

Tearing Down the Walls

by Darwin Hostetler

The sermon emphasizes the importance of enduring hardship, avoiding entanglement with worldly concerns, and tearing down spiritual walls to experience spiritual growth and victory.

Duration: 1:14:42

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 8:1-11, 2 Timothy 2:1-4, Hebrews 13:20-21

Topics: "Overcoming"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the story of Joshua and the battle of Jericho. Joshua realizes that they have been defeated and cries out to God, seeking answers. God reveals to Joshua that there is sin in the camp, specifically a Babylonian garment, silver, and gold that were taken. The speaker emphasizes the importance of guarding one's eyes and being committed to not allowing them to wander into sinful places. The sermon concludes with the reminder that obedience to God's instructions, such as shouting as He commanded, will lead to victory.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

This message is not copyrighted and is not to be bought or sold. You are welcome to make copies for your friends and neighbors. If you would like additional messages, please go to our website for a complete listing at www.charityministries.org. If you would like a catalog of other sermons, please call 1-800-227-7902 or write to Charity Ministries, 400 West Main Street, Suite 1, EFRA PA 17522.

These messages are offered to all without charge by the freewill offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Greetings to all of you in the name of the Lord Jesus.

It is indeed a pleasure for us to be here tonight and to share here a bit with you. First, I would like to say thank you to the local brothers here and sisters that have so faithfully spent time in the Word, in teaching, preaching to us. Cooks that cooked and homes that put up with everyone.

It really has been a good week for me and I think from our brothers that are here, I can say likewise, it has been a blessing for us. As I came towards the end of the week and pondered the fact that I had the last message and spent some time in thinking and praying and asking God, what do I say? You know, I

thought about all the preaching, the messages that have been given time after time and I was awestruck as I considered the accountability that you and I will go home with this week. All of the words of truth that were spoken and it has been said here a number of times that the Bible is a book that demands a response.

And for each one of us, if you have heard the messages, if we heard the preaching of the words, it filtered down into our hearts, it called a response out of many of you. Out of many of us found our way back to a prayer room back here and found ourselves responding to the Word of God. But it doesn't stop here.

Just for some of you, most of us I guess, I'll say it only started here. It still calls for a response. In the days to come as you go home from here, it still calls for a response.

And we've been living here in a pretty greenhouse, generic environment, haven't we? You know, it's been pretty easy to lean on the brothers and find your way to a prayer room and when you have a struggle, you know, you can just pretty easily go to one of the brothers and say, Brother, you know, can you pray for me? Can you help me here? And you know, you found that little place of prayer, of refuge in Christ and your brothers helped you do that. Well, you're going to go home to a real world. It's a real world out there and there'll be some real struggles for all of you.

But I'd like to be an encouragement for you tonight. You know, I want to assure you again, you know, the messages that Brother Denny brought to you about Christ and Christ focused theology and centered theology more than theology life. You know, that's really what you have to look forward to.

And what a joy it is to know that you can go home and the details, whatever it is that you might face, you can just, with a focus on the Lord Jesus Christ, taking Him and wrapping Him into everything that you have. You have everything that it takes to fight the fight. And I enjoy that.

As I thought of that, I'd like to open with a couple of verses out of 2 Timothy. 2 Timothy, chapter 2. And I'd like you to just bow your heads and have a word of prayer here as we begin. Let's pray.

Father, I thank you for this privilege that we have this evening to again look into your word. Lord, help me be an encouragement to someone along the way today. Lord, might someone see Jesus tonight? Lord, that's our heart.

That's our desire. We don't want to go home, any of us, empty. We don't want to go home with a life that is still blocked up and tied up.

But we want deliverance from you, Father, tonight. Lord, and I pray that if there's anyone here tonight that isn't free, might they see the cleansing power of the blood of Christ tonight to set them free. Lord, I just pray that you would take this message.

Protect us tonight. Shelter us under the blood of Jesus Christ, Father. We need your protection.

We need you to guide us, Father, in Jesus' name. Amen. Alright, in 2 Timothy, chapter 2, the first four verses.

These are verses that Paul gave here to Timothy. And he said, That thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also.

That sounds like it fits us this week, I think. We heard many things. And many of you are leaders.

That you have a responsibility to take these things home and commit them to other faithful men. But he has some instruction regarding that. He says, Thou, therefore, endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

No man that woeeth entangled himself with the affairs of this life that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a good soldier. And I'll stop there. But I'd like to just focus in a bit on these last two verses.

Thou, therefore, endure hardness. You know, it's not just for missionary personnel or somewhere in another culture somewhere that has to endure hardness. We're asked to endure hardness.

I talked to someone not so long ago that was in the army and they were telling me a bit about the things that they faced and the things that they were doing in Iraq and among other things, this individual told me that the gear that she wears every day, just the clothes, just the gear, weighs almost a hundred pounds. Can you imagine that in 120 degrees or something? You know, that's just the clothes that they wear without all the other things that they have to go through and so on. And they're enduring something.

Endure hardness here means to endure afflictions or to suffer trouble. And we may face that. Some of us will face those kind of things in the days ahead.

And he was telling Timothy, as I'm telling you here tonight, that you should prepare yourself as a good soldier of Jesus Christ to be willing to endure hardness. We don't have to do it ourselves. Then he goes on and he says, There is no man that woeeth... And we're in a war, brethren.

