

Jesus Is Lord

by Dennis Kinlaw

The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing and submitting to the Lordship of Christ, and the role of the Holy Spirit in empowering us to make the ultimate surrender.

Duration: 55:06

Scripture: Psalm 16:1-10, 1 Corinthians 12:1-2

Topics: "Lordship Of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells a story about a Roman senator and a woman who is about to be executed. The senator offers her a way to save her life by dropping three drops of oil and speaking three words. However, the woman responds by saying that Jesus is Lord, not Caesar. She then asks the senator if he can hear the angel. The preacher emphasizes that the woman's faith in Jesus and her focus on Him bring her joy and life, even in difficult circumstances. The sermon concludes by highlighting that there are only two groups of people: those who have their focus on Jesus and those who do not.

Transcript

Our scripture lesson this morning is found in Psalm 16. If you do not have an Old Testament handy, if you will turn in your hymnal, you will find that this psalm is included in your hymnal there in the pew. It is scripture reading 525.

I wonder if we could read it responsibly so that you share in the reading of this scripture. And then I would like to ask that you keep the scripture open, because I would like to think that in the next few minutes we together can look at this psalm and find out what God has to say to us through it. Reading 525 in the back of your Nazarene hymnal.

Let us read responsibly. Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put my trust. Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another God.

Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips. The Lord is a portion of my inheritance, and of my trust, thou mayest maintain it in my life. The lions are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage.

I have set the Lord always before me, because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices, and my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in

hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to seek corruption.

Thou wilt show me the path of life, in thy presence your soul is the joy, and thy right hand is my grace. I would like to add to that three verses taken from the New Testament. They are found in Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, the first of his two epistles.

First Corinthians 12, reading from the beginning of the chapter. Now concerning spiritual things, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. You know that you were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as you were led.

Wherefore, I give you to understand that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed, and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. One of my favorite stories from the early Church is the story of the teenage girl that had come to faith in Christ, and the Roman government was putting the Christians who made a public confession of their faith on trial as to whether they would maintain that profession. They knew that if they did maintain that profession, they would lose their lives because of their faith in Christ.

And so she was brought into that public ceremony where the option was to put the three drops of oil before a figure of the Emperor and say, Caesar is Lord, or to be led out into the arena to face the lions and forfeit her life for Christ. As she stood there in line waiting for her test, a Roman senator looked down at her and saw what a slip of a girl she was. In her youth, in her innocence, in her weakness, and his heart was profoundly moved.

And he, with some of the milk of human kindness within him, could not understand why it was necessary that a girl like that should lose her life over a religious confession. So he slipped out of his place and came down and stood side of her and said, Daughter, it isn't necessary for you to die. All that you have to do is drop those three drops of oil and speak three words.

It won't take you three seconds. Just three drops of oil and speak three words and you have the rest of your life to do what you please with. And if you want to live it in your own religious way, fine, but just that and your life is your own.

And she looked back at him and said, But sir, Caesar is not the Lord, Jesus is Lord. And the Roman senator looked at her and said, But daughter, do you hear those lions? She paused for a moment and cocked her head and listened, and then she looked back at him as if that were a new thought. And then she turned to him and said, But sir, do you hear the angels? Which way do I go? Now I like that story because it moves my heart in letting me understand something of what those early Christians faced and what the crucial issue was for them in those early days of the Church.

It was simply a matter of who was going to be Lord. And the issue was precipitated so that the Christians had to publicly go on record saying either Jesus is Lord, or the political option Caesar is Lord. Now I think we sense some of that when we read the New Testament, because you will remember that there are a number of references in the New Testament that indicate that those early Christians felt that that basically was the difference between the Christian and the non-Christian.

The Christian was the person who had seen who Jesus was and was ready to take his public stand on the fact that Jesus really is the Lord. And so the early Church made that confession. You will remember in that second chapter of Paul's Philippian letter, he spoke and said, Now you need to have the mind which is in

Christ.

It is not a proud mind, it is not a self-exalting mind, it is a humble mind. It is the mind of one who had the right to be equal with God, was equal with God, but emptied himself so that he could become a servant, humbling himself to give himself to other people even in death. And he said, Because of that the Father has highly exalted him, and I want you to know what the ultimate end is to be.

