

Dedication According to Renewed Knowledge

by Devern Fromke

The sermon emphasizes the importance of dedication to God through renewed knowledge and the guidance of Scripture in our spiritual journey.

Duration: 1:13:26

Scripture: Proverbs 1:22-24, Acts 21:14, 2 Timothy 3:16

Topics: "Dedication"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the past year as a time of both blessings and challenges in their walk with God. They express a belief that God is doing something significant in this generation, something beyond our understanding. The speaker discusses the importance of walking in truth and developing a sense of fellowship with God. They emphasize the need for an ordered life and the consequences of disregarding God's laws. The sermon concludes with a prayer for God to use our knowledge and dedication for His purposes.

Transcript

Praise the Lord. We began yesterday by speaking about dedication, and our concern was, what is dedication? And I believe that it's the Lord's mind for us to continue this morning. I'd like to speak to you.

If you'd like a title for it, let me put it down up above here. Dedication. Dedication according to knowledge.

I don't know, but there's something about me that loves a dedicated person. When I see someone who is all out, and there's an intensity about their being, there's a sort of a person that throws himself wholeheartedly into something, it just echoes back and I say, that's my sort of person. But I have to admit, they're the most difficult ones to get along with.

So you're always in a quandary, you have a little bit of a problem. And that's why I think I appreciate all of you this morning, because I sense in us, in each of you, in varying degrees of course, a real longing for the fullness, and to really go on into the things that God wants. We were saying yesterday now that once the Lord has brought us back from our place of rebellion, our lost, hopeless condition, and through His mercy, He's redeemed us, He's brought us into a place where we stand in freedom as it were.

The question is, what is my freedom for? The tragedy today is so many people think that freedom is from something, and that's only one part of it. I'm free from something, but my freedom must always be for

something, or unto something. This is why, as we said yesterday, once we come into this place where He has redeemed, He's loosed us, He's set us free, we then have the glad heart choice of presenting, giving ourselves unto the Lord.

This is where dedication comes in. Maybe I should just ask, how many are here this morning who were not here yesterday? Would you raise your hand? One, two, three, four, five, six. All right, thank you.

We'll just make that kind of background and maybe not go on anymore. Now, one of the difficulties, as we were saying a moment ago, is that in our real longing to be all that God wants us to be, in the zeal and in the dedication of our heart, we come into collision. We come into problems with others who are equally as dedicated.

I think I'll just have you turn to the book of Acts. And if you think we've got problems today, I'd like to have you see a real problem. I'm glad I wasn't there.

Acts chapter 21, I think we'll read. Acts 21. Oh, let us pick it up.

Let us pick it up in chapter 21 with verse 14. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done. And after those days we took up our carriages and went up to Jerusalem.

There went with us also certain of the disciples of Caesarea, and brought with them one mason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge. And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the day following Paul went in with us unto James, and all the elders were present.

And when he had saluted them, Paul declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous of the law. Paul, you remember, has been well schooled at the feet of Gamaliel.

He has been of the strictest of the Pharisaical sect. And when God reached down on the Damascus road and plucked this man, caught this fish for himself, so to speak, Paul was the zenith of zeal and dedication in the knowledge that he had. And it was quite a thing when God, in the midst of Paul's zeal to rid the Jewish religion of this awful sect, quite a thing when God reached down and touched this man who was so schooled and was so convinced in his ways, the Lord began to open his mind, began to give him some understanding.

And of course, now that God has been sending him out among all the heathen, among the Gentiles, those who are outside of the law, outside of Israel, he's come back with a glowing testimony of what God has wrought through him. How wonderful. And of course, it takes a little bit of stretching here among these Jewish believers to imagine that God could do all this out there.

Lord, I never thought you could do that any other place but with us, with we who are Jews and we who are the privileged and the elect according to God. But God's wrought something in their hearts. And so they glorify the Lord because who can deny miracles? Who can deny all of this that has been done? But they've got a problem.