No man that woeeth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life. You know, you are involved in many affairs. Many of you had businesses.

Many of you have other things that occupy your mind. And he says here that you don't have to be entangled with those things. If you're going to fight a good fight, don't be entangled.

Don't let them wrap you up and hold you captive or in bondage. You know, I still remember many... Some time ago, some years ago actually, at home with my family one time, I had a skein of yarn that was... I think it had fell out of a basket or something there in my living room. And I was going to put this thing away and somehow I saw an end that was sticking out.

And I don't know what all I did, but I pulled the wrong end there somewhere until I was done. I had a heap of a mess in front of me. You know, and it was just kind of... Before I knew it, it just kind of went everywhere.

And it seemed like the harder I tried to patch things up again, the more tangled the mess became. And that's the way many things are in life. And if we're not... If we don't take our minds and keep them going in the right direction with our focus on the Lord Jesus Christ, we soon lose out and we soon get entangled with many things.

And He says you shouldn't do that if we're going to fight a good fight. Don't do that. Don't entangle yourselves.

So, this evening I'm thinking here, as we go home from this place, as we engage ourselves with some more of the ammunition that we got, some more of the learning, the things that came and settled down

over our heart, as we go and engage these things and put them to practice, one of the ways that we need to do that is we need to be careful not to entangle ourselves with everything else that is out there shouting at us, trying to get our attention. It happens far too easily, brethren. That we may please Him.

That's our heart. That's what we're here for. We're here to bring honor and glory to Him.

We want to please Him. You know, we don't want to just have a godly family here of some kind so that we can look good when we go to Walmart. We want a godly family to please Him.

One that will speak with the enemies at the gate. One that we will be able to send out into God's work. Not just for fun.

It's to please Him. That's what we're really wanting to do here. Alright, that's not where I'm preaching about.

That was just kind of a beginning there. Turn to the book of Joshua. I'd like to look at a couple of different accounts here as they kind of just flow here back to back.

Joshua 5. Joshua 5. And this is the time here when the children of Israel, they would come up to Jericho. They had won some previous battles, things that went fairly well for them. And in chapter 5, in verse 13, just a few verses I'll read there first.

It says, It came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho that he lifted up his eyes and he looked and behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand. And Joshua went unto him and said unto him, Art thou for us or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servants? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose the shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy.

And Joshua did so. And here Joshua, as they're coming up to Jericho, and they probably have this city surrounded or close, or they were camped there. And I'm sure the people of Jericho, they heard of these people.

They heard of this mighty group of people coming up through the land. And it seems like they kind of hold up here behind the walls. It says they were straightly shut up there in the next verse.

And here Joshua, he goes to the Lord and he asks Him, goes there and he's wanting to know what he's to do next. He's trying to go there to get an answer and he saw a man standing there. Now, just picture in your mind what you might do.

There's a man that is standing there. It says, a man over against him with a sword drawn in his hands. So as he's going to seek God, and here Joshua, he stands out there and he sees this man.

This man that is looking at him as an angel and had a sword drawn. And it says Joshua walked towards him. He went towards him.

Do you see the faith and fearlessness of Joshua? You know, that he is willing to just walk towards this man, this individual with a sword. And he asked, who is this? Who are you? Are you for us or are you against us? And he said, I'm for you. And Joshua fell on his face and worshipped.

As I read that, I realized that many of you met up with a man this week with a sword that did some cutting. You know, he did some cutting in your heart, didn't he? He took out some dross, some self, pride. Took out a lot of things this week, didn't he? As I was back in the little prayer room tonight, I heard someone walking by and I heard the man telling his wife, this was holy ground back here.

This is where sins got dumped this week. That's right. But you know, you need to take that home with you too.

You need to take it home with you. You know, Ephrata doesn't have a corner on those holy spots. You take them right home with you.

Alright, now let's look here at Jericho. There's a few chapters here. We're going to not go through all of it.

But we're just going to look here. The children of Israel coming up against this city. They're wanting to know what to do here.

And they have some specific instructions in verse 1. I'll read a few verses. Now Jericho was straightly shut up because of the children of Israel. None went out and none came in.

The Lord said unto Joshua, I have given unto thy hand Jericho and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valor. So, here God is speaking to him and He's telling him, this is what I am going to give you. I will give you Jericho.

This city that is all fenced in and not just the city, but the king too. He said, this is yours. You can have it.

I want you to keep that in mind as we go through here. Because there might be some of you in a group this size, there is very likely some sitting in this room that still have some walled cities that are in there in their lives. Very likely you have some walls built around some very protected spots in your life that you didn't uncover this week or still just hanging in there and that are protected by a wall.

You may think the wall is too big. You may think you don't know how to take it. But Joshua, as God told him that you can have this city and you can have the king therein, he moved in faith and he went right to action.

He sprang right to action and said, I'm going to tell my people what to do. And we're going to line this thing up and we're going to begin marching. We're going to do whatever you tell us to do.

If you have a wall around something that God has been slowly probing onto your heart this week, an area of your life that you haven't uncovered, an area of your life that you know it's there, but you have not went there. Your prayer group leader might have poked around on you all week long trying to find out, you know, is there something else? And he may have seen in your eyes there's something else. And he has pried and poked and asked and fussed and you have refused to go into that room because the mountain looked too big.

