

Training ■ Sacrifice for Future Success

by Daniel Kenaston

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Description

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Transcript

All right, good morning. I was pre-warned that I might be interviewed, so it looks like I'm not being interviewed. But I thought you still might like to hear one of my most embarrassing stories, since that's one of the things people look forward to.

I realize some of you don't know me, and so I'm just going to briefly introduce my apologies to those of you who know me really well and wonder why I'm repeating something so obvious. My name is Daniel Keniston, and I grew up in this church as a little boy. My father was Denny Keniston, and grew up here most of my life.

My wife and I have been missionaries in Ghana now for getting close to 25 years. And my son is part of the Bible school here, Nathaniel. And we've been missionaries, as I said, since 1999 as a married couple, doing church planting work in northern Ghana.

And then, just about recreated my most embarrassing moment. People who know me well know that I can dance a jig when I am shocked. I'm going to keep holding on right here.

All right. As I was saying, my name, I think I still know my name. My family and I have been working in church planting work for many years in Ghana.

And then for the last 10 years or so, we've been coordinating two youth training programs in missions. Ascent One program, which is a 12 week introduction to missions course. 12 weeks of discipleship, life in the village, ministry in Ghanaian schools.

I have a number of brochures, which I will leave up here on the pulpit for the Ascent One program. There's also, much better than a brochure, there are a bunch of alumni here who have been on Ascent One and I'm sure would be happy to answer questions and tell you a few stories. So every year we host a Ascent One team, usually from September through December.

And that's usually between 14 and 20 young people who spend three months with us in classes, in village ministry, ministering in schools, learning to eat African food, and basically using the catalyst of missionary life to disciple a group of young people. Ascent Two is a two year training program. I don't have those brochures here, but if someone is interested in learning more about that, I can get you those brochures.

Ascent Two is a long-term missions training program, sort of a ministry apprenticeship that we also operate there in Ghana. In addition to Ascent One and Ascent Two, we're still involved in the village work, training leaders, discipling pastors, et cetera. We have a very full life.

We love our life in Africa and I'm here alone. My family's not here other than my son, Nathaniel. They're back in Ghana and I'm just in North America teaching in a couple of Bible schools and just about ready to go home.

I've been in the States now for three weeks. Most embarrassing moment is a slightly missionary related story. We came home from Africa for a furlough a few years ago and we do not use the dollar in Ghana.

We use a different currency called the Sidi. So because I live in Ghana, I don't usually have dollars on hand. I think I had like a hundred US dollars that I brought back from Ghana.

And I knew as soon as I arrived here, the mission board and the church, people would take care of us. I wasn't really worried about my finances, but we came home from Africa straight into a missions conference and we had to buy supplies and buy food and buy fuel. And we lived through the week of the missions conference and I was too busy to go to the bank and my dollars were slowly decreasing.

Somewhere during that week, the mission board gave me a check. So I knew I had money, but I needed to go to the bank and it was the weekend. And so my dollars were getting lower and lower.

And as the case was, we finished on Sunday evening with the missions conference and some of the sent to alumni were coming over to our house. So we went to the grocery store and got some tea and chips and things. And I realized I had \$3 left in my pocket, three US dollars.

And when we got in the vehicle to drive home, the fuel light came on. And I told Kristin, we're gonna run out of gas. But well, we can stop and put the \$3 in.

I mean, it's pretty embarrassing to put \$3 in, but we drove over, it was a Sunday evening. I realized cultures change on these things, but where I grew up, buying anything on a Sunday is something to be a little bit embarrassed about. So I pulled into the fuel station on Turkey Hill, there in Ephrata on a Sunday evening.

And when I pulled in, I'm kind of looking around to see if there's anybody I know. And yep, there's the deacon from the Ephrata church. He's also buying fuels.

Both of us, yeah. So I went in, you have to prepay because it's cash. And I went in and I felt so apologetic.

I told the lady, I'm sorry, I only have \$3. Can you put \$3 on pump 13 for me? And I handed over my money. I don't know if the pumps can't be set that low, you know, the automatic shut off.

But I went out and I'm trying to remember because we don't pump our own fuel in Ghana. So I'm trying to remember how to pump gas, you know, push the button, turn this, do this. And I'm there trying to work the pump.

And suddenly over the loudspeaker, the lady says, pump number 13. Make sure you don't go over \$3. It's like, lady, I thought we had a little agreement here.

I told you I only had \$3 and that's why she didn't want me to go over \$3. So that's one of my most embarrassing moments. And I drizzled my \$3 in and drove away.

So I thought I might have to share that story. So I decided maybe you would like to hear it anyway. I'm really glad for the chance to share with you young people this afternoon.

I don't usually speak with groups this large, but I minister to young people all the time in our village settings, in our Ghanaian Bible school, in the St. Juan school. And we have in my home what we call the chocolate family, which is a whole bunch of students from the villages who've come to live with us in Tamale in order to attend school in the city. We call them our chocolate family.

It's an honorary term that they love. They've even printed up shirts. We are the chocolate family.

So I have about 15 to 18 of those. So that's another group of young people that I minister to almost on a daily basis. And I am very happy to do that and really glad to share with you.

You were singing the song there, The Days of Elijah. And I wonder if you realize that preparing the way of the Lord and being the voice in the desert and all of those things that God's word promises will happen to us in this period, the way that God is going to do that is through human beings. The Bible says when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Lord will raise up a standard against him.