This fellow who God's using out here is teaching some rather strange and peculiar things. And here he comes back and the immediate elders and the brethren here in Jerusalem, they just, well, they don't quite know what to do about it all. What Paul is telling them is wonderful, but he's not fulfilling all of their mosaic

economy.

He's not fulfilling all the little interpretations that are so very real and precious, all they've been schooled in. I wonder if you can begin to see a little bit of the strain and the stress and the conflict in it, you see. Read it again with me, verse 20.

And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous of the law. Now somehow for years, I don't know how to picture this, but for a number of years, I just sort of felt like everybody in Jewry out here that was in darkness and blindness and all that, that represented one group and these who came to believe in the Messiah, they came to believe in Christ, they just sort of became another whole independent group out here. And it isn't quite that way.

These believing Jews are going back. They're still a part of what? The temple and all the rest of it. You see, you who have come into a new measure of life and some insight, and you're wondering what to do, where to go, it's quite a thing when all you have is the temple.

You'll leave this. What do you have, you follow? What do you have? All down through this period, there's transition. There's a change going about, and it was not easy.

So he says they are all zealous of the law. They're believing Jews, but they've come out of a matrix. They've come out of a cradle, and everything about their awareness and consciousness has been molded for these hundreds of years.

And these elders, these who are the leading brothers here at Jerusalem, I don't want to say it too boldly, but they don't see things too clearly yet either. You see, we live way over here on this side of the cross, and with our new glasses we say, oh, praise God. We've had all the Pauline interpretation and instruction, and they didn't have it yet.

We forget that it took quite some time before the revelation and some of the unfolding that came through Paul was to be presented. And here's this awful struggle now going on. Well, let's see what else they say.

Verse 21, And they are informed of thee, Paul, that thou teachest all the Jews, which are among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? The multitude must needs come together, for they will hear that thou art come. Paul, I wish you hadn't come.

If you just hadn't come, we wouldn't be in this problem. I don't know how to explain this this morning, and I don't want to, this is just sort of to paint a little background. I have to say that the last year has been a wonderful, blessed year of walking with the Lord.

But it's been a year of being thrown into stress and places of difficulty and conflict as I've never known it in my own soul before. I have determined before God that I must walk in truth and in all the light that I have and dare to believe that God is doing something for this hour, for this generation, something that we hardly conceive and can hardly grasp, but I believe it's a lot bigger than we realize. And it would be so much easier.

I cried out and I said, Lord, just let me go to Richmond and Norfolk and Washington and places that I sort of fit a little better. They appreciate. Lord, let me stay in Indianapolis, even though it's got a lot of problems

too.

And yet the Lord keeps opening doors, and I sense something of a compelling thrusting as He says, I'm doing something a lot bigger than you realize. It's not confined and it's not narrowed down to some, with just little interpretations, I'm doing a bigger thing. And I don't want to overwork that this morning, but I do sense.

Last week, a week ago, we were in Detroit. It wasn't a bigger group, but 1,200, 1,200 people gathering, meeting after meeting, and my heart was torn. You begin to look out over all of these various groups that come in, and your heart says, Lord, how can you ever, how can you ever minister in the midst of it all? Only God can do it.

But we have to believe that God is going to take some hearts that have a dedication, and He's going to help us in this dedication to really move according to, I would like to get to the place where we call it a renewed knowledge, after the image of the Lord Jesus, a renewed knowledge. You see, you finally get to the place where you know that it just shatters every last conception we've had. I don't care which group we've come from, but God's doing a stretching work.

You feel the stretch? Lord, I've been asking since yesterday, don't let any of us go without getting enlarged. And that starts with me. Really stretch, really enlarge us.

We need it. We really need it to be able to receive what God is doing. Well, I don't want to get involved in this, but can you see a little bit of their problem? Paul has been out among the Gentiles.

Now he comes back to this Jewish group that are, but they're so set, they, and it's very difficult. I can well understand why God really started from Antioch as the springboard for the New Testament church. He just, well, he just can't get some things done in an old framework.