But the mountain is not too big for God. And I tell you, I would just plead with you tonight that you don't go home without getting into that room. Because there is a man that holds a key for that door and you can get in.

And you can be free. The walls can just disappear. They'll crumble.

You might have to... Maybe you're one that has just simply cracked the walls pretty good so far. Well, they'll come down. They'll just... Let's keep going.

That's my focus this evening. That would be the title of my message is Tearing Down the Walls. He gives them instructions in verse 3, "...and ye shall come past the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once.

Thus shalt thou do six days." So here he's pretty specific about things. "...the seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of ram's horns. And the seventh day, ye shall come past the city seven times.

And the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout. And the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up, every man straight before Him." So here, as he got his instructions, then in verse 6 it says, "...Joshua the son of Nun called the priests and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant.

Let seven priests bear seven trumpets of ram's horns before the ark of the Lord. And he said unto the people, Pass on and come past the city and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the Lord." So here he's given his instructions, and I'm going to move on down here. I'm going to skip some of that and go on down to where they began to.

They began to go around this city. And I can imagine that the people that are inside these walls, you know, that are watching this huge company of people, you know, march around this city one time. Jericho is a big city.

Or it was a big city at that time. Jericho is still a big city. Jericho, by the way, is a very wicked city.

Jericho was a very ungodly place, full of idolatry, false religions everywhere, witchcraft, many things. Jericho was full of. And today actually, Jericho is still known to be a corrupt city.

And you drive into Jericho, which I did once or so, maybe more than once, and there is an evil, nearly spirit in the air of the place. I actually saw the very broken down foundations that are still remaining from some of these walls. Okay, here we are.

Getting ready to walk around this thing and these walls. And I can imagine inside, the people are trembling. They had just heard how these people came across the river, came across the Jordan, and God had dried it up for them just a few weeks back, or whatever it might have been.

I can imagine they're trembling and wondering what will these people do. What are they going to do to us? You know, watch this sight, that these men are marching around here holding trumpets and having the ark of God and just marching around the wall as if nothing is strange. That's no way to fight a battle.

You know, that's a different kind of situation. It's a different kind of fight. And we are in a different kind of fight.

We're in a very different kind of fight. It looks very different. And many times, the ones around us, they do look on us and they wonder what is going on.

What is it that is so different about you? But what's even better, I believe that inside, I believe Satan trembles as well when he sees what's going on. Much like I believe that the people were trembling behind these walls, I believe Satan trembles as well. It came to pass that the seventh time when the priest blew at the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout! For the Lord has given you this city.

The Lord has given you this city. You know, I don't know. I believe that they could have very well said, Well, shout! Why should we shout? What will that do? What will that gain us? I believe the walls would have went down.

But Joshua knew what would happen. Joshua said, Shout like God said. And it will happen.

And verse 20, it says, the people shouted when the priests blew at the trumpets and it came to pass when the people heard the sound of the trumpet and the people shouted with a great shout that the wall fell down flat so that the people went up into the city, every man, straight before Him, and they took the city. So here, after they were walking in obedience to God, they took the instructions that God gave. They believed what God said.

They had never fought a battle this way before. They had never walked around any walls and watched them just collapse. This was a new thing for them.

They had not been there before. But there they were willing to do that and watch God work. Maybe for you here tonight as well, maybe this is the kind of battle that you haven't fought.

Maybe this is something that you haven't allowed God to stir in your heart. You haven't taken down the walls that still stand there. Walls of bitterness.

Walls of jealousy. Anger. You know, the bitterness that comes from hurt feelings.

Hurt when a brother says something that you think he shouldn't have said. The bitterness that sometimes exists to stay between husbands and wives. You know, those kind of walls.

They need to come down. They all need to come down. They need to be destroyed, disintegrated, so you can have that fellowship with God, the victory that these people had.

You know, it's only when the walls are destroyed out of our life that we can be effective. Do you notice here? This was one that I just rejoiced in as I pondered it a little just this morning. As I noticed that as soon as these walls went, you know, the people went right straight to the place and they took the city.

You know, one of the things that I saw that they did is those two spies, they went in here and they salvaged Rahab out of this whole deal. You know, and when the walls come down in our lives, people can get saved. People can get free.

And this, for the first time this morning, I saw missionaries going to Jericho. You know, people that were going, someone was because of their obedience. Someone because of what they had done.

You know, their willingness to walk this thing. And I realized Rahab had some other things that happened before that. But they were able to save her life and her family's life.

That was kind of exciting for me to see that this morning. But here we're looking at the victory that they won. This was a miraculous victory that they won.

But here, because these things were, even though they won such a beautiful victory, it's not very long, just in the next chapter, that they go up against Ai. You know, and they think we can easily win this thing. It's going to be a piece of cake for us.

You don't even have to send very many men. We can easily take it. And they go up there against Ai.

And what happens? They lose the battle. They lose the battle. And you might wonder, why did they go and make such a mistake after they had just had a miraculous victory? That could be like you and I this week.

You might have had a miraculous victory this week. You might have knocked some walls down this week. But you know, if you don't have your eyes set on the Father, if you don't keep a clear heart before God, you could well go into the battle just like they did to Ai and be destroyed.

And again, find yourself crushed. But it doesn't have to be that way. And that's my heart tonight, that we can go on beyond that, so that when you hit the Ai's this week, that they can be destroyed.