I'm not sure what we picture sometimes when we sing these songs or read these verses. Like the almighty God of heaven is gonna come down and raise up a wall like we're building on the border. Here is the standard against Satan.

When we say we are the voice in the desert, are we picturing that we are the voice or that God is going to use his voice in the desert? Who and how do we feel like, how do we think God is going to prepare the way for the Lord? It is us. And most specifically, it's you. And when you're singing those songs, I just, I feel a great sense of, just a surge of passion for you all that you grasp who God intends for you to be and that you become that.

It's Satan's interest that we spend our youth years just kind of doing nothing. That's in his interest. It's in God's interest that you and I grasp as early on in our lives as possible the fact that our lives matter.

The enemy is coming in like a flood and God has this tremendous desire to raise up a standard against him and say, here is where it stops. God has a tremendous desire to be glorified by the lives and voices of his people. That's not people with gray beards.

That's you all. I mean, yeah, it's good for me to be involved in it too, but it's primarily you. You have the next 60 years of your life in order that you can live out God's purposes.

God does things on earth through human instruments. That means it's you. So I'm delighted to have the chance to share with you a little bit today.

I have not been here all week. I've been teaching in another Bible school, but I've been in and out and really delighted to hear a little bit of the messages and some of the overflow by talking to my son every day. But I'm really grateful for what God has done here.

I remember Bible school. I feel like it's only about seven years ago, but the fact that my son is now in Bible school tells me it's been a lot more years than that. But I remember Bible school.

I remember how God would work in our lives and I remember that we get to the end of Bible school and there's this desire. Now, the things that God has done in my life, how am I going to make good on those on Tuesday and on Thursday and two weeks from now? We did the things that God did in my heart while I was standing up here worshiping and everyone around me was worshiping and nobody was trying to pull me backwards and it seemed like the only thing to do was to lift up my voice and praise him and there were even people around me raising their hands and so I finally was able to raise my hands. How do I live like that on Tuesday in my work-a-day world, in my home world, in my everyday life when it's just me? One of the things that is helpful to us is to recognize the importance of training.

So I would like to share this morning on the subject of training. Sacrifice for future success. Training, sacrifice for future success.

The Roman philosopher Seneca said this, it is better to sweat in training than to bleed on the battlefield. It is better to sweat in training than to bleed on the battlefield. So in the olden days when this Roman philosopher is speaking we're not talking about sitting in a tank, shooting missiles or heavy artillery.

This is the days when they fought hand to hand with swords and spears and your ability to fight and hold that sword and be skillful in its use was the only thing that stood between you and death. And so the picture there is a bunch of young men, sorry young ladies back then they weren't doing swordsmanship, but the picture there is a bunch of young men and they're out there hour after hour practicing, practicing their moves, how to hold your feet, how to twist your body, how to get out of the way of the sword, how to get in underneath the other guy's armor, practicing hour after hour and they're drenched in sweat and probably complaining. And the philosopher Seneca says, hey, it's better to sweat in training than to bleed on the battlefield.

And when you hear that it's just obvious, of course I would rather sweat than bleed. Sweating is just a normal part of life when you're working, but bleeding takes away your life force. And yet I think sometimes we may not recognize that our daily disciplines of walking with God are the training which prepares us so that we don't bleed when we're actually in conflict, spiritual warfare with the enemy.

The city that I live in, Tamale, just got its first, in Ghana we call it a flyover. I think you call it an overpass where one road goes over another road. It's a very short overpass, but Tamale is incredibly proud of it

because it's the first one that most of my people have ever seen.

And it's a big thing when people come from the villages, they're like, did you go over the flyover? Like driving on top of another road is quite an amazing thing. The Chinese who built that road had these public safety or worker safety signs all over the place. And some of them are translated from Chinese to English for the Chinese workers.

But if you can imagine working in African heat, it's 100 degrees every day. And your boss tells you to wear a hard hat. That a helmet is not something comfortable to wear in any temperature, but at 100 degrees, it's really, really awkward.

And they had these signs hanging here and there. Sweaty head is better than bloody head. That pretty much says it.

I mean, you're complaining, it's 100 degrees, your head is sweaty, you would like some breeze, all these plastic straps holding this thing on, and there's a sign. Sweaty head is better than bloody head. Yeah.

The things that I do which protect me when it's real warfare, they're worthwhile. So I wanna encourage us as we're winding down from this Bible school and preparing to go home to take seriously our spiritual disciplines, which will be an aid in helping us to walk with God and protecting us against the temptations which are absolutely going to come rolling back. What we don't want is to be here again 11 months and three weeks from now, saying, oh man, I need Bible school again.

Now hopefully there will be Bible school here again in 11 months and three weeks from now, and hopefully you'll come. But it would be an amazing thing if you could come into the next Bible school saying, yes, I've struggled, yes, there've been battles, but honestly, my life in the last year spiritually has been lived at a different level. I have practiced praise on a more consistent basis.

I have not practiced complaining. Well, those words that Brother Tim used this morning. Praise and complaining, one is the language of heaven and the other is the language of Satan.

It would be wonderful if you could come back next year and say, I have definitely faced temptations and I've definitely failed, but victory has been a major facet of my life in the last year. That's our goal. We don't come to Bible school just for a wow, that was good.

