barren womb. The earth that is not filled with water.

It seems like you never get enough rain in that desert area over there. Nor in Southern California. There are some places that have more water than they want.

But the fire that say it, it is not enough. So these things that are always, it seems, not satisfied. Cannot say it is enough.

Then he goes on to declare the eye that mocketh at his father and despises to obey his mother. The ravens of the valley shall pick it out and the young eagles shall eat it. When a person was hanged, when they die, the ravens would usually come and pluck out their eyes.

And that's what he's referring to. Now there are three things which are too wonderful for me. In fact, there's four.

And he has an interesting way. There are three. Yay, there are four.

Things that are just beyond my understanding. I just don't understand them. They're things that I don't know.

The way of the eagle in the air. You can follow an eagle for a little while, but soon he's climbing out of sight. And you can't really follow him.

The way of a serpent on the rock. Now you can see the trail of a serpent in the sand, but when he gets on the rock, you can't follow the trail. The way of a ship in the midst of the sea.

To follow after a ship, you know, and you can't see it. There's no way to track it or to trace it. And the way of a man with a maid.

A mystery that I don't understand. Such is the way of an adulterous woman. She eats and then wipes her mouth and says, I have done no wickedness.

So the dangers of becoming ensnared in an adulterous relationship, an adulterous woman. For there are three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it cannot bear. There are four odious things.

A servant when he is reigning. We've dealt with that before. We mentioned Felix in the New Testament who was a slave, maid, governor in Judea and how corrupt he was.

A fool when he is filled with meat. An odious woman when she is married. And a handmaid that is the heir of her mistress.

These things disquiet the earth. They seem to be always a vexation, a problem. A servant when he reigns.

A fool when he is filled with meat. An odious woman, she's odious to begin with. When she gets married, you think, oh, maybe she'll molly up.

No, she gets worse. And then the handmaid that is the heir to her mistress. There are four things on the earth, which are little, but they're exceeding wise.

The ants. They are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer. The ant, of course, is a very common insect.

In fact, the most populous insect in the world. They're not very strong. That is compared to you.

They're very strong in ratio to us. They can carry two or three times their own weight, which you can't do. But how easy it is to crush an ant.

You know, with just your finger you can crush ants. So they're not very strong. And yet they're wise, exceedingly wise, because they prepare their meat in the summer.

An ant's brain cannot be very big. Talk about miniaturization. And we've got all the, you know, the whole thing in the computer industry is microchips, and in TV and so forth, you know, putting things in smaller and smaller little packages and things that can do more and more in just the small little packages.

Think of what a small little package the ant's brain must be. And an ant does have a brain. But it must be awfully small.

And yet, as small as it is, it's able to communicate to the other ants. They're able to work together in cooperative efforts. When an ant finds a piece of bread that's too big for it to carry, it'll get three or four friends, and they'll work together in carrying that chunk of bread off.

And it's fun to watch the ants as they evidently communicate with each other, and they say, hey, man, the kitchen's full of crumbs, you know. They left the honey jar open, you know. And boy, by morning, your kitchen can be covered with ants as they communicate the good news to their friends, and they come to

clean out your kitchen.

And they prepare their food in the summer. The wisdom is manifested by the fact that somehow, some way, this little ant realizes that during the summertime, it must gather its food because ants can't swim. And thus, they cannot go out and forage for food in the winter.

They more or less hibernate in the wintertime because they can't go out. They sort of hibernate within their colonies in the winter because puddles of water they wouldn't be able to cross. So the time for their gathering of the food is in the summer, and they have enough wisdom to know that.

They know that the time is coming when they won't be able to gather their food. And so they have enough sense to gather it while the opportunity is there in the summer, and they prepare for the future. That's where the wisdom is manifested.

There are many people that have brains that are larger than an ant's brain, but they don't have as much wisdom as an ant. Because we know that death is coming. We know that the time when we are able to labor and work for the Lord is coming, the end of that time is coming.

The Bible exhorts us to work, for the night cometh when no man can work. The Bible exhorts us to lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, to make use of the unrighteousness of mammon, so that when we come to the end of the road, we'll be received into the eternal habitations. And yet there are people so foolish as to make no eternal preparation.

Now, you can't do that after you die. Once death comes, the opportunity to lay up treasure in heaven, the opportunity to do something for the Lord, is over. Now, the ant exercises and demonstrates its wisdom in laying up its food in the summer.

Interesting how they do it. The little cut ants cut the leaves off of trees and plants. Of course, during the winter time, the deciduous plants and all, no leaves, and so they can't do that in the winter time anyhow.

Then they gather those leaves, they chew them up and deposit them in one of the rooms of their colony. And that mesh that is formed sprouts little mushrooms. And they tend their garden and eat the mushrooms that sprouts from the chewed up leaves.

The other ants that gather the nectar, and they have these little storage ants that hang from the ceiling and just bloat as the ants deposit all the nectar in them. They blow up like a balloon until they get so fat they can't even move. And they just hang there and have the nectar all stored for the winter time.

Then they go and drink out of the mouth of that ant. Let it regurgitate its product for them. They're a little feeble folk, but I'll tell you they're wise.

The coney is just a feeble folk. The hyrax, no defensive mechanisms. It's an easy prey to the coyote or the bobcat, the other predators.

And the coney knows that it can't defend itself against its predators. And so he makes his home in the rocks. He burrows back in the rocks.