It doesn't have to be that way. They really got whooped here. And here, without reading all of chapter 7, you know very much the story of Achan, but I'm going to read some of that.

And we're going to look at some of these areas in our lives. We're going to look at some of these areas that are so prevalent to us. A few things in particular that God has laid on my heart that I'd like to just share with you and trust that God will stir there in your heart on these things.

Joshua, after he knew that they were in trouble, Joshua, after he knew that they had been defeated, he is crying out to God. He is desperate. He is knowing that something has went bad wrong and God was just simply going to reveal to him, God was going to tell him what happened, that there's sin in the camp of God here.

Something has taken place, and this is why you have lost the battle. This is why the battle isn't yours, or why Ai had defeated you. Joshua 7, he said, Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast Thou at all brought this people over Jordan to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would to God we had been content and dwelt on the other side of Jordan.

O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies? For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round and cut off our name from the earth. And what wilt Thou do unto Thy great name? Joshua is asking, what will people think of us? What will they say of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ if they see that we were defeated? And that's a good question for you to ask tonight. What do people say of your testimony and our testimony when we're living defeated lives and call ourselves Christians? Little Christ, children of God, yet the testimony doesn't show it.

When the testimony shows that we have sin that is hiding behind walls, that we have bitterness among us, and we have unforgiving spirits and anger and the list goes on, lust and you name it. They see the name of God is at stake. The name of God is at stake.

And Joshua here is asking about that. The Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up, wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel has sinned, and they have transgressed My covenant which I have commended them, for they have taken of the accursed thing and have also stolen and dissembled also and have put it even among their own stuff. Therefore, the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed.

Neither will I be with you anymore, except you destroy the accursed from among you. So here we have a situation here where God is again having mercy on Joshua here and telling him what has happened and telling him this is why you're in trouble. This is why you've lost the battle.

Because the children of Israel, someone here has sinned and you're in trouble. Remember the victory that they just had. Remember the victory that was marvelous that just took place.

Never before or since that has a city been taken like that. Going on to verse 19. Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give I pray thee glory to the Lord God of Israel.

This is after they had brought family by family along the way until they came to Achan here to find out who this was, to find out what happened. And he said, My son, give I pray thee glory to the Lord God of Israel and make confession unto Him and tell me now what all thou hast done. Hide it not from me.

And Achan answered Joshua and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel and thus have I done. Now, the next two verses, I want to spend just a little bit of time here on them. The next two verses I see there were four fatal mistakes that Achan made.

There were four fatal mistakes that Achan made and I think probably many of you can identify with them. I can identify with them. I have made some of those mistakes already.

And Achan certainly made them and he is confessing them here. And I'll read the verse 21 there and then I'll go back and talk about them. When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonian garment and 200 shekels of silver and a wedge of gold of 50 shekels weight, then I coveted them and took them and behold, they are hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent and the silver under it.

Four fatal mistakes and they lost the battle. This is a learning lesson for us. When you go out of here this week, brethren, some of you have probably been here every night.

Maybe there's some of you, maybe there's visitors here that haven't been here every night. But these, nonetheless, these are four fatal mistakes that happen to humanity that causes many a battle to be lost. The first one that I see here, he says, when I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonian garment.

When I saw among the spoils. I don't believe that Achan just happened to glance down and just happened to see this. Achan saw them.

Achan was looking. Achan's eyes were going that way. I believe he had a bent to see that.

He was looking. He was allowing his eyes to look out to see if he could find something, I do believe. When I saw among the spoils, I believe he probably, as they were going through the spoil and they were seeing the things that these ungodly heathen people had, he was looking around there and he was probably kicking through some of this stuff and seeing what could I find.

Is there something that I could take home with me? Is there something that would be of value to me? Is there something that I could have? By the way, notice all of these things are very selfish. They're very eye-oriented. My brother Ron calls it the unholy trinity.

Me, myself, and I. And that's really what it is. It's all about I here. Just watch them.

When I saw, and I'm just going to ask you, where are your eyes tonight? And I don't know how much of this has been covered in Brother Rick's sessions, but where are your eyes, the commitment that you have made with your eyes to guard them, to watch over them, so they don't go into these places? If he would have had a covenant with his eyes, he wouldn't have been kicking through the stuff trying to see if he could find some nice clothes and some gold and silver. You know, and if his heart would have been in a right place, that wouldn't have even been a draw on him. But instead, his eyes were looking.

There was something wrong. Where are your eyes tonight? You know, when you walk into the grocery store. You know what I'm talking about.

You walk into the grocery store and you walk past the book rack and the magazine rack and you walk past all those things and you know, he just happened to see. And I realize there are occasions where you walk onto something that you didn't know was there and you quickly back out of it as fast as you can. But where are our eyes? If we guard our eyes by the Spirit of God, you know, we don't have those problems.

And we ask God to close our eyes. Ask God to turn our heads. Ask God to protect us from the garbage and the filth that is out there.

The billboards that are out along the road, you know. Many of them. The magazines that lay around, you know.

And maybe the Walmart sale paper that comes in the mail every week. You know, those kind of things. Are you watching your eyes? Men, young men, fathers.

Are you teaching your children, your young men, to watch their eyes? Internet as well. And many, many other things. When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment.

You know, this is heathen, these things. Things that your eyes want to look at. Then he said he coveted.