And the fact is is that it is good, and we all feel good when we're surrounded by lots of people praising God and singing with us, but we all have to be able to live it in everyday life. I think it's Oswald Chambers who says, all of us are capable of dying for Christ provided that there's a crowd of people around us who support us and cheer us on. Everybody's capable of that.

It's easier to raise your hands in praise when everybody around you is doing it. Some of you might find that more difficult in your home church next Sunday. But Oswald Chambers says we're all capable of dying for Christ as long as a group of people is around us cheering us on.

But this group of people will not be there to cheer you on on Thursday morning when you wake up and wanna spend some time in the Word before you go to work. And so spiritual disciplines are of vital, vital importance. Let's turn to 1 Timothy chapter four.

Timothy, 1 and 2 Timothy should be a regular part of your diet since they were specifically, these two books were specifically written to young people, a young man named Timothy. We're in 1 Timothy chapter four. And Paul is giving instructions or encouragements to Timothy understanding the situation where he was going to minister and who the people were.

We'll break in in 1 Timothy four seven. But refuse profane and old wives fables and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.

Some versions say at the part B of verse seven, train yourself for godliness. Paul says to Timothy, Timothy don't waste your time with old wives fables and profane stories and these things that people waste their time on. Don't spend your time on those things.

But rather, spend your time training for godliness. Now the word training is a word that we understand, especially people like yourselves. Young people like to train.

They like to go out and exercise and they press themselves and it's okay if it hurts the next day because they're training. I have a younger brother who's a bodybuilder. I ended up being the smallest even though I'm the big brother.

I ended up being the smallest of all my brothers. And I remember meeting my brother on one furlough and he said, I can hardly walk today. I said, what's wrong? He said, yesterday was leg day.

You guys know what leg day means? That's the day when you go to the gym and focus on your legs. He said, so today I can hardly walk. But it was just a normal thing.

Yeah, today's leg day. Tomorrow will be upper body. The next day will be biceps.

I don't know what the pattern is. Paul says to Timothy, Timothy, don't waste your time with profane stories and old wives' fables. I'm not sure if old wives' fables are a temptation to you all.

I'm not really into them. But we all have things that we can waste our time on, right? Obviously, that was a thing where Timothy was. We will sit around and tell these old wives' stories.

But we all have temptations of things we could waste our time on. I think Brother Dean was fairly specific on those things already. I don't need to clarify further.

But instead of those things, Timothy, spend your time training for godliness. Bodily training, bodily exercise, it profits just a little bit. It's good for your overall health and it helps you to live longer.

But when you train your spirit to serve God, that has benefit in this life and in the next. Train. Train.

Let's turn next to 1 Corinthians chapter nine. It's very possible that I'm preaching verses that have already been preached. That's one of the somewhat embarrassing things.

I just have to trust the Lord on that when you get up to preach after other people have been preaching and you weren't there. 1 Corinthians nine. We're reading from verse 22 of 1 Corinthians nine.

To the weak became I as weak that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake that I might be a partaker thereof with you.

Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. This is a rhetorical question. To put it in modern language, Paul says, hey, you know, not everybody who runs wins the prize.

Everybody runs, but one person wins. Run in such a way that you are the person who wins. So run.

Be the one who runs in such a way that you win. Continuing, 25. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.

Now they do it to obtain an incorruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. Every man who strives to be the best, every woman who competes and wants to be the best, they're temperate in all things. I wonder if we really realize how much self-control and training it takes to be an athlete at the highest level.

I don't know. I mean, some of you might be athletes at that level, but I've been fascinated by Olympic-level athletes for a very long time. When I hear about Olympic, the person who competes and wins the gold medal, I am really not all that interested in watching their final performance.

It's neat to watch somebody sprint. It's amazing to see somebody throw the hammer or the javelin or use that pole, the pole vaulting. There's some really neat Olympic disciplines.

But I'm personally not that fascinated by the actual sports event. I am fascinated by the discipline that it takes to get there. So I've done a little bit of research about it.

And over the years, I keep hearing stories of these Olympic athletes. And the stories kind of line up. Olympic athletes compete, spend about four years training for each major Olympic event that they compete in.

Now, sometimes they compete in regional events, but their goal is always that upcoming Olympic event. And the average is somewhere between nine and 10 hours a day that they train for their particular sport. I admire the discipline.

When I see them stand up there receiving the gold medal, I'm kind of trying to look into their eyes. Like, what have you learned? Okay, what's going on in here that you have been able to get up for the last four years and train for 10 hours a day? And when you look further into their lives, you find out that they are temperate in all things. We don't have world-class Olympic runners or competitors in any of those sports at the gold medal level who are also drunks on the side, who also spend a lot of time partying.

They can't. They are temperate in all things because they want to win. I remember one time I was listening to, when we lived in the village, we had only shortwave radio before cell phones.

I was listening to shortwave BBC. That would be out of England. And they were interviewing the person who had just completed, I think it was the London Marathon.

And as is typical, the winner of that marathon was an East African. They're usually Ethiopian or Somali. And so they were interviewing this man.

He had just won the London Marathon and broke a world record and everybody was praising him. And so they asked him, you know, what's the secret of you winning? He said, camel milk, camel milk. He said camel milk is his secret.

