

The Process of Detachment

by Dennis Kinlaw

Dennis Kinlaw's sermon explores the process of detachment through the faith journey of Abraham, emphasizing a personal relationship with God over legalistic practices.

Duration: 54:36

Scripture: Romans 11:8, Hebrews 11:8

Topics: "Detachment"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the story of Abraham and how God fulfilled his dream of having a child and a son who would inherit his blessings. The speaker emphasizes the importance of God's timing and how waiting until Abraham was 75 years old made the story more impactful. The sermon also highlights the challenges and sacrifices that missionaries and believers may face when following God's call, using the example of Abraham's alienation as a foreigner. The speaker concludes by emphasizing the significance of having a personal encounter with God, which gives believers the strength and conviction to endure hardships and persecution.

Transcript

Yesterday we looked at a passage in the book of Romans. I want you to turn to the book of Hebrews this morning to chapter 11 and begin reading with verse 8 of chapter 11. By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country. He lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations whose architect and builder is God.

By faith Abraham, even though he was past age and Sarah herself was barren, was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore. All these people were still living by faith when they died.

They did not receive the thing's promise, they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own.

If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son. Even though God had said to him, it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned, Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.

By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons and worshipped as he leaned on the top of his staff. Will you notice how much space is given to Isaac and how much space is given to Jacob and how much space is given to Abraham? Yesterday we were talking a bit about why the book of Genesis in the Bible, why does everything begin here, and why is this book placed where it is.

And we tried to say that there is divine wisdom, divine wisdom, not human wisdom, that put it there. And it put it there in spite of the fact that the ones who put it there lived hundreds of years, centuries after the events, and you can even say millennia after the events. But they sensed as the Spirit of God led them, as the canon was put together, this book had to be first.

Now I think the reason is because it enables us to see more clearly what God wants out of us. Because as the years pass, God explained more and more of what it meant to walk with him. But all of the additions do not change the fact that the central thing is that we should know him and that we should walk with him.

So it is that David is not the type for you and me, though he was an incredibly great man. And he is the one that is called the Messiah in the Old Testament, the Anointed One, because that's what he was. He was the Anointed One.

But he's not the model in this sense biblically for you and me. And this is why God did not take Moses, and the New Testament does not take Moses. Now if I wanted to make a case for which was greater as a human being, Abraham or Moses, in all the canons of the world's understanding of what greatness is, Abraham doesn't compare with Moses.

Because, you see, Abraham started a family and Moses built a nation, saved a nation. I suspect I can make a case easily that Moses is the greatest human being, if we omit Christ, the greatest human being that ever lived. But the New Testament doesn't tell me I'm supposed to be like Moses, in spite of the fact that Moses talked face to face with God.

But the New Testament, again and again, and in the Old Testament, Psalms, many others in the Prophets, Abraham is set up as the pattern for us. Now, he is set up in spite of the fact that he lived in a world where there was no Bible. I wonder how many people there are in the world today that have no Bible.

They can identify with Abraham far easier than they can identify with you and me. He lived in a world where there was no church. What would you do if you didn't have a Bible and a church, or a Bible or a church? But here he is.

A lot of people in the world today that have no church. He lived in a day when the law, the Decalogue, Sinai was not known. Moral standards were set by the culture.

And that's all he knew. It's interesting that there is no discussion of individual sins in the book of Genesis. Now, it discusses evil, but there is no case that I can find in the book of Genesis where there is the kind of thing that you and I know as repentance for sin and the washing away of the stain.

Because, you see, what he wants to do is get clear to us the origin of that washing away of the stain. There is nothing outside of him that saves. It is in God, in Christ, and God in Christ alone.

Why do we repent? So we can get rightly related again to him. And when we get him, then we get all the benefits. And so there was no law.

There was no religious ritual identified in the book of Genesis that you and I are to follow except prayer, because he prayed. And then you will remember he was circumcised. Now, that's a religious rite.