And so we're going to see that what's happened to Jerusalem begins to wane and wane and wane, and Antioch becomes a new springboard for God sending out to the whole Gentile world. It's that that we need to realize this morning. God allows one thing, he uses it as long as he can, but it begins to wane.

And while it's waning, another thing is becoming. It's coming into the horizon. Well, that brings us to the verse that I'd like for us to turn in Romans now.

Chapter 10 and verse 1. Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. Oh, can you sense the groaning of Paul in this? He looks out at these in their blindness, their inability to see and to grasp. Some within Israel have come to know the Lord, come into a living relationship, but the great majority in their dedication and their zeal, so he says, for I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

A zeal, a dedication. Now there's a difference between dedication and zeal. But I'm not sure what it is.

I see zeal. I see dedication. I'd like to make one spiritual and the other natural, but you really can't.

Anyway, I'm using them much the same. They have a dedication to God, a dedication, but not according to what? Knowledge. All right, we were saying yesterday that once God brings us back and we experience the mercy of the Lord, and then we come into the crisis of dedication, which is the presenting of ourselves.

I feel that it is wonderful, then, for us to begin to see how God takes us along this new way, this new walk, a crisis beginning, but he begins to take us along the new way in which now there's going to be the renewing of our mind, the transforming of our understanding, the renewing of our mind, that there'll be an outward transforming of all our ways. And I want us to turn now to 2 Timothy. We're going to see a little bit of what is involved.

I believe this will help us. 2 Timothy chapter 3. What really is involved now is God takes us in this way of dedication. There's only one safe way.

There's only one safe way, and that is for us to realize that God has given us his Word as the safeguard. One thing I rejoice in, wherever we go today, there is a renewed sense that we must stay carefully with the Word of God. You can't have folk get into life and into freedom and liberty in the Spirit and all that this involves.

But what there are those who are wanting to go off, there's a tendency to say, well, I don't need the Word. I've found the Spirit. I've been liberated from any hindrances or any of these old bondages.

And I want us to see this morning why God has given us the Word as the safeguard. Oh, I thank God that all the teachers that I've been with in the last year, every one of them, with a new cry has been saying, the Word of God must be our safeguard. I don't know one of them.

So I thank God for what he's doing. Verse 16 of chapter 3 says, All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, truly furnished unto all good works. Let me read it for you in the Phillips translation.

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the faith and correcting error, for resetting the direction of a man's life and training him in good living. The Scriptures are the comprehensive equipment of the man of God and fit him fully for all branches of his work. Well, that's a pretty loose rendering, but I like some of it.

Let me deal for a little bit this morning with these four words. It is profitable, Scripture is profitable for doctrine. When I think of doctrine, as we will see it now, I think on the highway here that we're moving, I think of the guardrails along the way.

Here are the guardrails to keep one from getting off from God's road. When we know the teaching of the Scripture, and this is why we need to be saturated, we need to be dwelling in the Word, we need to be rich in it, I know that people have taken God's Word and misinterpreted it. They've become legalistic, they've used and misused, but that doesn't mean that it isn't His Word that I need as a guide in this teaching.

Just because someone misuses it, I must not overreact. You see, our problem all the way through is that we are like a pendulum. We're over here, and then we swing way over to the other side.

Almost all the time, we are prone either to move from no place for a thing to give it the place, and when God brings the pendulum back, He brings it into what we call His place. One of the most difficult things is to get an individual into a sense of what is God's place for a thing. How many of you have gone through an experience? There was a time you gave no place to a thing, and then suddenly, you entered into some reality and you didn't see anything else.

It was the whole place. You couldn't see anything else. But in due time, God was able to bring you back to show you His proper place in a thing.

This is true regarding almost every truth we get a hold of, regarding almost every experience that people enter into, and I'm wanting us to see. It may sound strange, but there was a day when we had really no place for God's Word. Oh, of course, it was the Word of God, and we revered it, and we honored it, but it had no place, really.