So they asked him, what are you gonna do to celebrate? Now you've won this event. He says, I'm going to take three days out of my training regimen and just relax and eat whatever I want, drink whatever I want for three days. What are you gonna do after those three days? He said, I'm gonna start training for next year.

How do you train? Well, I get up in the morning and I run for two hours. And I come back and I have a shower and I have a breakfast which is made by my nutritionist, a sports nutritionist. I don't eat what I want.

I eat what they make me eat. I drink my camel milk. I go through a sauna thing to sweat out toxins out of my body.

Then I go and run for two more hours. And I come back and I take a little rest and I do a massage thing that my sports, whatever does for me. And then I go run for two more.

All day. He runs eight hours a day. Can you imagine? Paul says, every man that wants to be a master becomes temperate in all things.

And I just want to encourage us when we look at our lives moving out from this Bible school, how do I train this flesh? How do I train my body? How do I train my spirit? How do I set aside unnecessary things? How can I become temperate or controlled in everything? Because I want to be a master. And you and I are not competing for gold medals. We're competing for a life which glorifies Christ.

We're competing with all that draws us back. The world, the flesh, and the devil which seeks to pull us back from everything that Christ wants from our lives. He that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.

Now they do that, Paul says, just to win a corruptible crown. Back in those days, the awards they gave them were crowns sewed out of greenery. Think of English ivy.

Doesn't last very long in the sun. They do it to win a corruptible crown. But you and I are not looking for our chance to stand and collect a gold medal.

We're not wanting to be on the medals podium at the Olympics. We are striving to get an incorruptible crown. That is, to win heaven.

And Paul says, verse 26, because of this, I therefore so run, not as uncertainly, so fight I, not as one who beateth the air, but I keep under my body and I bring it into subjection lest by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. I've spent most of my life communicating to people who are illiterate or barely literate. So when I read scripture, I have pictures in my mind.

And it's almost impossible for me to preach without seeing those pictures and acting out those pictures. Maybe the picture of someone standing in a pulpit and doing what I'm doing will help you to remember this message. But this is what I think of when I hear this verse.

Paul says, I keep under my body and I bring it into subjection. What Paul is saying there is that this body must be submitted or brought under subjection to Master Jesus. This body must become obedient to God's will for my life.

This body must submit itself to training. I told you about my brother and his sore legs. Yeah, yesterday was leg day.

You know, he didn't check himself into the emergency room. He expected for his legs to hurt. He was bringing his body into subjection to his training program.

And I gotta be honest, when I looked at him, it's like, human bodies can look like that? Wow, I guess I'm not as fit as I thought I was. A human body brought into subjection to a bodybuilding program is an amazing thing. It becomes an incredibly different person than you would otherwise be.

Our bodies brought into subjection to the Lord Jesus and making sure that my body fits into God's plan for my life is also an amazing thing. This is the picture I have in my mind. I picture arm wrestling.

I don't do a lot of arm wrestling, but youth teams that come to Ghana do a lot of arm wrestling. I don't think this last team did, but I remember a lot of teams sitting down somewhere on an off evening and there's guys and they're going at it. And I've seen guys just be taken down in seconds.

I've also had guys that were so evenly matched that for minutes, they're just there, just shaking, just, and finally I'm like, somebody just give in, it looks like it hurts. But that's the picture I have in my mind. It's early morning, the alarm goes off.

Nobody that I've met, nobody that I've ever met including myself, wakes up at five o'clock in the morning just inspired. I am what they call a morning person, I think. But I still don't wake up at five o'clock.

Yes, thank you Jesus, let me get into the word. It's just not that way. And I'm sorry if that disappoints you.

Maybe you think by the time you get to my stage, it'll be just instant. No, it's not, it's still a choice. This is the picture that I have in my mind though.

Okay body, okay. Paul says, I bring my body under subjection. Come on body, you are gonna get up and you are gonna start glorifying God and you're gonna do that by praising him and you're gonna do that by spending time in the word.

Come on body. Paul says, I bring it under subjection. He doesn't say he snaps his fingers and puts it under subjection.

He says he brings it under subjection and so that's the picture I have is that I'm wrestling this flesh to make it do what my spirit knows that God wants me to do. We don't wanna live our lives according to the flesh. If you let the flesh tell you what to do, you'd never have time with the Lord in the morning or the evening and probably a lot of us wouldn't even have a job, honestly.

Eventually our flesh gets hungry enough that we would go out and get a job. But the fact is is that we don't live our lives with the flesh in charge. Paul says, I bring my body under.

When I read those verses, I hear in common English, I hear, I tell my body who's boss. Tell my body who's boss. If you ever watch somebody lift weights at a gym, that person is telling their body who's boss.

You are gonna lift this. That's somebody who's telling their body, you're gonna lift this weight. I'm boss.

I have decided up here, this is what I'm gonna do. Spiritual disciplines, training ourself for godliness. So Paul says, I'm keeping my body under.

I bring it into subjection. I don't let this body, its lusts, its desires, its convenience, its comfort, what it wants to do, when it wants to get up, I don't let my body tell me what to do. I bring it into subjection.