He found some things there that he saw them. He found some, I believe. And he says, I coveted them.

He began to let his heart go after them. He began to reach out in his mind. He began to think, you know, if I just look a little bit, if no one sees me.

Obviously, he was going to hide them. So, he took of these things. And for you and I, it's after we have saw something, it has begun to work in our minds.

The mind has begun to go. The wheels of our mind, you know, as we're looking. And then the next move for us is to take this into ourselves.

To covet or desire it. To want it. You know, some of you have done that in the past.

Some of you are clear of that this week now after the end. You know, some of you have gotten free from that and have confessed and repented of your sin. But there may be someone out there that still finds a draw, you know, when someone begins to speak.

And they begin to speak about some things that aren't even quite right. That are just a little off color. You know, and you begin to wonder what he's going to say.

Or maybe you begin to speak with your wife and you begin to talk about the things that are on your past. You know, and you just kind of enjoy it just a little bit. You begin to just entertain some of these things.

Sin isn't exceeding sinful in most places anymore. Just begin to desire and to covet and to slowly, slowly your conscience gets desensitized. Slowly, after you think about it and after you desire it, you know, maybe just a little bit.

I can just look once. You know, I can just take a little puff. Slowly your conscience gets to be steered.

Slowly your conscience... Well, maybe it's not so bad. Maybe I can handle it. Maybe it's not like those preachers keep telling us.

Maybe I can do it. He saw. He began to keep coveting them.

And then he took them. He took those things. He took them into his possession.

I thought of the little Scripture that said, Can a man take fire into his bosom and not be burned? He took those things. He brought them into his... He took them. It was more than just looking.

It was more than desiring. It was more than opening your heart. It was action now.

Now he's bringing this into his life. Some of you have done that. You know, you found it somewhere in a road ditch and you looked and you looked a little more and then you began to take it, you know.

He took them into his life. He took these things. Then he brought them and he hid them.

He took them and hid them. He that covereth his sins shall not prosper. We heard that many times this week, didn't we? But it's still true tonight.

We didn't wear it out. It's still true. He that covereth his sins shall not prosper.

The walls will never go down in your life if you're covering your sin. If you're still hiding and you're still covering, it won't work for you. It just simply won't.

And many of you have some of those that are probably... some of you at least have some of those in your life. I'd like to talk to you about some of those things that are very likely possible to be there. The things that build walls in your life.

And there are many of them and I just have a handful of them that I feel that God laid on my heart to share with you. And some of them are from personal testimony to let you know a little who I am and where I come from. And some of those things and some of the walls that I experienced in my life that needed to come down.

And... So, I'd like to begin with just sharing with you a little bit about my background, where I come from. I don't know how many of you have heard of what we call the sleeping preacher or shlok preriha people. I don't know if you've heard of those, but that's my background.

That's where I come from. And I was there until I was probably around 20 years old. And I'd like to just explain to you a little what that is so that you have a little bit of an idea of what kind of a bondage it brings into your life.

Because these things had a deep effect on my life for years. And it is my desire that if there is anyone that has anything such similar that they could be free. Anything I have to say this evening on this subject, I do not say it in any way to hurt anyone.

Almost my entire family is still in these particular shlok preriha churches. But the sleeping preacher basically is named by the name of John Kaufman. There was a few of them actually.

I'm not sure that breaks down a little. I'm not sure how it works as I think about it. But he was a man who died in 1913, and for 30 years he preached in a trance twice a week.

And when this man preached in a trance, this was a long time ago in the days of the little one-room schoolhouses and so on. And he would lay on a floor. They'd lay this man on a floor or he'd lay down.

And he'd lay there for a time while the people gathered in here, much maybe like you did this evening. And soon this man would begin to thrash around. He'd begin to thrash.

And the few reports that we have that are written say that he would violently thrash and hit his arms and legs on the floor so that the whole building or the floor would shake at times. After he had done that for long enough, while they would take him, a couple of men would come and they would stand him up on his feet. And he would walk back and forth and preach for two hours and have no idea what he was doing.

They would have a big, often a pot-bellied stove in the middle of the room maybe to keep the place warm in the wintertime. And they would have to have men around that thing to keep him away from it because he would walk up against that and fry his leg against the side and not even know that anything happened. As I ponder how much to say, you have to pray for me.

I know that when I even speak about these things, I expect to fight before and after. And it always comes. But to make a long story short here and to give you a few personal testimonies about it is that today, if you ask people about this, they will tell you that he is the man that was prophesied in John, the Comforter, that was prophesied in the book of John.

And I'll tell you tonight, he's not my Comforter. Just a few Scriptures that I'd like to look at as well. One is in Hebrews chapter 1 and I must turn there.

And one of the reasons I think about these things is because we live in a day when there's all kinds of confusion. We live in a day when there's false prophets everywhere trying to destroy, to deceive. And here's just a Scripture that's in Hebrews chapter 1 that I have to think of often when I think of my past and some of the things that it did.

And here it says, God who at sundry times and in diverse manners, He spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets. And He hath in these last days spoken unto us by whom? By His Son! Not through some other man that sleeps and speaks and does all those things. By His Son! This man would speak in a schoolhouse.

Many times He would tell people what's going on in other rooms. Often the boys would be out in the barn hitching off the horses, you know, and putting the buggies away and whatever else. And so while they're out there doing that, He'd be inside preaching and He'd tell them what they're doing out there.