Old Testament counterpart to New Testament baptism. You read the history of the Church and think of how much of the Church has placed baptism as sort of the sign that a person is a Christian. Have you been baptized, sprinkled or dipped, whichever it is? Now, Old Testament had not baptism, but it had circumcision.

That was a sign that you were one of the elect. If you were circumcised, you were part of the chosen people. But, you see, Abraham is given as pleasing God before he was ever circumcised.

All of these things are external. What he's after is what's in here. Now, if it is in here, the externals will come.

You don't despise them because God ordains circumcision for him, and God ordains baptism for us, and God ordained the Lord's Supper, and God established his institutional Church. But those are secondary, and it is the personal, individual knowledge of God that is primary. There is no worship prescription in the book of Genesis.

There is no cult, as the technical people speak about. There is simply a man who encountered God one day in his life on the roadway, and he knew somehow or other that he was good and that it was safe to trust him. And when the stranger spoke to him, he decided to follow him.

And the rest of the book of Genesis is about traveling, not doing, if you'll let me separate between those two things. For the rest of the book of Genesis, he is going where Yahweh wants him to go, and doing what Yahweh, as he understands it very simply, what Yahweh wants him to do. Now, who is it that he met this way and encountered? You know, I think more people have met God than we sometimes realize.

I had the privilege of hearing two weeks ago at Wheaton, Michael Scanlon, who is the president of the University of Steubenville. He is a Franciscan father. He said, I grew up in a Roman Catholic home.

He said, my family sent me to the best private school. Then they sent him to Williams College, one of the exclusive colleges in New England, a preparatory school sort of for Harvard graduate school or Yale. He said, I had a philosophy professor in my college days whose main purpose in life was to convince us that we couldn't trust our senses.

He said, every class was to bring us to the place where we said, Are we really here and are you listening to a lecture or is this all a dream? Now, how can you prove to me that this is not an illusion that we are experiencing? He said, I had that day after day after day until I began to doubt everything. And when you

doubt everything, circumstances push you where they will. So he said, one day in desperation, it was the middle of winter.

Do you know what northwestern Massachusetts is like in the middle of the winter? It's the absolute reverse of what you experienced here yesterday. He went out into the woods away from the campus and he said, I'm going to spend today finding out if there is anybody beyond what I can, my illusion. He said, I started early and I spent the day in the sunset and nothing had happened.

But he said about 6.30 he came and he said, do you know I've never had a doubt since? Now he said, I didn't start walking with him the way I should, but I'd met him and I knew he was there. Do you know that's the only way you can explain these strange people called Christians? What is it when they will let you throw them in prison, when they will let you beat them mercilessly, when they will let you chop their heads off? They've got a memory. They've met him.

And once they've met him, they may deny it. They may wander, as Mark spoke so well yesterday about it. We may wander.

But if you've ever met him, the witness is there to you. And I loved what he said. I never doubted there was certitude in it.

Now if you've never experienced it, you won't understand. But if you have experienced it, you will know what we speak about. Now he had met him.

You will notice that now he begins to walk with him. The paradigm here is not the judicial one that we use in Reformation circles to explain our relationship to Christ. The paradigm is an interpersonal relationship, a creature in need of his Creator.

A creature in need of his Creator. Now why do I need my Creator? I need my Creator the way a fetus needs its mother. Because there's no life in me and there's no life in you.

Our life is in another. And if you take a fetus at too early a stage and separate it from its mother, cut its umbilical cord, there's only one thing, death. And when you and I get separated from God, he is the source.

He is life. And if we're to live and know that life, we have to be related to him. The difference between Jesus and you and me is, you will remember, he is the only being begotten Son.

I used to think that was a past tense verb, that he was begotten of the Father, but the text literally says he is the only being begotten Father. See, the difference between that Son and the rest of the sons and daughters is, we've cut our umbilical cord. He never cut his.