And Paul says, because I realize that even though I've lived an incredible life as a preacher, it would be possible for me to yield to the flesh and wreck my own life. If Paul says that, from his exalted position, the Apostle Paul, how much more people like you and I should carry a healthy fear that says, even though I've lived a life of praise, or even if I've come from a Christian family, or even if I really enjoyed the worship time at Bible school, if I go home and allow my flesh to dictate the terms on how I'm going to live my life, I'm gonna make a shipwreck. I'm gonna become a castaway.

I'm gonna become a disgrace to God's name. Train. I think young people should be well equipped to understand everything that goes around the processes of training.

Training for godliness. This quote is not original with me. But I give it to you for your thought.

You may be Solomon in wisdom, or David in praise, or Joshua in war, or Abraham in faith, but if you are not Joseph in discipline, you will end up like Samson in destruction. Let me repeat that. You may be Solomon in wisdom.

You may be David in praise. You could be Abraham in faith. You could be Joshua in war.

But if you are not Joseph when it comes to disciplining your flesh, you will end up like Samson in destruction. You know, we all admire what Joseph did when he ran away from the flesh. When he ran away from the available opportunity to sin.

When he ran away from lust. We admire that. But the fact is that something had been happening in Joseph's life for a long time which made that running away possible.

I wonder if I would have. I wonder. I think back in my youth.

Would I have run? I hope to God I would have run. I wonder. But Joseph had trained his flesh to honor and obey the word of God.

And so when that opportunity came up, that temptation of temptations, Joseph was gone. Because he had practiced. He had trained himself for godliness.

I remember at 15, very concerned about persecution coming. When I was 15, we were still hearing a lot about the possibility of communism taking over the world. And that was before Islamic terrorism was really a factor.

But we heard a lot about communism. We read a lot of books about communism and how the people suffered in China and in Russia. And it really disturbed my heart.

I remember going to my father and saying, Papa, I'm worried that if they ever hold a gun to my head, I will not be strong enough to say, I follow Jesus Christ and die. What if they torture me? What if when they're torturing me, I give up? What if I start giving the names of other Christians? What if I swear whatever they want me to swear? How do I know that I'll be strong enough? And my father said to me, he said, son,

you're worrying about something which is way out in the distance. What you should be thinking about is whether you are making choices every day now to say no to the flesh and yes to God's word and God's direction in your life.

And he said, if you've done that for the next 15, 20, 30 years until they are there trying to pull your fingers out of their sockets or remove your toenails or whatever they do to torture you, if you've been living a life of obedience to God's word and rejecting the flesh, when that moment comes, you will absolutely do the right thing. That was a really good answer. Because what it said is instead of thinking, oh, what about when that great temptation comes? It's right today.

What am I doing today that is training me to have the right response then? I don't think Joseph stood there and went, oh, what on earth is this? I've never imagined a temptation like this. No, Joseph had been saying no to temptations and yes to God's will for his life for a long time. And when this pinnacle moment of temptation, this epitome of temptation is in his life, he's gone.

He did the right thing because he had trained. If you are not Joseph in discipline, you can end up like Samson in destruction. Training, training is sacrificing now for future success.

This is the time of life to be doing it. This is the period of your life when you are preparing spiritually to walk with God for the rest of your lives. You are charging spiritual batteries which will be of benefit to you for the next 50 years.

Train now for a life of godliness. How many of you are familiar with the story referred to as the miracle on the Hudson? The miracle on the Hudson? A few of you. I preached this in Canada and like nobody knew about it there.

The miracle on the Hudson is the story of an airplane. Let me read a little bit to you here from Wikipedia. The miracle on the Hudson is described as the most successful ditching ever in aviation history.

January 15th, 2009, U.S. Airways flight 1549 was scheduled to fly from New York City's LaGuardia Airport to Charlotte Douglas International in North Carolina and on to Seattle. The captain and pilot in command was 57-year-old Sullenberger, former fighter pilot. At the time of this miracle, he had logged almost 20,000 total flight hours and he was also a glider pilot and an expert on aviation safety.

The flight was cleared for takeoff at 3.24 p.m. when it took off. As soon as it took off, about 700 feet and climbing and as it took off, it flew into a flock of birds. When you hear that this happens, it's like how doesn't this happen more often? How do they keep birds away from airports all the time? You'd think there'd be guys standing on the edge with shotguns like, birds, stay away.

But in this situation, birds went into both of the engines. They were not very high up in the air. They had no time to go up and dump extra fuel, look for another airport.

They were just up in the air and they were just starting to climb to altitude and both engines went out. Four minutes after they took off, three and a half minutes after they took off, the plane struck a flock of Canadian geese at an altitude of 2,800 feet. The pilot's view was filled with the large birds and passengers and crew heard loud bangs and saw flames pouring out of the engines followed by total silence and the odor of fuel.

Realizing the engines shut down, Sullenberger took control while Mr. Skiles worked the checklist for engine restart. The aircraft slowed but continued to climb for a further 19 seconds, reaching 3,000 feet altitude and then it began to accelerate. Sullenberger radioed back, we've lost both engines, we're turning back towards LaGuardia.

Sullenberger made a calculation and realized there's no way to turn around. The turn is going to lose a lot of their forward momentum. They're not gonna be able to turn around and come back to LaGuardia.

Sullenberger landed that airplane in the Hudson River and that's why it's called the Miracle on the Hudson. Look it up sometime. If I had more chance, I would have put a picture up here for you.