And He was right. He could tell them what they're doing. Things like when Jesus bent down into the ground and rode into the dust in front of the adulterous woman, I think it was.

And He rode down there. The Bible doesn't say what it says. Well, He said what it said.

Those things are extra-biblical revelations that are not written in the Word of God. And if they're not in the Word of God, we're not going to preach them. That's simply enough.

But the sad part of all of this is people are duped into these things. People are duped into believing these things are true because we at least appear and look and dress and so on and pretend like everything's right. And so in the middle of all that, then we have this extra-biblical revelation and people actually hang to it.

They actually believe it. I was told by a person already that if I don't keep the German language and stay in the sleeping breach of church, I'll be cursed. There'll be a curse on my life.

Something bad will happen to us. He Himself said in one of the letters that I have that if anyone speaks out against Him, that it's blaspheming the Holy Ghost. Well, that's where I come from.

And because of all of that, there was lack of assurance in my life. There was lack of victory over sin in my life. Try as you may.

Or otherwise, many of those things made it very, very difficult. And as I was growing up, there were issues, moral problems, things that showed up along the way that looking back now, I see were very prevalent because of such a movement, because of such what I believe was a familiar spirit. And I'd like to quickly give you a few testimonies of some things that took place.

And these are things... These bring bondages into your life. These things will stop you like a concrete ceiling in your spiritual growth. My father is probably listening to me tonight.

Some years ago, he lives right close to us, a quarter mile down the road. And some years ago, I had a brother-in-law that was being ordained as a minister in one of their churches, the church I grew up in. And my dad said he thought he'd go to the ordination.

I thought he shouldn't. But to my shame, I didn't say so. I should have opened my mouth.

Well, he went. And that night, I got a phone call at 1 o'clock in the morning. And my mom was on the phone and she said something's wrong with dad.

Will you come down? So I said I'll come down right away. I jumped in the car. And I headed down the road.

And I got into the living room or into his bedroom. He was laying there on the bed with a high fever, shaking like a leaf. Just his whole body.

The bed was just rattling from him shaking. And I looked at it. I knew right away what it was.

And I said to him, I looked at him and I said, you're scared, aren't you? He said, yes, I am. And I said, it's that John Kaufman thing, isn't it? He said, yep. So I started praying right away.

I didn't say a fancy prayer. I just asked God to rebuke that spirit of John Kaufman in Jesus' name. And he stopped and was sleeping just about instantly.

And the fever disappeared. But these things, they put a tremendous bondage on you. Because there is a direct involvement that you have a following, a going after, something that is in the spirit world that is not of God.

It's that simple. And what my cry is tonight is one of the burdens that is on my heart is that this movement is large. There's a lot of people.

There's many people in my family and hundreds and hundreds of others that are duped into it. And most people, I don't know of almost any that are man enough to stop and say it isn't right. We need to take a look at sin and call it what it is.

These things bring a horrible bondage into your life. And I say that just as that's my background. That's one of the things that brought the bondage into my life.

But what about some of that brought a wall around me? But what about some of the ones in your life? There's probably no one else here that comes from that background. But what about the ones here that believe in water witching? You know, and how about the ones that are reading ayahs? You know, and powwowing, braha and all this stuff that goes with it, you know. Those are all things that will do the very same thing for you.

They'll bring you into bondage. They'll tell you, they'll absolutely render you helpless. You will spiritually be defeated until you take care of it, until you ask God to break that chain in Jesus' name.

You'll be stuck. It's just that simple. You're going to be stuck.

But you have a way out today. You have a way out. Jesus Christ, He's the One.

He's the Answer. You know, we're pretty gullible. You know, us plain folks.

You know that, don't you? Another example quickly. I don't know. I've got to hurry.

But another example here was for myself. I had a serious throat problem. And some days, some winters, I would lose my voice.

Brother Moses remembers, I think, coming when I just lost my voice. I couldn't talk. I whispered for two and three months.

And that was a burden to me. I loved to sing. If there's anything I don't want to give up about, it's singing.

And I'd sit on the front bench with my wife while everybody else would sing, and sometimes I'd just sit there and cry because I couldn't sing. Couldn't open my mouth. And nothing would come out.

So despite the fact, all doctors and whatever else didn't have much to say for me, I found my way to some little Hick doctor somewhere about two hours away. And someone thought he could help me. So I went there to see him.

And he asked me for my name and my address. And I gave it to him. I gave him my name and my address.

And then he took me into his office and he told me to sit down on his chair and take my shoes off. And I didn't say it, but I thought to myself, you know, I have a throat problem. It's not my toes.

But he asked me to take my shoes off. So I took my shoes off. Then he wanted me to take my socks off.

So I took my socks off. Then he asked me if I would hold on to this little metal object. You know, it had a wire going to it.

It went to a computer. It could have went to a shoe box. It wouldn't have mattered.

So I held on to this thing and he had another little thing that looked like a pen. And he started poking around on my toes. And the first thing I know, all of my problems started showing up on a computer screen.

And then he was right. You know how gullible we are. I should have known that that was enough.

I should have known this was a number of years back. But I should have known that that was bad enough. And then soon when he was done, he said, I have just the stuff for you.