When you see him again he will not be incognito like he was in Judea and in Galilee, but when you see him again he will be King of kings and Lord of lords, and every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Christ, to the glory of God the Father. The early Christians said, That's what we believe. We believe that in the final day, even you who speak and say Caesar is Lord, in that day you will be bending the knee and joining us to say, We were wrong, Jesus really is the Lord.

You will remember that John came to that in the nineteenth chapter of his revelation. You will remember he had a vision, and he said, I saw heaven open, I saw beyond time, and I saw beyond space, and I saw beyond that which is all about us, and I saw the ultimate, and when I did, I saw a man sitting on a white horse. And he was called the faithful and true.

He came in righteousness to judge and to make war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on his head there were many crowns. He had a name written that no man knew but he himself, and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood.

His name is called the Word of God. The armies which are in heaven follow him as he rides his white horse, as he is clothed in fine linen and white and clean. And out of his mouth goes a sharp two-edged sword, a sword with which he will smite the nation and with which he will rule over them with a rod of iron.

And he has on his vesture that blood-dipped vesture, and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. You see, they believed that they knew the secret to Jesus and that he was not simply a Galilean prophet or a Jewish peasant. He rather was the ultimate Son of God, and that he ultimately would reign over all of God's creation.

He was the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and that they must make that confession if they were to be honest. Now, they believed that making that confession was what ultimately determined one's salvation. That's what Paul is saying in the tenth chapter of the book of Romans, you will remember, when he says, If thou shalt confess with thy mouth that Jesus is Lord, and if you will believe in your heart that God hath raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

For it is with the heart that man believes to righteousness, but it is with the mouth that confession is made unto salvation. And this is something that you cannot keep quiet about if you are to be saved. If you are to be saved, you must join those who speak up and say, Jesus is Lord.

Now, it was something that they could not keep quiet about, and they felt that their eternal destiny is hinged on it. Now, never did they feel that that was an easy decision. There is no glibness and there is no romanticism in the New Testament in dealing with that.

They recognized two things. They recognized that they would have a problem with society. They recognized that when they went out to speak and to live under that word, that Jesus is Lord, they would find themselves confronting a society that had other ultimate loyalties, and they knew that it might necessitate their death even as it necessitated the death of the girl of which we spoke.

But they knew something else. They knew that not only was there external pressure to keep them from doing it, they knew that in the heart of every man was an internal problem with which they needed great and radical help. They knew the sinfulness of the human heart and the rebelliousness of the human will.

As George Crowley in the hymn which we sang a few moments ago spoke about checking the rising doubt, but also checking the rebel sigh, and the early Church knew the tendency of the human heart to want to be autonomous, even the believing Christian heart with that remnant of self-will uncleansed within, the potential for resistance even to one's own acknowledged Lord. And so Paul wrote and said, A man may be able to speak it with his lips casually, but if his life is to mean it and if he is to speak it with his life and if it is to be true, no man can say that Jesus is Lord without the aid, the empowerment, the cleansing, the grace that only the Holy Spirit can give. No man can say that Jesus is Lord saved by the Holy Ghost.

Now I like the frank realism of that, because if you have ever tried to bring your life under the Lordship of Christ, you've found that you have two problems. One is the culture about you that is so alien to that confession, and the other is the waywardness of the human heart, even after new birth. The Church in its better moments has always recognized that.

Do you remember the hymn of George Matheson, that Presbyterian theologian, preacher, philosopher who gave to us, O love that wilt not let me go, I rest my weary soul in thee? It was he who spoke as a Christian and said, Make me a captive Lord, and then I shall be free. Force me to render up my sword, and I shall conquerer be. I sink in life's alarms when by myself I stand.

Imprison me within thine arms, and strong shall be my hand. I sang that for years before I ever noticed the verbs. Did you notice them? Make me a captive Lord.

Now, you know as well as I that when the grace of God is come to a man's heart, he sings, Since from his bounty I have received such proofs of love divine, had I a thousand hearts to give, Lord, they should all be thine. But the problem isn't a thousand hearts. The problem is the last corner of the one.

And so George Matheson says, If that surrender ever occurs in that last corner of my being, you'll have to act, O God. Make me a captive, then I'll be free, totally free. Force me.