And then we became hungry. We began to see that the Word of God was the only safeguard, and so we gave it, well, how I put it, a wrong place. We began to set up doctrinal barriers and hedges all along the way to keep people in our approach, our understanding.

And we used the guardrails most of the time on people. You know what I'm trying to say? Being very hard when this is the approach. Well, without getting into that any further, let me say, as we move along, God has a wonderful way of setting up reproofs.

If an individual begins to get off the way and he bumps his head on a verse, he says, well, praise the Lord, it becomes a reproof to him. We're going to see that the Word of God becomes reproofs if I will use the teaching of it in a right way. So here's the reproof.

What about the individual who doesn't use the Word as a reproof to stop him? He gets way off and he bumps his head on something else down here. It's the reproofs. The reproofs.

Sometimes I like to call it retribution. You sow and you get a harvest, you see. But the Word of God is intended to be the doctrine and to be the reproof.

And if I jump over the guardrail and I get way beyond, not even heeding, there are other reproofs we're going to read about. But the Word of God is also a correction to bring me right back once again. It's profitable for what? For doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and as Philip says, to lead me and to bring me on in the full way, not just back and forth all the time, but forward movement, you see, instruction, that a man's whole life will be progressively moving along.

I believe that there's nothing more tragic than to find folk who started out with dedication, but they never get very far because they get stalled with various legal conceptions. They run into reproofs. They faint.

They give up. They do not realize that there must be a forward motion all along the way. Now, just for a little bit, while we're considering, let's look at some of the reproofs that we have in the Scripture.

The book of Hebrews gives us a very, very interesting picture. What did I say? I mean Proverbs. Proverbs chapter 1, 22.

One, 22. How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity, and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof. Verse 23.

Turn you at my reproof. Behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you. I will make known my words unto you, because I have called, and ye refused.

I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. But ye have said it not, all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. Here we are.

We're moving along. We're dedicated. We want to go on to the full thing God is after.

And we have the teaching of the Scripture. But one of the problems that comes up, someone says, well, one man teaches this, another man teaches this. How do I know which is the guardrail? How do I know I'm interpreting the guardrail right, you see? And so we get confused sometimes in our teaching or the doctrine.

We get confused. For that reason, sometimes people jump way over and do not accept the reproofs. All right? Look again at chapter 5 in Proverbs.

I think we'll read from the first verse. My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding, that thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. For the lips of a strange woman drop as in honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil, but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.

Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold on hell, lest thou shouldst ponder the path of life. Her ways are movable, that thou canst not know them. Hear me now, therefore, all ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.

Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house, lest thou give thine honor unto others, and thy years unto the cruel. Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labors be in the house of a stranger, and thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproofs. Let me just stop for a moment in these verses and draw to your attention what kind of retribution comes when we fail to accept the reproof.

I notice several things here. First of all, in Proverbs 5, he says in verse 9, Lest thou give thine honor unto others, and thy years unto the cruel. The individual who gets retribution because he fails to accept the reproofs that come from God's Word, will lose all, how do I put it, honor, all standing, becomes in society one who is just utterly cast down, looked upon with disdain.

Sometimes God uses individuals along the way here when they see one. And the Scripture pictures of the individual who comes with a word of reproof and says, Don't go that way, I tried it. This is the end.

Then there are the sad circumstances that develop. And in verse 10 we read, Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth. In other words, you don't accept reproof, others are going to take all that you have.

You've seen this. People end up getting what you have. You've labored, you've labored, but someone else benefits from it.

Strangers. And thy labors be in the house of a stranger. Here was the prodigal son.

He didn't listen to the reproof of a father. He went into the far country. And oh, what a tragic thing when one day a Jew finds himself taking care of pigs.

I mean, you just can't imagine that. You just can't appreciate what that would be. Of all things.

He refused any reproof. And so it says, His labors, his slavery, his bondage in the house of a stranger. I believe I've seen individuals who rejected corrections and reproofs and anything that God uses others to bring.