I have a little bottle here of stuff. Take this stuff and you take three droppers a day, I think, or something, or put it under your tongue. When the bottle is half empty, put it in and shake it 257 times and go again for another month.

When it gets half empty, do it again. Then I should have really known that it was bad. Anyway, I went home and I walked in the door to my wife and I told her what he had told me.

And I showed her the little bottle and she said, are you okay? But that's the way we are. Many of us have gotten duped into those things because of that. Because we get desperate and because we were ignorant or whatever and we didn't know how to go to James 5 and cry out to God for help.

Instead, we went to some foolishness of poking around on our toes. And it's all the works of darkness. And if you've been involved in those kind of things, you need to repent of it tonight, in Jesus' name, if you want to be free.

And I can tell you tonight that if you have done those things, you probably have struggles with assurance of salvation, and I don't wonder why. And you probably have many other kind of maybe moral issues and thought-life issues and all kinds of things that go with it. But I don't wonder why a bit.

Because I know by now how Satan works a little. I'm not a professional on the subject, but I've been there enough and experienced it enough, and knows what comes down upon you and how it grips your life and you even think you can't possibly get out. The sooner you get out, the better.

The sooner you repent of those things, the better you are. Don't bother going to all those places and things. Jesus said, I'm the way! I have to share one more yet.

We have a family in our church presently. And I didn't ask him if I could share this testimony, but I'm certain that he'll okay it. They had a son that was four or five years old.

Four years old, I think, at the time. And he couldn't talk. Brother Moses will remember this story well.

This boy, four years old, couldn't talk. And Brother Moses came there, preached a message on witchcraft one day, and Mom and Dad brought this little boy up. The little boy was sleeping actually, I think.

And they told us, you know, this little boy can't say a word. He can't talk at all. He would kind of jumble around.

He had a language of his own. But no words that could be recognized. And they began to tell us that they were to an Amish midwife that practiced some types of strange things.

And they explained some of those things. And Brother Moses said, that needs to be broken in Jesus' name. So they had the little boy there sleeping, I think, in their arms and prayed over that little boy.

And the next morning when he woke up, he started talking. He started putting words together. It took a while to put sentences together.

It didn't come overnight. It didn't come in just a day. But he started to making words and putting words together the very next day.

When we play with the tools and tricks of the devil, I'll tell you, we suffer from it. And in this case, our children suffered from it. So tonight, I want to make a plea with you that if you have dabbled in those things, if you have played with those things and simply have never confessed them, and you find and you know that what I'm saying is true about the lack of assurance, lack of understanding the Bible.

I remember the day because of those things that I'd go to the Bible and it'd just be a blur. There was nothing there. But as soon as things started to be peeled from my life, all of a sudden I find out that the Son of God is alive! He is here! So I just ask you tonight that if you've been there, if you've done some of those things, you need to seek some help.

You need to find some help. You need to find somebody to pray with. And I didn't do you an extensive sermon on witchcraft.

I could have done that. But I'm not going to take the time to do all of that. But I brought you just a handful of pieces.

And I think you know, if you've been there, you know in your heart that little thing called the conscience is telling you already. Your conscience is speaking to you. Do you know the conscience really speaks in some strange ways? Did you know that? Some time ago, I saw an individual that I knew very well, and he had a t-shirt on, and on his t-shirt it said, Don't judge me.

That's reserved for God. Do you know what he was really saying? I have a cloudy conscience! There's something wrong with me! And I said to my wife, I said, isn't it something that if people would get their lives clear before God, they wouldn't have to announce it to the world that they have a problem. We can see it already.

The conscience is speaking to you tonight. I know if you have been in those things, if you've dabbled in those things of witchcraft and issues in the spirit realm, we think that the curses belong in the third world countries somewhere where they openly worship the devil. But you know, they're in this country.

They're in this country. I could go on with many other stories about that, many other things that have taken place that I can't say here in ways that we have been affected by some of these things. And I praise God

for victory through Jesus Christ.

He is the way, the truth, and the life. I'd like to spend just a little bit of time on another wall that is very prevalent in many, many lives. And I see it especially today when I go to the bookstore.

You go to the bookstore, it's full of religious psychology. It's full of psychology books and information that is so rank and humanistic, woven through with human cooked up ideas and breeds of stuff that will actually hold you bondage instead of setting you free. And people are falling for them by the droves.

I hear incredible things and terminology that is used in that realm that I see being pulled into our circles, can I say, and I wonder sometimes where this is all coming from. Recently, I don't know where I heard it. I have to be honest, I don't recollect the exact place.

But I heard someone telling me recently that they want to take back their life. They want to find out who they are. They want to take back their life.

And hey, that has some... if you look at it from the right angle, I understand what they're trying to say, but the Bible really says you're supposed to lose it, not take it back. You're supposed to lose your life and then you can find it. But somehow in this whole thing, it's a sneaky snake in here somewhere.

And this thing is creeping in on us and it actually, I believe, it begins to affect us in the way that we think. And without even knowing or understanding what is taking place, our focus is going on all the psychology and the stuff and the garbage that goes with it instead of a simple faith and repentance to our Lord Jesus Christ. Instead of honoring Him.

Instead of giving Him the place that He needs. There we go back to our books again. What happened to the good old Word of God? The good old Word of God.

It's all right there. It's all right there. You know, I say sometimes if you go to the bookstores, the most valuable piece is the attractive cover on the front.