It's no accident that we speak about him as sinless because he never separated himself from the source of life except with your sins and mine. Now, it is this kind of personal relationship that Genesis is leading to. A creature in need of his creator.

And what a fool a man is who doesn't feel a need for his creator. He has opted for suicide. Now, the same thing is true of a church.

The same thing is true of an institution. The same thing is true of a culture. And our culture has cut its cord.

And so our society is disintegrating. And you and I cannot weep because it's a false option to Christ. And so we look at America disintegrate and say, that's God.

Because we've cut our connection from the source of life. But it's not only a creature in need of his maker, it is a child in need of his parent. And so we have those hungers within us that we think can be satisfied somewhere else.

But they basically are for a return to our family and to our Father. So the pictures given in Genesis of our relationship to him and what he wants is, as we said yesterday, a walk. Enoch walked with God and he's the one God took him and said, I just don't want to, I want you to sleep in my house tonight, not in yours.

And so he took him home with him. He walked with God. That's all we're told about him.

Doesn't say he kept the Ten Commandments. Doesn't say he observed any liturgy, any ritual or that he did anything religious. He just walked with God.

Now, Noah walked with God and the world had a new chance because Noah walked with God. And Abraham, the rest of his life is the story of from Ur of the Chaldees leaving, walking with God. Now, if you'll remember his sons, three generations later looking back, chapter 48 of Genesis speaks about Abraham and Isaac and Jacob who walked with God.

Now, that's the story of Israel, the people of God, isn't it? Their journeyings from Egypt into Canaan land. I dare you sometime to sit down and read the book of Deuteronomy and notice the word walk every time. I've come to the place where I like it much better than a bay because a bay sounds like you've got a master who's waiting for an opportunity to extract out of you something.

But it's a walk in which the one with which you walk is trying to get your defenses down so he can give to you. That is a radically different picture, you see. Go through the Psalms and you'll find this is a steady image in the back of the Psalmist's mind.

You remember how the book of Psalms begins? It's a negative, but that's the way. Blessed is the man that doesn't walk in a way that will separate him from the Lord God, which means blessed is the man that walks in a way that he is in unbroken communion with him. You'll remember the end of that Psalm? He knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

And do you know you can't walk without a way? So now you've got two words. You've got a walk and a way. Now the rest of the Bible spells out details on the way, but the prime thing is the walking in the way.

Now, you will remember I noticed just checked there are thirty-three passages in the book of Psalms that speak about walking. If you will come to Jeremiah, you will remember that Jeremiah, in a magnificent insight as to who we are and what we are like, he comes to the end of a sermon given in the city of Jerusalem on idolatry, false gods. And what he's talking about is religion, man's relationship to the divine.

So he talks about the true God and then he talks about the false options that we choose. And then he comes to the end and he says, I know, O Yahweh, personal conclusion to which he has come. I know, O Yahweh, that Adam's way, and the Hebrew word is Adam, Adam, that means every human being that ever existed or ever will exist, all of us, you and me both, all of us, that Adam's way is not in himself.

It is not in the way of God. It is in man. Man is used in the translations.

The Hebrew word is a different Hebrew word from Adam. I know, O Yahweh, that man's way is not in himself. It is not in man who walks to direct his steps.

The second word, man, is the individual, Dennis Kenloff, Elsie Kenloff, Pauline Bruton, J. Six, whoever you are. It's the individual. He says, What do I know about us all and what do I know about me? Our way is not in us.

And do you remember what Jesus said the night before his death? He said, I am the way. Did you know that the Bible and the church and religion are no substitutes for him? Genesis wants us to understand that, that I have the privilege of knowing him and possessing him as my daily, moment by moment companion. So you see, it's a personal relationship.

Now, what does that do to all of the legalism of Christianity? The law. Does that mean good? We can forget about the commandments and the law. You know, the interesting thing is, this is a much higher standard than Sinai gives you.

I remember when I first came across as a student, and Elsie reminded me of it the other day, Susannah Wesley was writing to her son who was away at school. And as she wrote, she was always admonishing and instructing him. What a woman she must have been.