And you find them in slavery, serving, bondage, when God has called His people to be a free people. And it's true of Israel as a whole corporate nation. All right.

You see what happens when reproofs are not. And finally, in verse 11, And they mourn at the last when thy flesh and thy body are consumed. What else can happen? You sow to the flesh and the flesh will bring corruption and death.

Oh, how wonderful then that God has given us the guardrails. He's given us His Word. He's built the law into things in nature.

And so when we disregard them, we get retribution. I cannot help but just pause for a moment and say, if there's any one thing God seems to want me to encourage young people today, it's that God desires an ordered life in all of us. A God-ordered life.

If He set the sun and all the planets to move in their order and there's wonderful precision about it, I believe that He has set in the metabolism of my body that which requires a certain order. I don't always get to follow it, but I believe that the life that learns discipline and order and a certain punctuality, that life is going to be blessed. And I get awful practical at this moment.

We have young people with us from time to time at the farm who have great difficulty with any sense of time, any sense of order and arrangement of their life. And I see them come in at 3.30 in the morning because they've been out to a meeting. And then when we meet at 8 o'clock for fellowship, they have an awful time.

How many of you know that you might do that occasionally as an emergency? And we make room for emergency. But if you do that continually, you're going to be irritable during the day. Huh? And you can pray all day long, Lord, don't let me be irritable.

But your whole body and system is crying out for regularity. Oh, how did I get off on this? Brothers, sisters, the disciplined life, the ordered life, God's way in taking us through. And I appreciate that emergencies come.

But when I see people always living in the edge of emergency, I know something's really wrong in that life. Do you ever see anybody just always moving from one emergency to the other? And the last emergency will be death itself. They've been sowing of a certain kind.

This is why I just like to say to us, when we really come into the dedication of the Lord, there's a discipline that goes along with it. And I believe this is why God says, early to bed, early to rise. Does He say that? Put it in the margin anyway.

It's a good verse. It ought to be there. I'm sure I can find something like it anyway.

You get my point, don't you? Or do you? Do you really? All the people that get reproofs, they get retribution simply because they have failed to accept. So we not only have reproofs, but every time you get some retribution, you get sick or something comes up or takes place, God's way is not to run to the healing line again or to run to somebody who has a ministry of deliverance. We're not against those things.

What is God's way? Lord, what was that you were saying about taking care of my body? Lord, I'm looking for correction. I'm sure you've got some. I tell you, it's the individual who keeps abusing, disabusing, who's

open for correction.

Lord, teach me thy way. Teach me thy way. Now, this probably doesn't fit us this morning, but it fits most of the places where I go because I wonder if there is the discipline and the order of living there ought to be.

So God's word is for correction. The prodigal came to himself. What am I doing here when I could be back home with my father? And he goes back.

Now, all instruction then is for moving along in a proper way. The difficulty that we've all had, you see, is that we don't like the guardrails here. We don't like this called narrow way.

We like the freedom. And you see the tendency, it's true among younger people and it's true in those who are coming into life in the spirit today, hallelujah, I'm free. And the tendency then to assume is I'm not under law, I'm under grace so that there are no guardrails.

Now, I'd just like to pause for a little bit and say that when God in the Old Testament gave them the law as a method of divine dealing, there was grace even back during the period of law. Do you realize that? God was gracious even when it was called the period of law, and his method of divine dealing was according to the law. How many of you can realize today that even under grace during what we call this period in which God's divine method of dealing is that of grace, that there is law? Our tendency is to assume once we get on this new way, praise the Lord, no guardrails.

No. No. It's a method of divine dealing.

There's always been grace. There's always been law. I like to think of law as God expressing himself out of his own nature and what he is in his own being.

And when men want to follow, they want to please, they want to walk according to that which is in God's own nature and heart, there's no problem. Lord, I want to please your heart. I want to walk and be one with you in nature.