Incredibly, they landed that airplane in the Hudson River and the picture, I remember seeing it in Africa, is this airplane like floating on its wings and little fishing boats and police boats and every kind of boat is crowding up to the airplane to pick people up off of the wings and all these people just climbed out onto the wings and got onto the boats and no one was seriously hurt and no one died. It's called the Miracle on the Hudson. The world is fascinated by events like this.

What a miracle! Nobody died, how did he turn that plane around? New York City, I mean, you realize how bad that could have been if they'd have brought that plane down in New York City? We'd be talking thousands of possible deaths, dumping a full load of jet fuel all over that city and then landing, oh my. But instead, Sullenberger landed that plane in what's called a dead stick landing and if there's somebody here who's into aviation, forgive my poor explanations. A dead stick landing is when you're landing a plane and you do not have the ability to use the thrust of the engines to control your speed and get everything lined up.

He landed that plane with the force that it had when those engines went out. It's called a dead stick landing and the world praised the miracle and Mr. Sullenberger was given awards. They're all listed here.

I mean, everywhere in America just went crazy, you know, and gave him the keys to this city and gave him an honorary membership to this and that and, you know, crowned him a knight or whatever they do to honor people like that. Here's what is not well known and this is why the story fascinates me. Mr. Sullenberger had 20,000 hours of flight time, which is a lot, but he was towards the end of his career, he was almost ready to retire, but beyond that, he was an air safety trainer and he was a specialist in air safety and he advised lots of airports on air safety and how to, you know, how to set up their airports and all these things and he trained lots of pilots.

Mr. Sullenberger miraculously had a particular interest in glide, in gliding and he was also a certified glider plane or a glider instructor. Well, what is an airplane when the engines go out? One huge, super heavy glider. Mr. Sullenberger had this fascination with dead stick landings and people who knew him said he would go up to the flight simulators and just practice dead stick landings over and over and over.

That, my dear people, is the miracle. The miracle is not that when those engines went out, Mr. Sullenberger was able to just immediately go, okay, here's what we do now. We're gonna bank this way and we're gonna come down over the Hudson and this is how you land a plane when you have absolutely no power and he brought that plane down.

I mean, he'd come in a little too hard. It would have gone under the water. Come in this way, you're gonna break the wings.

There's so many things could have gone wrong and he brought that plane down and nobody was hurt. The miracle is not that. The miracle is that God allowed that man to be the pilot.

Not every pilot is so fascinated by gliders. Not every pilot is so fascinated by dead stick landings. Not every pilot is so trained and that's why we're telling the story here.

Mr. Sullenberger says you could say it was a miracle. He said you could also say that I had been personally making deposits in the bank of training and on that day, the balance in my bank of training was so high that I could make a huge withdrawal and land that plane safely. Did you get that? He says I've been making investments just going up to do another dead stick landing.

I mean, it's not like this is a common thing. He'd flown his whole life. He'd never had to do this but he's just fascinated by it.

How does a plane respond? How does the stick respond? How do we work the airlines and all those things to land this plane when we have no force, no engine thrust? You just keep doing that and you're stacking up. You're stacking up money, if you will. You're stacking up deposits in the bank of training and then on that day, Mr. Sullenberger was probably one of the only pilots in America that had enough training to say, okay, I'm gonna just take out all of this at once and land that plane.

I told you I'm not all that fascinated by watching the gold medalists win their medals. I'm fascinated by watching them train. Some of those gold medalists run like the 100 meter sprint.

It takes seconds. It takes just like seven seconds, four seconds, nine seconds depending on the length of the run. That's it, it's over.

Where'd they, they're gone. But they've been training and for Mr. Sullenberger, the miracle is not that he landed that plane. The miracle is that God let a man with that incredible level of training and just the fascination for dead stick landings be the one who was piloting that plane.

See, in my mind, that's the Joseph story over again. Okay, yep, we've been practicing this. We've been, both engines are out.

Okay, this is what we're gonna do and Joseph is out of that room. He's been training this flesh. This flesh, you flesh, you are going to do exactly what God's word wants me to do.

I don't listen to you. Sullenberger, glide in and land on the Hudson. What an incredible story.

Look it up sometime. I think it's actually on film. I think you can actually watch a YouTube video of the plane land on the river.

I mean, it's just, it's wow, incredible. But the thing that's incredible is the training and that's where it's pertinent to you and I because you and I are making deposits in our bank of training, training for godliness, disciplining myself, preparing for a life of service, preparing for a life where we don't listen to the flesh and then when the great event happens, we do the right thing. When push comes to shove, when here comes the real spiritual battle of my life, I'm able to land it in and people say, oh, what a miracle.

Sullenberger says, no, I've been making deposits in that bank of training for many years. Mark chapter 14, book of Mark in chapter 14. These are Jesus' final hours on this earth and Jesus takes the disciples with him to pray.

I would expect that I'm not the only one here who's fallen asleep at a prayer meeting. Anybody else wanna be honest? Anybody fallen asleep at a prayer meeting? Okay. A whole bunch of you have never fallen asleep at a prayer meeting or you're not honest.

God bless you for your staying with it in prayer meetings but as a little boy, I can remember the incredible shame of suddenly waking up and realizing everybody is standing up around me looking at this little nine-year-old still laying on the floor asleep. I was like. Years ago, Bible school in this building, we had an overflow tent set up right out there and the prayer groups would go out there for their small group time and pray together and I happened to be the prayer group leader of this particular group and we're praying and go around the circle and pray as you will and share and all that and we finally finished.