How many children did she have? Nineteen? But anyway, in one period of her life, she spent an hour a day with each one. A number of them had died, and that made that possible. But she spent an hour a day with each one.

So now she is writing to Jackie, her son, John Wesley. Son, whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things, you are not worthy of these things. That thing, son, to you is sin.

Now, I don't know what your married life is like, but do you know I can get away with some things with Elsie that you probably can't get away with with your wife or with your husband? There are a lot of women in the world that would give me fits over some things. But God gave me the one I need, and some of my decisions that I make, she doesn't critique me. She says, go to it.

Sacrifice to her? Such things as purchase of books. There are a few people in this crowd who will vibrate with that. I wouldn't be standing here today if she had been grieved by that.

But do you know there are some things in my wedding I can't do that you can? Because they grieve her. And that's reciprocal. What I say about me in relation to her is true in relation to her in relation to me.

That's the closest relationship I've ever known, person to person. And isn't it interesting that when they asked John the Baptist about Jesus stealing his bride? He said, he's the bridegroom, and I'm just his best man. He's the important one here.

He's the bridegroom. You'll remember Jesus turned to the Pharisees when they said, John the Baptist had good religion. His disciples fasted when they prayed.

Your disciples don't fast. And Jesus said, is it appropriate for the friends of the bridegroom to fast at a wedding announcement party? At a wedding announcement party, you rejoice. Jesus said, this is a wedding announcement party.

The day will come when my disciples will fast when the bridegroom is taken from them. You know, it would be interesting to get the professor of history at the University of Kentucky to lecture on the nuptial view of human history. That the whole purpose of human history is to give Christ the second person of the Trinity a bride.

See, this runs all the way through Scripture. It is a personal relationship. Now later when he's dealing not with an individual but with a whole group, he spells out the law for those that are not sensitive enough to recognize the dark cloud in the face of Yahweh when people grieve him.

Now, is it freer without the law or tighter? It depends on what you understand by love and what you understand by the delights of intimate fellowship. Now, let me use one other, speak briefly about the law though before we go on. Something that I missed for a long time in the Old Testament which is supportive of this.

I used to think, now if I can just keep the Ten Commandments and keep them in their implications, I'll be all right. So I began thinking, you know, in terms of those. And that's what many of us have done.

I don't believe there's a soul that ever walked with Christ that didn't struggle somewhere with the question of legalism. It's a, we tend, there's something within us that says we need to do these things. And if we do these things, we'll win his approval and we'll win his favor.

But that's not what he's after. We've got his favor if we'll receive it. And if we receive it, we're going to want to please him because there's a joy in that relationship.

But now, did you ever notice that in the Old Testament if you break one of the Ten Commandments, there is no sacrifice for you? Do you know how much of the Old Testament, the Pentateuch, is devoted to sacrifice? Read Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers and notice those passages about the different kinds of sacrifices. And the sacrifices for sin and the way you made sacrifices for sin. But do you know that not one of those sacrifices were for a conscious, deliberate violation of the Ten Commandments? Because, you see, it doesn't say if you kill somebody, this is what you've got to do to get forgiven.

If you commit adultery, this is what you've got to do to get forgiven. It gives you no instruction. If you break the Sabbath day, what do you have to do to get forgiven? If you take the name of the Lord in vain, what do you have to do to be forgiven? There is no sacrifice suggested.

Do you know why? You're in the hands of Him when you break one of those. And if He doesn't forgive, there is no chance. The sacrificial system is given for what are called unwitting sins.

And so it says, if you break one of these, our relationship is broken. Now, He forgives. He is the God who forgives.

The psalmist understood that. He said, Lord, if you were to mark iniquities, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with you. But the forgiveness is in Him, not in what we do.