Do you notice anymore how nice those are? You just look at the front cover and my, the artist, the fellow that does all the computer layout and stuff, they know exactly what to do to make this thing look attractive. Just like in the romance novels and all of that that you girls have tended to see with those longing eyes before you begin to take it in. It looks like it's a little bit of heaven or something.

It's not. I tell you, there's a snake in the grass. There's a snake in the grass.

Don't go there. We need to learn how to discern their lingo. We need to learn how to discern what these people are really trying to say because they're trying to undermine us.

They're trying to undermine us. I believe it with all of my heart. And I tell you, you just watch.

Give it a few years. I don't think you have to wait very many. I often say when these new trends and things start going, you just watch to see what kind of fruit hangs on the tree.

Just be a little patient and you watch and you see. But I can already tell you what's going to hang there because I already see the blossoms coming. It doesn't take very long.

The things that used to be said in an alcoholic anonymous class or in Weight Watchers class or whatever it is, is now said in the church of God. Self-help classes and all of that. And it should never, ever be that way.

If you want to find your life, lose it. Don't put the emphasis on trying to find it. I think it's time we put the emphasis on trying to lose it.

John 12. John 10, verse 24. Very familiar verse.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. Very, very similar to losing a life.

It's called dying. It's called a kernel of wheat going into the ground and simply rotting, germinating, going to nothing, giving up of itself, letting itself be emptied, and then as the moisture gets a hold of that thing, germinates that thing and new life begins to grow. That is very, very similar to us.

That's why Jesus chose to use the example of us finding our place of coming down in repentance and losing ourselves, losing our life in coming down before Him so that He can give us new life, so that He can put a new heart in you. You don't want that old heart that you've got. You might think you do, but you don't want it.

You want to lose it. Another one about losing it is in Matthew 10.39. Again, very simple. He that findeth his life shall lose it.

And he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it. You know, as if Jesus, He said that very simple verse that is known all over the world, That kind of life is a laborous life, I can tell you. It's a hard life.

The devil is no easy taskmaster. It's a hard life. And Jesus is saying, come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden.

You just need to come at the foot of the cross. Just lose your life. And for someone here tonight that hasn't lost their life, but it's also for some of you in the next days ahead that have battles ahead of you, that want to take mountains out of your life as they come.

We don't lose it just once. Sometimes we have to lay our life down over and over and over. And it doesn't always feel good, does it? But tonight, if the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.

You know, someone else can claim to have a comforter, but there's only one comforter that can free. There's only one comforter that can free. And that comforter, the Holy Spirit, is available for everyone, not just an elite group of people.

Or else our dear people in all the other parts of the world would never have a chance at the Holy Ghost. How have you allowed the mountains or the walls of the city to surround you? Fear is another one that comes when you've been involved in those demonic things. Fear.

Incredible fear. Incredible fear. Fear of the dark.

Fear of being alone in the house. Incredible fear comes from being involved in those things. Another thing for you to ask yourself as you consider your pow-wowing and all those kind of things.

Is there fear in your life because of that? If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed. Outbursts of anger. They happen.

It's another fruit. But tonight you can be free. The Lord Jesus came to set us free.

There is not a one of us as you sit here and you ponder where your eyes have been, where your heart has been all week long as you heard the teaching of the Word of God and you know deep down in your heart, you know the things that have been spoken to you. And that thing has been pounding in your heart all week. Boom, boom, boom.

You know it's there. You know, and you don't want to go home that way. You absolutely do not want to go home that way.

And I beg of you not to go. But tonight you can absolutely find freedom in Christ. There is.

There is freedom with Jesus. You know, there are some things that I can't promise you. I can't promise you what the weather is going to be like tomorrow.

I can't tell you that you're going to be rich and famous one day and whatever else comes your way, maybe the desires of your heart, I can't tell you that. But I can tell you that the Lord Jesus is here for you. I can tell you the Lord Jesus will bring forgiveness your way.

You know, there's no going wrong with Him. There's no going wrong. So tonight, I'm just asking you as you have went through this week, you felt the call of God on your heart.

Message after message. Message after message. And you knew that God was saying something to you.

And tonight as you sat here and we started talking about walls that surround your heart, you knew that there were walls there. You knew that there are walls that are in your heart that ought to be tore down. Walls that need to come down.

You know, you can't decide how many times you have to walk around the wall. God told them. The children of Israel didn't decide.

I don't want to do it seven times. That's a waste. I only want to do it three times.

Or walk twice as fast and get as much done. We'll do it three times. It doesn't work that way in God's economy.

God knows. The recipe is clear. And I think you know what it is tonight.

I don't think I have to beg you long. I just want to give you an opportunity. You have heard it this week.

And the accountability that lies on our shoulders as we go from this place I believe is incredible because of everything that we heard. So tonight, without a lot of begging and pleading with you, I'm just going to ask you to come and give your burden to the Lord. Once and for all, don't leave this place.

And if you've been involved in some of these things I preached about tonight, or things from the rest of the week, it doesn't matter. Let's clear it up tonight. Just get it straight.

Find forgiveness at the foot of the cross. Let's have a song. And someone, you just come to the front.

Find a place to pray here. Find a place to get alone with God. Right, we're not going to sing long.
Just come. Come and clear your heart. 228.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/16/SID16815.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/darwin-hostetler/tearing-down-the-walls/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net