It was time to go for supper and we all stood up and when we stood up, we realized one of the guys was out. I mean, just out and I can't really blame him. Some of you stay up late at night.

By the end of Bible school, you're tired. He was just asleep and we're all kind of standing there looking at each other like, oh my. If we would've known, we would've nudged him.

We don't want to embarrass him and suddenly, he comes to and jumps up, amen. Yeah, just slightly delayed. Oh yes.

I'm not sure if any falling asleep in a prayer meeting could be as embarrassing as falling asleep in the prayer meeting where the son of God is about to go to the cross and he says, you know, you're my best three friends. I'm getting ready to walk through the hardest thing in my life. Could the three of you please come? It's like, you know what, they're doing a surgery on my wife and they don't expect her to live.

Could the three of you come to the hospital? I need three people to be with me. That's the kind of moment this is. And then I come out after the surgery and there you guys are just zonked out on the couches.

It's like, oh, if I wanted people to sleep in the waiting room, I could've, you know, just go back and sleep in your beds. Kick your feet and say, excuse me, I have you here because my wife might be dying. Could you not watch with me one hour? Jesus wakes him up, goes away, and they wake up like, oh yeah, okay, we're gonna do better, we're gonna do better.

Okay, gotta wake up here, gotta wake up. Jesus walks away and goes over there in great agony of spirit. He is walking through his death in a spiritual battle format knowing what's about to happen to him.

Comes back, they're out again. Can you imagine how embarrassing that was? Mark chapter 14 and verse 38. Jesus said to them, let's read 37.

He cometh and findeth them sleeping and saith unto Peter, Simon. Sleepest thou? That, in common English, is like, you gotta be kidding me. Sleepest thou? Like, for real, Peter? Like, tonight, Peter? You couldn't stay awake in this moment of moments when I chose you as one of my special disciples to walk through this challenge with me? Sleepest thou? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray, verse 38, lest ye enter into temptation.

The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. Some verses, some of the other portions say the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. I like this one.

The spirit is ready, but the flesh is weak. Jesus was acknowledging that there were sincere desires. Peter and his brothers there in the group of disciples, they were not unspiritual, they were not unconcerned.

It wasn't that they weren't concerned about Jesus. They had made it clear they didn't want him to die. They also clearly didn't understand what was about to happen, but they had sincere desires.

And so, Jesus gives them the compliment of telling them, the spirit is ready. Oh, but the flesh. The flesh.

If I told you today, I wanna go out and lift weights, I believe that I can bench press 250 pounds. I wanna go out and do that. Guys, I am so pumped.

I am gonna be a bodybuilder. I know I can do this. I'm gonna lay down on that bench, and my spirit might be psyched, and the music might be pumping, and I'm like, yes! But when I start lifting, I'm gonna find out I can't lift 250 pounds.

Sorry, I can't. My spirit is ready. I'm like, yes, do it, do it! But my flesh is not there yet.

My flesh is weak. So Jesus was not beating these guys up. He wasn't saying, you unspiritual guys.

He said, your spirit's ready, but your flesh has not been trained to cooperate with your spirits. And I think this is very pertinent for a group of young people leaving Bible school, because we stand up here and worship, and that's you, okay? I don't believe that's fake. I believe that's you.

In fact, I would say to you that when you're worshiping up here, that is the real you that God created you to be. You're probably closer to what you're really supposed to be in these moments than in most other moments of your life. That is not fake.

That's you, okay? Your spirit's ready. But on Thursday morning, when Tim's not there to say, no complaining, let's speak the language of heaven, start praising, win your battles with praise, and there's 50 people around you going, I love you, Lord Jesus, thank you. When you're doing that battle all by yourself, you may find out that your ready spirit is canceled out by a flesh that's weak.

Does that make sense? So I didn't feel like Jesus was beating up on them here. I don't think he was being down on them. He said, your spirits are ready.

You're like, yeah, let's do this. Jesus, I'll die for you. But I, stay awake for an hour.

Oh, no, no, no, no. I'll die for you, but not stay awake. Come on, be reasonable.

I mean, do you get the irony there? I'll die for you, Lord Jesus. He said, okay, just stay awake for an hour. I can't stay awake for an hour? How are you gonna die for me? You can't tell your flesh what to do for one hour, but you believe you can tell your flesh what to do and allow them to kill you for my sake? And that's kind of where we all are.

But we need to train. Training is sacrificing now for future success. It's sweating in training so that it won't bleed on the battlefield.

It's doing dead stick landings so that when it is an emergency, I'm able to reach into that bank of experience and land that plane. When Potiphar's wife grabs me and the most incredible temptation of my life is upon me, I'm trained. This flesh knows, you obey the spirit and get out of here.

The spirit is ready, but the flesh is weak. And I think that aptly describes where most young people are and it also aptly describes where I am sometimes too. However, it does get easier.

I told you, if you think it's gonna be natural to get up and worship God at five in the morning when you're my age, you'll be disappointed. It's true that it doesn't become a natural, but it does become easier because you train, all right? It would be possible, even with my gray beard, for me to get to a place where I could lift 250 pounds. I wouldn't be able to do it in one day, but I believe I could train for it, right? Right? Guys, I'm not that old, okay? There are guys my age who decide to become bodybuilders and absolutely can do 250 pounds, but you gotta work for it.