Isn't it interesting that the person who has come to saving grace still looks up and says, Violate my self-will, overcome it, Lord. Force me to render up my sword, the sign, the symbol of my autonomy. Force me to render up my sword, and I shall conquerer be.

I sink in life's alarms when by myself I stand. And there it is where our problem is when we go it alone, because in our aloneness there is no hope. I sink in life's alarms when by myself I stand.

What is my hope? Imprison me. You, Lord, please imprison me within thine arms, and strong shall be my hand. Make, force, imprison.

And so George Matheson knew what I think Paul was talking about. No man can make that ultimate surrender without divine aid and assistance. No man can say that Jesus is Lord, saved by the Holy Ghost.

But that's what the human heart cries for, and it doesn't matter whether you're a Nazarene or a Scottish Presbyterian. It doesn't matter whether you're a Phineas Brisee or whether you're a George Matheson. It doesn't matter whether you're at the lower edge of society or at the lower edge of intellectual gifts and training, or whether you're a man like George Matheson who was invited to give the Gifford Lecture.

And I question whether any higher honor is ever given to a British intellectual than that honor. But when he exposed his heart, you know what he found his heart crying out? I want something better than this world's laurel. I want to be holy God.

And you do, too, deep in your spirit. No matter who you are, that's the thing for which our hearts cry. Now what does it mean? I've looked through the Scripture through the years to find the choice expressions of it, and through the years I've come to this passage as the one that to me expresses it best.

I'm sure there are others in the Word of God that are equally good, but one day this one. And it may be that one of the reasons I love this passage is that for so long I simply knew a few lines out of it, and then one day I saw it almost as a whole. I'm sure there's a lot more for me to see.

But I've begun to see the configuration in this sixteenth psalm. And the beautiful thing is that the sixteenth psalm is a testimony on the Lordship of Christ. Now of course he doesn't name him Christ or Jesus, because he was writing perhaps a thousand years before Jesus was born to Mary.

But let me remind you that the life of the eternal Son of God didn't begin at Bethlehem, and the cry of the human heart before Bethlehem was for a recognition of and a submission to and an experience of the Lordship of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. You see, God doesn't change, and his requirements for his creatures don't change, and his provision for his creatures does not change. God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob and of John and of Paul, Christ slain from the foundation of the world, and so here a thousand years before Christ, a person came to know that experience that you and I speak about as a clean heart and a pure heart.

Now look at it. I want us to just look at the text as quickly as we can and see the way he bears witness. If you have any question about it, let me say, if you will get another translation or two and read with the King James, which is in your hymnal, you will find a little better translation.

We know a lot more about the biblical text and about Hebrew today than we did in 1611 when the King James was written. And so you will find me changing the text a little. If you've got an RSV or an NIV, you will find that what I am saying is basically in all of those translations.

I've spent a number of years teaching Hebrew, so you'll forgive me if I use what is my translation, and basically it is the same as in these other translations. But let me show you. I love the way the psalmist so oftentimes begins his psalm with his conclusion, and I like that.

You see, the psalm is the crystallization of an experience in his life, and since it's something that has now come to full realization within his life, he begins with his conclusion. And what is it? Preserve me, O God, for in you do I put my trust. Now, that word, preserve, could be translated just as easily, keep me.

And that's the problem, isn't it? Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it. Now that's the proneness of the human heart. And when there is a corner of my being or yours under my control and not under his control, there is all the more potential and probability of wandering, is there not? Here was a man who knew his own heart, and he knew that he needed divine help to keep his eye fixed upon God so that his eye did not wander away from his true goal.

And so he says, keep me, O Lord. And you know, I believe that's the perpetual prayer of the sanctified soul. Expressed or unexpressed, he knows that his security is in the grace of God and God alone.

You and I never get to the place, no matter how long we've lived in grace, to where in ourselves we can do his will. And if we turn to our resources, alone and separate from him, we will wander. And out of his own experience, he looks up and says, Lord, you keep me, keep my soul, because in you I have placed my trust.

Could be translated, in you I have taken my refuge. Rock of ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee and let me live there. Now look at the next verse.

The King James says, O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord. In the Hebrew, the expression, O my soul, is not there, because the King James translators could not make up their minds whether it was a second-person verb or a first-person. And in the original text, there is no difference.