Makes his home in the rocks, demonstrating its wisdom. We know that we are no match for Satan, who goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. If we were as wise as a coney, we would make our home in the rock Christ Jesus.

So that the enemy can't get to you because you're as strong as the rock. I don't need to have a strong defense. I don't need to be able to defend myself.

The Lord is my defense. My home is in the rock. Satan can't get to me.

He may, like the coyote, stand at the entrance and bark all he wants, but he can't get to me. Because my home is in the rock. The locusts have no king.

Yet they go forth, all of them, by bands. The locust conquers by the vast numbers. By itself, a locust is no problem.

It's easy to kill a locust. They're sort of a stubby grasshopper, and they have a tremendous appetite, and they can move through and eat a lot of vegetation. But what they do is they gang up.

They come in such vast numbers that they cover the whole land. You can't even see the ground. It looks like the whole earth is just moving as the locusts devour all of the plants and all of the vegetation.

And it's by sheer force of numbers that they conquer an area, a territory. They work together. And their wisdom is manifested in that use of combined cooperative effort.

And there is, of course, where the weakness of the church is. If the church could ever combine its efforts, if we could quit fighting with ourselves and with each other, if we could lay aside our differences and just join together in a common cause, we could accomplish so much for the kingdom of God. But Satan has used the old strategy of divide and conquer.

And so he divides the church, and he conquers the world. Because the church cannot seem to become united in its effort against him. Too many lone rangers in the church, guys that are out doing their own thing and not willing to work together.

Finally, the gecko, called here the spider, but the Hebrew is lizard or gecko, takes hold with their hands and is in king's palaces. Each little toe of the gecko has a little pad that has several thousand tiny, tiny little hooks. And the gecko can climb right up a pane of glass, holding on.

Now that to me is amazing, how a gecko can hold on to a pane of glass. He can run upside down on the ceiling. And that's always fascinating to me, to see a gecko running across the ceiling.

You wonder, you know, he's holding on with three feet at least while he's putting the next foot down. But to run across the ceiling is a fascinating thing to observe. But he's able to do so because of all of these little claws he can hold on, with these little claws that are in each pad that is on his toe.

And due to the fact that it can climb up glass, climb up smooth walls, run across the ceiling, the little gecko can invade your house. And in Hawaii they do invade the houses, the mansions, king's palaces. And the wisdom is manifested by its ability to just hang on.

God has given to us exceeding rich and precious promises that we need to hold on to. And if we hold on to the promises of God, one day we're going to dwell in a king's palace. The Lord is going to say, come, ye blessed of the Father, inherit the kingdom.

And with David I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. For God has promised me salvation, I'm going to hold on to that promise. Don't let go of the promises of God.

There are three things that go well. Yes, there are four that are beautiful as they go. The lion, which is the strongest among the beasts, and just doesn't turn away from anything.

Oh, to watch a lion going through, it's just a beautiful sight, the grace, the power. The greyhound, which some have, and in the margin of some of the Bibles, is the horse. To see a horse running, to see a horse prancing as they go, it's beautiful.

The he-goat also, to see that goat as it's going up the side of the steep cliffs, and you wonder how in the world it can get up that cliff. And then finally, the king, against whom there is no rising up, the demeanor and the awe with which the king goes. And final exhortation is, if you have done foolishly in lifting up yourself, or if you have thought evil, lay your hand on your mouth.

The exalting of oneself is always foolish. He that exalted himself shall be abased. And if you've done that, or if you've thought evil, just lay your hand on your mouth.

And then, surely the churning of milk brings forth butter. The ringing of the nose brings forth blood. And so the forcing of wrath brings strife.

That sort of speaks for itself, doesn't it? We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse venture through the Bible in our next broadcast, as Pastor Chuck continues his study through the book of Proverbs, and we do hope you'll make plans to join us. But right now, I'd like to remind you that if you'd like to secure a copy of today's message, simply order Proverbs chapter 30, verse 10, when visiting thewordfortoday.org. And while you're there, we encourage you to browse the many additional biblical resources by Pastor Chuck. You can also subscribe to the Word for Today podcast, or sign up for our email subscription.

Once again, all this can be found at thewordfortoday.org. If you wish to call, our toll-free number is 1-800-272-WORD, and our office hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Time. Once again, that's 1-800-272-9673. For those of you preferring to write, our mailing address is The Word for Today, P.O. Box 8000, Costa Mesa, California, 92628.

And now, on behalf of The Word for Today, we'd like to thank all of you who share in supporting this ministry with your prayers and financial support. And be sure to join us again next time, as Pastor Chuck continues his verse-by-verse study through the Bible. That's right here, on the next edition of The Word for Today.

And now, once again, here's Pastor Chuck in today's closing prayer. Father, we thank you for the words of wisdom, instruction in righteousness and in truth and in equity. May we walk, Lord, in that righteousness and in that truth.

May we incline our hearts to understanding, to knowledge and to wisdom, and that we might, Lord, receive the rewards of the righteous. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen.

You know, for thousands of years, Israel has been the heartbeat of our world's history. From the shout of victory that brought the wall of Jericho tumbling down, to the tortured cry of Jesus on the cross, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? No other nation has ever had a history so vibrant as Israel. The Word for Today presents a series entitled Israel, a biblical study of the history, covenants and the people of the nation of Israel.

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