Not even repentance will do it. He is the source. Now, but what does it mean to walk with God, and how is He going to lead us? I'd like to speak about something that when I thought about it, I thought, is it positive or negative? One angle is negative, but from another angle it's very positive.

And I'd like to speak about the word detachment. I'm convinced that the Christian walk is really a process of detachment, because, you see, we are appetitive creatures. We have appetites and passions and desires.

And they're going to fix themselves on something. A mother told me the other day about her son, thirteen. Boy, just turned thirteen.

He had been with someone in the Caribbean among a black community, not a white face in the crowd. Now, I hope there's no race in this. It's just who we are.

When he came home, his mother said, How did you enjoy it? He said, It was a great experience. But you know, mother, it's so nice to see a beautiful white woman. I'm not talking about the color.

I'm talking about a thirteen-year-old boy, because I'm sure somewhere that story could be turned about a thirteen-year-old, black or brown, who'd seen our pale, pasty-faced white women. And he said, Oh, for one that's got some color and some attractiveness about it. But the thing about it is at thirteen their appetites develop.

God gave us those. They're going to fix themselves somewhere. I fixed mine first on the wrong person.

And he said, No. And then he brought me the right person. Now, we have these.

As we walk with him, he says, I want you to detach, cut loose from that. Because if you keep attached to that, it will keep you from walking with me. I'm headed for Canaan.

And if you're going to go with me, you've got to cut loose from Ur. And do you know the problem with missing the will of God? It's a problem when you miss the will of God, you miss him. Because if his will for me is to be in Nepal, and I'm in Kentucky, he's in Nepal.

So there's a detachment that takes place. Notice how it's expressed in Genesis. It says, God said to him, I want you to leave Ur the Chaldeans.

I want you to leave your country. I guess he was the first missionary. So I said yesterday, the missionary is a better example than those of us who haven't been.

More obvious. I want you to leave your country. Do you know what a price that is? Have you ever been overseas on a harrowing trip that was very uncomfortable and unpleasant, and land at JFK in New York? I remember Elsie and I had been on one of those.

And we'd lived in dirt and filth and all the rest. And so here we were. We just landed in JFK, and we walked past a Hockenbees ice cream shop.

It was clean as a whistle. The floor shined, the walls shined, everything about it was clean. I said, honey, this is our first stop.

We are home. Can you imagine what the first missionaries overseas went through? That's what Abraham went through, the alienation of being a foreigner. But the one he was committed to was there, so that's why he was there.

Place. You cannot be attached to place if you're going to walk with him. You know a fellow who used the figure of the cloud lifting, you know, in the Old Testament? Came in one day and looked at his best friend and said, the cloud's lifted.

I'm moving. That's the way we're supposed to live. Position.

Abraham's family had status in that country. Do you know you've got to detach from position? Do you know what I've dreamed about? Now, if you're not a Methodist, you'd be patient with me a minute. No? Have some, pray for us.

In the Methodist system, you know, you don't choose where you go. The bishop and the superintendent choose that. And so, very quickly in a Methodist conference, a mood develops that certain people get the better appointments.

And the young preacher coming in knows that stair-step ladder to perfection. He'd be a fool if he didn't recognize it. And so, when he goes to annual conferences, he says to one of his friends, where are you going? And he tells him, he says, ah, that's a parallel move.

He didn't advance. Another one tells him where he's going, and he says, ah, he's got the favor of the hierarchy. He's got a nice promotion.

Now, the pastor gets a little opportunity, the preacher, in that. He gets a chance to share a little of what he would like. And he tells them what he thinks and what he wants, and then they make their own decisions.

You know, I've dreamed about the day when a Methodist preacher would look at his superintendent or his bishop and say, do you know, I think you ought to send me there that God wants me to go to this place. And have the bishop say, I beg your pardon. And the guy say, I believe God wants me to go there.

And the bishop say, man, have you lost your mind? I've never had anybody in all my tenure that wanted to go there. Why do you want to go there? That is a demotion. Have the fellow say, because God told me that's where he wanted me to go.