And for some reason, traditionally, they decided it was second-person. So to whom, who is it that's saying? So they say, evidently it's the man's soul who is saying, You are my Lord. But really, you have said to the Lord, You are my Lord.

But really, the Hebrew can be translated, the consonantal text just as easily, in fact it can be translated better, I said to Jehovah. Or if you'll let me use the more formal term now, I said to Yahweh. I said to the God of Israel, I said to the God whose name we know, the God who has disclosed himself to us and told us what his name is, our God, the God, I said to him, You are my Lord.

I said to Yahweh, I said to Jehovah, or I said to Jesus, You are my Lord. Now the rest of the psalm comes out of that confession. Now the next thing that occurs in the King James is confusing, too.

But let me tell you what the Hebrew just simply literally says. And if you have an RSV or an NID, you will find it there. What it says is, My good not against you, or apart from you, or besides you.

My good not. The Hebrew is very cryptic, very terse, poetic. My good not apart from you.

And what a conclusion. What a place to come in a man's thinking. And that's the essence of it.

You see, the place he has come to now is where he says, There is nothing that is good for me if it's separated from him and his will for me. I do not believe that you will ever live a Spirit-filled, Spirit-led life unless you come to that conclusion. You see, now, the issue in the Spirit-filled life is not whether you're going to live in moral transgression or not.

The question in the Spirit-filled life is what you're going to do with goods, not evil. I think that's what Wesley was saying when he said, This we know about the born-again person, he no longer sins. The thing is not what he does with moral transgressions, the thing is what he does with goods.

Because, you see, the man who has come under the Lordship of Jesus says, It may be perfectly good for you, bless you. But he said no to me, and he's in control in this house. Now that's good biblical theology, Old Testament theology particularly, because, you see, in the Old Testament everything was good originally, because everything that existed originally came from the hand of God.

We had time, we could go into that in great detail, but you will remember the classical critical illustration at the beginning of chapter 3 of Genesis, And the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God, Jehovah God, had made. The text says that even in the beginning, that in the beginning even Satan was good. And the problem came when Satan got out of the will of God, when Satan moved

out from under the Lordship of Yahweh.

And when he did, it meant trouble for other people. But you see, in the beginning, Satan was part of that creation of which God could say, It's good, very good, because I made it. And the psalmist says, You know, I've come to the place where I know that nothing has any goodness for me if it's outside of His will for me.

Now the psalm takes that and develops it beautifully, because in the last line, and it's interesting how these motifs play against each other all through the psalm, more magnificently structured than a Beethoven symphony or a Shakespeare sonnet or a V-8 engine. Whatever it is that you think of as putting together so it works and purrs together and every part fits and every gear meshes, look at the end. Your text says, At thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore, and in your presence is fullness of joy.

Let me tell you what the Hebrew literally says. It says, With your face is fullness of joy, with your face is fullness of joy, and in your right hand there are pleasures forevermore. And the question is simply what he's got in that right hand of his for me.

And if he doesn't have it in his right hand for me, it is wrong. It is not good. I have learned, Lord, that my good is not apart from you, it's in you.

And if I seek you and find you in your will for me, I will have found all that is good for me, and I will have missed all that is evil and wrong and damaging for me. Now I like that. Do you know what it does? Because it puts the tension right in my relationship to him, not in my relationship to things and places and people.

It means that I have to take the focus of my soul away from them and put it on him to where I can say, Like Jesus the true Son, not my will, but thine. Is this your cup for me? If it is, it is good. He says, when you come to the place where you see that, you know instantly that there are only two groups of people.

You can now split society right down the middle, there are only two groups of people. Now he's speaking ultimately. There are those who put one foot in one camp for a while and one foot in the other, and who of us has not been there? But the psalmist says, ultimately there are those that will say, Jehovah is Lord, and those who will not.

My man goes to the 22nd chapter of the book of Revelation, and he says, Let those that are filthy be filthy still, and let those that are holy be holy still. And there is no middle ground, for on the outside are those that are not holy, and on the inside are those that are holy. Now let me show you something in this psalm.