But when men don't want that, then he says, well, I'll just take what's on my heart and I'll put it on some signposts along the way, 35 miles an hour. Slow down the curve. Stop the red light intersection, you see.

These things are really just God taking what's in his heart and putting them outwardly. That's all the Ten Commandments were basically. God took what was in his heart and with his finger he engraved, Thou shalt have no other God.

He engraved it on stone. So, we realize then why it says, Paul says, that the law or the guardrails are only for who? For the lawless. I mean, those who don't basically want to say, it's for their good, it's for their health.

But God's real way is to take that which is outward and write the law on my heart. Oh, blessed is the life when it's not just an outward sign along the way that keeps me from hitting the rails, but that God has written it so within my heart that the longing and the desire is there. I remember my dear friend Bill Cady.

Some of you have read his book, My Glory's Discovery. I remember Bill telling, after he'd gone through a very crisis experience, how for years he'd come up to a sign that said, children playing slow. But he never really paid much attention, but he saw the sign.

Sometimes he'd slow, sometimes he wouldn't. And then one day, in the afternoon, someone came knocking on his door and said, brother, we think you ought to come over a few blocks down the road. We think maybe your boy's been hurt.

And he hastened over, walked to the side of the road, pulled back the white sheet, and it was his, oldest son, hit by a truck. I'll never forget, as long as I live, hearing Bill, tears coursing down his cheeks, say, the speed signs along the road are not important. They're not necessary to me anymore.

God's written it on my heart. I see children playing. I don't need signs.

You see what he does? He writes the thing on our hearts. This is what the Lord is doing. And so, when we begin in the new way of dedication now, it is true, for help and for guidance, God has given his word and he puts some teaching, he puts some guardrails.

But more and more, what is he doing? He's taking that which is external, that which is out here, and he is writing it upon our hearts until the longing is, Lord, I want to know what it is to be led by your Spirit. Now, I meet individuals every now and then who say, praise the Lord. I'm not under law.

I'm under grace. And they assume that that means no guardrails, no teaching, as it were. I'm just free to enjoy.

I heard a brother say the other day, in explaining this, when he found the liberty that he had in Christ, and he saw how many guardrails that men had built, and how many things he had misinterpreted, he just ran off into the pasture here and had a real good time for a while, enjoying his so-called liberty. And then one day, the Lord came and said, Son, come here. Come here.

Come here. The Lord, I'm free. Oh, yes, he said.

You're free. And in the process of it, the Lord brought him back, and he said, Now, I want you to know something. I've had these guardrails.

They're gone. I'll put it over here. They're gone.

Now, I want you to walk this white line down the middle. No guardrails. I just want you to walk this white line.

You'd be surprised if I told you who this brother was. I don't give his testimony. You know him.

You've heard him probably. Very blessed thing. But, Lord, Lord, this is freedom in the Spirit.

You see, what the Lord does is to take away all the burdens of the world. He puts a new bridle of law, and he puts a new bridle in our heart. This is why it says, If ye be led of the Spirit.

Let me put it in my own translation. If ye be led of the Spirit. That's walking the white line down the middle.

You don't need any guardrails. Boy, that's dangerous. Or is it dangerous? Are you following me? What's he doing? Putting the want to in? Creating the desire within? Isn't it interesting? I suppose you've all faced this.

You're trying to bring your son or your daughter at a certain age to a place of responsibility and develop within them a sense of fellowship with you, and you start by saying, Well, Johnny, tonight you come in.

You know what will please Daddy. Come in when you... About the time you think we want you to be here.

And I know what Johnny says, But Daddy, tell me, please. Ten o'clock or ten-thirty? Well, just come in when you think it will please me. He doesn't want that responsibility.

You know what he wants? How many of you know? I want a guardrail. Then I can get in twenty-nine minutes after ten and still please you. You see? This is the whole thing.

I don't want to go into it, but you can go back into God's dealing with Israel. And I think when He brought them out and He was going to bring them in, the whole focus of His final... You're peculiar people unto me. I want you to walk with me.