Do you know if that ever happened, it would be the beginning of revival with a capital R? Place, position. Now, you can apply that in your hierarchical system. If you're a Salvation Army officer, you understand perfectly.

If you're on a university faculty, you understand perfectly. Every organization's got it, but there are very few people who let Christ make the decision. Now, the third thing he wanted to separate it from was persons.

Let me say that. The fourth thing he wanted was a separation from his own ways. Now, let me talk about that for a minute.

There are two fascinating illustrations in Abraham's life. I've just begun to realize what all I've missed, and I've only gotten on the margin of what's here. Can you imagine what it was like to have God come and say to you, I notice that you don't have any children.

Your wife has given you no son or daughter. Do you know that in the ancient Near East, your success in life was determined by how many children you had, and particularly a woman's success? And the woman who had no children was looked upon as cursed? That was worse than leprosy, because a man had

married a woman who had totally failed. Now, we know now it could have been his fault, but they didn't know that.

The woman got the brunt of it all. But God says, but what about a man, his ego, his pride, his future? Look at everything Abraham had, and there was no world vision to give it to when he died. What are you going to do with your wealth? Nobody to keep it.

You've got to give it to strangers. God comes along and he's 75. You know, I love the fact God waited until he was 75.

If he had done it when he was 35, we wouldn't have the story. It's interesting how God's object lessons, how clear he makes them. And so he waits until he's 75 and says, the dream of your life is going to be fulfilled.

You're going to have not only a child, but a son who will inherit what you've got, and he will have a great future, and in him all the nations of the world, we believe. Kings will come out of him. Now, that appeals to a man's ego, doesn't it? Abraham walked away quite happy on that.

And a year later, he thought, you know, that's funny, it's been a year. Then another year passed, and he said, do you reckon I heard correctly? And then he, another year, nothing. And then he said, you know, either I misunderstood him, or God's got a problem, and I must help him out.

And he said, you know, I've got a servant whom I trust. He's very faithful. His name is Eliezer.

It's a beautiful name. My God is my help. And Eliezer was Abraham's help.

He said, I can trust him with anything. I will adopt him and make him my son and solve God's problem. And I can have progeny out of Eliezer.

And God showed up. I like the fact that he comes along sometimes to correct us. Aren't you grateful? And he said, Abe, you've missed it.

Eliezer is not the one. He's going to be your own flesh and blood. And so that day, God says, let me illustrate it, sort of drive it home to you.

And so he said, let's have a sacrifice. And they took a three-year-old goat and a three-year-old calf and a three-year-old ram, and he had them split them and separate the pieces. They had the birds there.

And then he put Abraham to sleep, and a fiery pot of fire moved between those pieces. And God said, I've signed a covenant with you and stamped it with a legal stamp. It's going to be your flesh and blood.

So we don't know when that took place. Suppose it was four years or five after the promise. Now he's 80, and he's 81 and 82 and 83 and 84 and 85.

And he said, it was going to be my flesh and blood. Well, there's a legal way of handling this. You see, in that country the law took care of all contingencies.

And if a woman did not have children, then there was a legal provision for her to take one of her own personal slaves, not a family slave. The family slave would have belonged to Abraham, and he would have had access to her for concubinage purposes if he had wanted to. That was the law of the land.

But the law said that if a woman didn't have a child, to solve her problem she could take one of her personal slaves and give her to her husband. And the child that she bore would be born, the technical term in the Babylonian was, the child will be born on the knees of the mistress of the slave and will belong to the mistress, not the slave. And Abe said, maybe that's what God meant.

Because he said, come to think of it, not a single time that he spoke to me and told me I was going to have a son did he tell me it would be through Sarah. So if he didn't tell me it would be through Sarah, maybe he's got another way. And maybe the legal way, the culturally accepted way is right.

Sarah must have thought the same thing. So Sarah said, let's help God out. And so she said, Hagar is my maid, you take her.