But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight, and that's the first class that he's speaking about. The Hebrew word here is truly the word saints, the holy ones is what it is. It's the Old Testament equivalent of the hagioi of the New Testament, the New Testament word saint, and so the translation there is excellent.

But do you know that word holy one is used very seldom in the Old Testament? Because it took several centuries to get holiness defined, and people had to learn what holiness was before God would say, I want people to be holy. And if you have a perverted conception of holiness, you have difficulty at that point. But he says, as for the holy one, and that is, same root as the word which is used about Jehovah where he speaks and says, I want you to be kadosh, because that's what I am, and these are the kadoshim, the holy ones.

As for the holy ones, they are the excellent ones, and in them is my delight. I stood here last night and watched you, and I thought to myself, you'll pardon me, but I thought, can this be stayed proper Bostonian New England, even for a Southerner and a Methodist? I thought, is this really stayed proper Bostonian New England? But you know what I loved the most? Was the delight that you found in him and the delight that you found in each other. Because whenever you come to the place where you have chosen him and him alone is your Lord, the deepest ecstasy that you can know other than communion with him is the fellowship of those who come to a similar commitment.

That's why you love each other and belong, because you're separate from a world about you. And so he says, as for the saints that are in there, they are my delight, in them is my delight, they are the excellent ones. I believe that.

Where are you going to find nobility and royalty like among the sanctified? Now, there's another group. And who are they? They are defined as those that hasten after another. Now, if you look at your text, you will notice that it says in verse 3, those that hasten after another God.

But if you've got a King James, you will find that the word God is in italics, because it isn't in the Hebrew, because there aren't any other gods. And the Hebrew knows it. And if you hasten after anything other than the Lord, you are hastening after something other than God.

There is no God but one, and so your options are to hasten after God, or to hasten after an alternative that's false and can never play the role that you need in your life. And you see, that's what a dollar-three is. And what are the options? Isn't it interesting that the only option you can find to God in your life is a gift that he's given you? The only alternative to God in your life and mine, the only alternatives are gifts that he gave us to make our lives richer.

But you see, there's where the psalmist is right. When you take the good gift of God, made to make your life and mine richer, and set it up as your objective instead of him, then that which was given you for good and to bless you becomes corrupting, corrosive, destructive, defiling, deadening. It kills you.

The good becomes the source of evil. I've learned, Lord, that there's no goodness in it for me if it's not in your will for me. There are the two classes of people, the people who hasten after him and the people who hasten, have a hungering and a yearning for something else, and hasten after him.

Now, you will notice he makes that clear in two other portions of the psalm. Look at verse 8. He says, I have set Jehovah always before me. Now, that's the alternative to hastening after something else.

I have set the Lord always before me. He is at the center of my vision. The New Testament can't improve on that.

Jesus himself said it very simply, but no difference. Seek ye first what? The rule of God. Seek first him and his kingdom, kingdom in your life where your life says, He is my Lord.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these other things that you need, the goods that you need will be added. I set Jehovah always before my face. Then you come down to that conclusion, with your face there is fullness of joy, and in your right hand there are pleasures forevermore.

Now you know you're not supposed to look at his right hand, except in your lateral vision. There's where the gifts are, and if you looked at his right hand instead of his face and seek his hand instead of his face,

the corruption has already started. But when you keep his face central in your lateral vision, you'll begin to see the good things that he's got for you and how rich your life is going to be.

But the focus is on him. I love the way he spells this out. He says, For the one who is holy, what does it mean? Quickly notice the alternatives.

For the one who's holy, and then for the one who's unholy. For the one who's holy, the Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, he says. He's testifying now.

Really that could be translated, the measure of my portion. It is the measure of my portion. What? Jehovah.

Do you know why the psalmist says that? Well, he's found that it's better to have God than any of his gifts. It's better to have God than any of his gifts. Now the funny thing is, if you get God, you'll get all the gifts you can handle.

But if you look for the gifts, you'll lose him. So he says, You know what is now the measure of my portion? It's he. He says, Not only is he the measure of my portion, he is my cup.

I don't think there's any way to deal with that without going to the life of Jesus. When he looks up at his Father and says, Father, if it be possible, take this cup from me. Life is one long drink of water.

Now the question is, are you going to drink from his cup or one of your own making? He has become my cup. My soul yearns for him, except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood. Your life is in him, but your life is taken.