And it's not just about going into the gym and being like, yeah, yeah, yeah, I'm a man. No, you're gonna have to train. And in the same way, I don't want you to go home and four days from now be like, where is that blessedness that I knew in the Bible school? That must not have been me, because the devil will be right there to tell you that was just a thing, that was just Bible school.

You're just floating along on Tim's coattails because he was worshiping and he told you to lift your hands up. That wasn't real. That is what Satan will do.

I'm trying to equip you with a tool to be able to say back to Satan, that was me, and I'm going to work by God's grace to keep training this flesh so that that becomes me in a more permanent sense. I'm gonna acknowledge that my spirit's ready. Go to the Lord, use these words, and say them to the Lord Jesus when you fall asleep in your own private prayer.

We get up early at St. Juan. I remember the vice principal going into the dorm room. You know, all the guys are up having their devotions.

There's one guy wrapped up in a sheet, still laying down. Hey, you need to get up. I'm doing my praying in here.

You know what? That takes a lot of training. I'm not there yet. I can't stay in bed at 5.30 in the morning wrapped up in a sheet and do my praying in here.

I go back to sleep. So when you fall short of the desires that you've set here, go to the Lord and just say to him, Lord Jesus, what you said about the disciples is true about me. My spirit is ready.

That was me. Lord, I want to honor you. I want to praise you.

I want to obey you. I don't want to yield to the flesh, but my flesh is weak. Help me bring that body under.

The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak. That's not a slap to anyone here. It's easier to get our spirits ready than it is to get our flesh trained to obey the spirit.

Does that make sense? You can get people excited about worship, and I absolutely support what Brother Tim has been doing here. It's beautiful. It's important, and I truly mean it that what you're doing when you're up here is being really you.

That is what sons and daughters of God are called to be. That's you, and he's done rightly to lift that up in this week, but I just don't want you to have an incongruence in your mind when on Thursday morning you've fallen back into a temptation that you repented of here, and you said, I'm not going back, and it's like, oh yeah, that wasn't me. I don't know what that Bible school thing was.

I just went along as there's a lot of people around me. No, your spirit was here. Your spirit was engaged.

Your spirit was ready. You were hearing the voice of God, and you were responding, but the flesh is weak, so I'm trying to give you something that you can carry home, an understanding that says, yeah, I'm gonna have to train. So picture me again.

I'm in the gym. I'm all psyched up. I'm gonna lift 250 pounds.

I know I can do it. My brothers do more than that. After all, I'm the older brother, and I'm psyched, and I'm ready to lift, and two minutes later, I'm laying there on my back crying.

I can't lift. Who was I thinking I could lift? I can't lift. I can't do it.

I'm just a... Trainer would come along at that moment and say, sir, have you been doing 20 repetitions of 100 pounds? Have you been doing 20 reps of 150 pounds? Do you realize that it normally takes people a year to build up from no bodybuilding to 250 pounds? Don't give up in frustration. Don't walk away and say, I can't lift. Rather, submit yourself to a process of spiritual disciplines and training, and if you'll do that for a year, the trainer says to me, I promise you can be lifting 250 pounds, but you don't walk in and do it in one day, and you certainly don't lay there crying on your back on that bench press machine saying, I can't lift.

There's a process by which we discipline ourselves. Training. I'm sacrificing today for future success, and my heart is that you are able to carry the spiritual energy and excitement that you've had in this week.

You're able to carry that home and not give up when you don't feel that excitement later, and don't listen to the enemy when you don't feel it was real, but rather go back to the Lord Jesus and say, Lord Jesus, my spirit was ready. I want to follow you. I want to honor you.

I want to say no to the flesh. I want to discipline my media input. I want to have more of your word in my life.

Lord, I meant those things I prayed, but oh, this flesh is weak, so Lord, help me in daily disciplines of training to build up to the point where my spirit and my flesh will work together to honor you. Paul says, I bring my body under subjection. I'm going to make this body work together with my spirit, which is God's, and I'm gonna let these two work together to glorify God.

Last proverb, and we close. This is not me either. This is a quote.

I want to encourage you young people to go home with great carefulness in what you use to amuse yourself. This quote has been burning in my heart for the last number of weeks. Be careful where you rest your head.

Be careful where you rest your head. Jacob rested his head on a stone and saw visions of angels and heaven. Samson rested his head in the lap of Delilah and lost his eyesight.

Where we rest our head is where we go to relax. Where we rest our head is where we go for amusement. Where we rest our head is where we spend our leisure time.

Be careful where you rest your head. Jacob rested his head on a stone and saw angels and heaven. Samson, great man of God, rested his head in the lap of Delilah and lost his sight.

Don't rest your head in places where you can lose your sight. Rest your head on a stone if necessary and see heaven there. I'm really grateful for the chance to share with you young people today.

I'm blessed with all that I've witnessed from you here of your sincere desires and I'm praying that you'll go home and train yourselves for godliness. These brochures are up here if anyone is interested. Thank you again.

I'll hand the time back to you Brother Tim.

Video: https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/o_gGzf9mVF8.mp4

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