Ishmael was born. And God came and said, no Abe, that's not the way it's going to do. You've complicated matters significantly.

Do you know the tension between the Ishmaelites and the Hebrews for the centuries that were to come? Now that's the reason I believe I need to be led by the Spirit and learn to work with Him instead of for Him. Do you know the most dangerous person in the world is the person who's working for Him instead of with Him? Because all we do is create problems. I love that passage in Luke.

Where it says about Simeon that the Spirit was upon him. That's wonderful. Then it says, and the Spirit led him into the temple.

Because you see, he had one hope. He lived for one thing. You know when you lose hope you die? That's the reason retirement is such a dangerous thing.

Deadly danger. As long as you've got hope, juices flow. He had a hope.

You know what it was? God had said to him, you will see the Christ. You will see the one you've lived for, you'll see the one Israel has lived for. And the Spirit said, go into the temple.

And he went in and there was Mary. And in her arms was the Christ child. And he lifted up his voice and said, now Lord you can take me home.

I've seen Him. My hope has been realized. Now how important it is that I know how to walk with Him that way and to hear Him.

That's the reason that one of the most powerful words in the Old Testament is not only walk and way, but it's wait. I dare you to read through the book of Psalms and notice every use of the term wait. It is a synonym for faith.

Because what is it we need? It's not what you and I can do. It's what He can do. And He's not going to act until the circumstances are right.

You'll remember 13 years later God came and said Abe, things are ready. And after 25 years the Messianic line was on its way. Now my time is gone.

What is it that He wants to say to you personally and to me this morning? The one thing I'm sure is He wants us to encounter Him close enough that we will live our lives in our way. We will live our lives in His way. Because when we live our lives in our way, it's wood, hay and stubble.

Do you know the best description I know of a substantial chunk of TV evangelism in the 20th century? It's wood, hay and stubble. And I think you know what I'm talking about. What we need is what only He can do.

That means we have to come to the end of ourselves. And that's the reason the central symbol in Christianity is a cross. Because there has to be a death for your way and mine, just like there was a death for Christ.

And then we detach from our way and His way becomes supreme. Will you give me one minute to read you something? In an address given to ministers and workers after his 90th birthday, George Mueller spoke thus of himself, I was converted in September 1825, but I only came into the full surrender of the heart four years later in July 1829. The love of money was gone.

The love of place was gone. The love of position was gone. The love of worldly pleasures and engagements was gone.

God alone became my portion. I found my all in Him. I wanted nothing else.

And by the grace of God, this has remained and has made me a happy man, an exceedingly happy man. And it led me to care only about the things of God. I ask affectionately, my beloved brethren, have you fully surrendered the heart to God, or is there this thing or that thing with which you're taken up irrespective of God? I read a little of the scriptures before, but preferred other books.

But since that time, the revelation He has made of Himself has become unspeakably blessed to me, and I can say from my heart, God is an infinitely lovely being. Oh, be not satisfied until in your inmost soul you can say, God is an infinitely lovely being. When we lose our way, we see His beauty and the rightness and the goodness of His way.

Final comment quickly, just a word. It's interesting what we do in translating the scripture, and how easy it is to read our thoughts in when we translate and interpret instead of translate. In the 15th chapter, when he's saying, Abe, it's not really easy, he says, I will be your shield and your exceeding great reward.

You know, it's interesting what some of the translations do with that. The NIV, do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield.

I will protect you. You'll be safe. You can go out into a foreign country.

I'll take care of you. I'll be your shield. Do not be afraid, Abram.

I am your shield. Your very great reward. Some of the translations say, your reward will be great.

But the NIV is correct. He says, I will be your shield and your exceeding great reward. And do you know what you find? If you've got Him, the place where you are becomes holy.

If you've got Him, the position you've got becomes a place of glory. And if you've got Him, the person you find are eternal royalties. That's how it's privileged, isn't it?

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/dennis-kinlaw/the-process-of-detachment/>

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