He's my cup. He's the plan for my life. Not the what of life, but the who.

That's the important thing. Now he says, He's not only my portion and my cup, but I've come to the place where I see that he's the one who's supposed to maintain my lot. I wish I knew how to preach that the way it ought to be preached.

It's rather awkward in a Nazarene crowd of Nazarene preachers because it's gambling terminology. You see, all of life hangs on the roll of the dice, and you're scared to death they're not going to turn up right for you. Now if you don't understand what I'm talking about, you touch some Nazarene preacher afterwards whose background is like mine and you ask him about it.

You've got everything you've got staked on that one roll of dice, everything. And if the numbers don't come up right, you're done. You say, How can I see to it that those numbers come up right? And so I stick my hand in to be sure the guy comes up with the right number up.

He says, No, I've left the roll of the dice to him. He's the one who maintains my lot. Maybe card language, I don't know.

You've got everything in your life hanging on that deal, you see. And you're the one dealing. So you deal off the top to your friends and you deal off the bottom to yourself.

And he says, No, I've come to the place where I'll let him do the dealing. You know where most of our problems come? When we stick our fingers in to that process. He says, I've decided to let Jesus determine my lot.

This is language of two kinds biblically. It's Levitical language and it's Canaanite language. If you haven't read Lawrence Wood's book, Pentecostal Grace, you ought to look at it because it deals with that Canaanite language.

You see, the words here, the nouns are straight out of the book of Joshua. Portion, lot, lines, inheritance. They were now in the land.

And Dan says, What do I get? Simeon says, What do I get? Benjamin says, What do I get? And they cast the lots. And they said, That's for you, Benjamin. And they drew a circle, lines around his territory.

And they said, This is for you, Ephraim. And this is for you, Manasseh. And they drew lines around it.

The choice was not theirs and the choice isn't yours. And I'm sure Benjamin said, I'd like what Ephraim's got. And Ephraim said, I'd like what Dan's got, or Judah, or one of the others.

And they said, That's not your privilege. Because if Ephraim, if you get what Judah's got, it'll be wrong for you. And Judah, if you get what Ephraim's got, it'll be wrong for you.

Because God gave to Judah what was right for Judah and to Ephraim what was right for Ephraim. And they called it the promised land, land flowing with milk and honey. You see, it's Canaan language.

But more than that, it's Levitical language. You remember the Levites said, What's our portion? And they said, You're going to get a better portion. And they said, Where is that? And they said, It isn't a where, it's a who.

You're not going to have any territory, you're going to live among other people. You see, I will be your portion, your cup and your inheritance. And you know, that's the way early Methodist preachers were ordained.

They never received salaries, they received pastoral support. The people took care of their needs because their business was not temporal things. The Lord was to be their portion and their life and their inheritance.

We've lost something, haven't we? No church can ever pay you to do God's will for you. They can help you. You see, it's Levitical language.

The fellow said, I came to the place where I have sought nothing but Him. I've set Him always before my face. You say, Can you really live in the world like that? That's sort of unworldly and unworkable, isn't it? Could I take the time to quote another hymn to you? Do you know the hymn, Jesus, priceless treasure, source of purest pleasure, truest friend to me? Long my heart had panted, till it well now fainted, thirsting after thee.

Thine I am, O spotless Lamb, I will suffer not to hide thee. Ask for naught beside thee. That sounds like what a preacher ought to be, doesn't it? I want to tell you, he was a mayor of a German city and a member of Congress.

And if a mayor of a city can come to that place, I think a Nazarene preacher and a Methodist preacher ought to come to that place. And the psalmist says, I've come to that place and I want to tell you what happened. The lions have fallen unto me with pleasantnesses.

I let him do the drawing and he drew my portion out, and man, I'm very satisfied. Are you satisfied with this portion for you? If you're not, you're missing something, because you see, he does all things well. The lions have fallen to me.

If you're not satisfied, the probabilities are it's because you've interfered with the lion-drawing process. But you let him draw your lot, and you'll find. Keep your hands off.

You say, if I don't tell that district, that superintendent, I'll really get a bad deal. Or if I don't pull some string somewhere, goodness knows what'll happen to me. It's interesting how subtly our ego gets involved in its own security.