I want you to be... Just please me. All the bondage of just pleasing you, Lord. The love slavery of just pleasing you.

And what did they say? Lord, give us some laws. Give us a guardrail. Give us something here.

Do you follow what I'm trying to say? Then you see, it reveals the double-mindedness. We really want to please the Lord, but we still want to stay out until twenty minutes after ten. We still want to enjoy all we can for ourselves and still.

So in the way of dedication, God is crowding us sooner or later to the place where the Holy Spirit begins to perform an effect within us. This real longing in pleasing the Lord, fulfilling all His desires and delights. And the law out here, the guardrail, only those things, when we start to begin to commence to please ourselves.

All right. I'll leave that with you now. Just wanting us to see this morning that as we begin the life of dedication, our conflict comes, first of all, inwardly, as to whether we are knowing what it is to please the Lord, be led by His Spirit, and God becomes the inward strength.

It's written in our heart on whether we want this. I'd like to say that there comes a day, I didn't get this pictured right, when the new way becomes a living way. How many of you, after you got saved and you started the way of dedication to the Lord, it was a new way? I mean, it was very new, but it hadn't become a living way.

The Scripture speaks of it as a new and living way. And the livingness of it, the livingness of it, is when we turn, as it were, from just our legal approach and we begin to realize the blessedness of God by His Spirit, putting His own bridle within. Oh, the livingness of it.

The joy of it. I get into a dangerous point here because I think every now and then I see folk who begin to discover the new liberty that is ours in the Lord. And they take some trips and they get some reproof and they get a little bit of retribution and they come back and say, Lord, I thought that would satisfy, but it doesn't.

I thought this could make, but it isn't. Put the bridle on, Lord. The lovely bridle of the Spirit that I will learn what it is to be led by the Spirit.

Write the law deep within my heart. Has it become a living way? I only want to say this morning now and summing this portion up, that God is bringing us more and more into the livingness of this. And while we do, it requires great patience with others as they're learning.

You cannot impose what you've seen. You wait for others to come in to the reality that they have seen. I think part of the problem back here as they moved from the old mosaic economy into the church dispensation now as we know it, they were wanting to impose the old rite of circumcision, keeping of all of these rituals, traditions, all of these things.

And can't you imagine the conflict in the heart of Paul when he had seen that all these things had been fulfilled in Christ and he's bringing the Gentiles into a whole new what? Living way. And I've said, Oh, Lord, how do you bring people out of all the tradition that's represented? How do you bring them into the new and the living way? The reality of it. It takes some time.

And in the midst of it, there's conflict. And our proneness is always to hibe around the little group that agrees with us. The most difficult thing is to keep all of God's people together where we're working on one another.

And don't let us hive off into our little interpretation or our little experience or our little blessing. But to see that in the midst of it all, God is working on us and through us to help one another. That's my time element.

I want to get on to the real emphasis this morning and I don't have it, do I? Well, we'll have to wait until tomorrow. Let me just say one more thing this morning. One of the problems in our dedication, and I need to change our picture now, is that we need to recognize that when God redeems us, He takes us out of Adam.

Here we were in an old family and all that creation represents is we're created. He takes us out of Adam. He nails us to the cross in the person of the Lord Jesus.

Buries us in the tomb. And when He rises from the tomb, we rise in Him. When He ascends, we ascend in Him.

The picture that we need to see is that dedication means that only that which has come up onto resurrection ground can be presented to God. You see, too much of the time we have thought we could dedicate to God something of the old life, the old man, our old talents. There's a song we sing that I always cringe.

Take my life and let it be, and then it goes through all the things we're going to give to the Lord. I'm sure the author meant well. But I want to say, Lord, don't take it.

And then He says, Son, I won't. I couldn't. Be contrary to everything I do.

You see, you can't really give anything that you are of the old Adam. None of this can be dedicated to God. The only thing God can do with it is to nail it to the cross and put it down here in the tomb.