But God wants people who'll say, Lord, it's up to you. When you draw the lines, you know, in those early Methodist conferences when they'd read the appointments, the appointments would often be punctuated by explosions from the balcony where the wives sat. And when the woman hears her husband's appointment, she can't, doesn't even know she's doing it while she screams out, My God, oh no, not there.

You've been there. But the psalmist says, I decided to let him handle all that for me, and he's done rather well. They've all been with pleasantnesses.

I turned fifty-nine this week. I tell you that because, just to let you know, I'm not nearly as old as you thought I was. But you know the thing I love? I look back now, and if when I started out I'd known what good things he had in his hand for me, and what his plan for me was, and how much better it was than anything I ever dreamed, I'd have been more faithful to him.

He draws the lines well. I'd like to shake your thinking on God's will, and turn it around and put it in another context. I'd like for you to put it in the settlement of an estate.

Have you ever been to the reading of a will? That's what we're talking about. Not just an authoritative command that you must obey. It's a father's loving heart taking care of his child.

That's what the will of God is. And he says, that will for me, that inheritance, what is it? The Hebrew word does not occur a great many times, shafarot. It has three connotations.

It's good. It'll never hurt you. You'll never be damaged by it.

There may be pain in it, but you won't come out damaged. You'll come out cured, strengthened, healed, built up. It'll be good.

The second connotation is, it'll be pleasant. And the third is, it'll be beautiful. And I believe that.

There is an aesthetic character to the life lived in the will of God. Now what's the alternative? Frightful. The sorrows are multiplied to those who hasten after another.

I'm sorry, I'm wrong. With this, I'm through. The sorrows are multiplied to those who hasten after another.

And the Hebrew word comes from the same root as the word which is used in Genesis 3 as to what happened when Eve took her eyes off the Father and looked at the fruit. Good to the eyes, pleasant to, you see, to the taste, good to make one wise, learn things she wouldn't have known otherwise, didn't know otherwise, but out of his will. And she said, it's good.

And it was. If it weren't good, God wouldn't have made it. It was good, but it wasn't good for her.

And so, she took the good that wasn't good for her, and what came? Guilt. God never intended us to live under guilt. Suffering.

God's own testimony to us that we're out of his will and our world is out of his will. Separation and alienation from our human companion and from God, loneliness and death. And it's always true, always true, it's still true when you turn your eyes from him to anything out of his will.

But what about the person who doesn't turn his eyes? With your face is fullness of joy. Would you look at the punctuation in that last verse? I love it. I never noticed it until this summer.

Thou will show me the path of life. And what have you got after the word life? You've got a colon. Do you know what a colon means? What's coming afterwards defines what's just been said.

You know his path for me? It's life, not death. And what is the character of that life? His face, even in a fiery furnace, or in a Philippian prison, or in a Nazarene pastury. His face, his presence.

And with his face is fullness of joy, and in his right hand there are pleasures forevermore. His will is good. Father, take this cup from me, nevertheless not my will but thine be done.

And for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross. Because on the other side of that cross with its pain was the joy of the redemption of his bride. I want to ask you a question.

Is there any division in your heart? Is your eye single? Is your heart fixed? Times haven't changed. If you've got one eye on something that's forbidden and not in his will, your sorrows will multiply. And if your heart is fixed.

There's a psalm in the Hebrew that talks about a man who has a heart and a heart. He's got a heart for God and he's got a heart for something else, and he's in trouble. And he has a prayer, and that prayer is, unify my heart.

In fact, it's just like in English. The verb comes from the word one, and what he says is, unify my heart to where there are not two hearts in me, but there's one heart. And that heart is to seek you and your will.

I want to know if there's any alien hankering in you today. I have good news for you. Good news for you.

The first may not sound like good news, but it is. The good news is, there's nothing you can do that will get rid of it in your strength. But the good news is that since it's his will for you, if there's nothing you can do to get rid of it, there's something he can.

And that's the reason we call it a work of grace. That's the reason we call it a work of grace, because it's his work to take my heart and cleanse it from its waywardness, and in his grace to fix it on him. Anybody need that this morning? Have you been struggling? Let's bow our heads together for praise.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/20/SID20899.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/dennis-kinlaw/jesus-is-lord/>

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