And that which comes forth from the grave, coming forth under resurrection, that alone can be presented unto God. And so on resurrection ground now, I present to Him. It's a strange thing how all of this literally is put in the tomb and God counts it out.

Now, this will help us adjust our thinking a little bit. Every now and then you hear someone say, Wouldn't it be wonderful if so-and-so would become a Christian? He could be such an influence for God. And it sounds good, doesn't it? What are we really saying? Well, probably without realizing it, we are hoping that because of His position and what He has been in the world or His stature or standing, that some of this is

going to be used for the Lord.

It's just influence. That's all it is. The Holy Spirit must draw.

The Holy Spirit is the one who does something of spiritual reality. And so God leaves all that influence down in the tomb. Let's say all that we would try to use for Him, He leaves it in the tomb.

And it's very interesting that the only thing that He ever anoints is what has come through on resurrection ground. I don't have time to take you to it. We may get to it another time.

But remember, yesterday we were saying that when the priest applied the blood to the ear, to the thumb, and to the big toe, it's God's way of saying, Here is something that has been through death. And you see, the blood shed, the blood poured out, speaks in a negative way of all that's put aside. But the blood applied, the blood sprinkled, always refers to life, life that's in the blood.

This life that's been shed, now this life that is being applied, it's God's own life, so to speak. And we must realize then that the blood that separates me under God from and under God brings me into resurrection. But the very next thing it said that the priest was to take a log of oil, just about a pint, in a container, holding it in his left hand to pour some in, and then he was to take with his right finger and the blood, rather the oil, was to be placed over the blood.

The oil was to be placed over the blood. What does it say? The only thing God anoints, the only thing that He really uses is that which has been through death. And now that which has been set apart into God, redeemed, separated by blood, He anoints that which comes on resurrection ground.

Do you see that? The oil speaks of the Holy Spirit. It's the anointing that comes once the individual comes through unto resurrection. I remember back during the war, just after the war, when many servicemen were returning, I used to have fellows come to me so often and say, I was a pilot in the service.

I believe I want to dedicate myself to God to be a pilot for the missionaries. Do you know of any place that would accept my experience? Where can I go? I want to be a pilot. I thank God, even in those days we saw a little bit.

And I'd have to sit down with a brother and I'd say, look, you don't dedicate a talent to God. I'm moving in the back door, so listen carefully. You don't dedicate a talent to God.

You don't. You don't dedicate some ability that you have to the Lord. If you do, something has squeezed through the tomb and gotten up here.

God's way is to take individuals who themselves are dedicated to Him. And I'd have to sit down with these pilots and I'd say, I thank God for your desire to help the missionaries, but I don't believe God's interested in that. They'd look so surprised.

Don't you think God needs pilots? No. No. God wants individuals who are His.

You see, the frustration that comes, I can show you any number of them who dedicated their pilotry to the Lord, and then they got in a place where they couldn't pilot. What did they do? They'd given something of their talent to the Lord. You see, something had slipped through the cross that they thought that God would anoint.

God doesn't anoint that sort of thing. Do you all agree? Do you see what I'm trying to say? Somebody says, I have a lovely voice, and I like to dedicate my voice to the Lord. You see why I moved in the way I did? Because we all have some talent we want to give to God.

Lord, surely you can use my talent. I thank you for a lovely voice. God doesn't accept it on that basis.

You don't come to dedicate something or some talent or something for Him. It doesn't work that way. Our dedication is unto Him, and here at the cross and in the tomb, God has a lovely reduction place.

He brings everything to zero. We all start from scratch. We all start from nothing.

I love this because it's hope for everybody. Lord, I don't know what you got from your grandmother or grandfather or the Mayflower or someplace else. I don't know what your background is, but we all start from the same place.

Total zero. Out of the grave. I no longer, but now it is Jesus Christ.

This ought to encourage you, beloved. Really. When He takes us forth and we come out, He applies the oil.

He anoints that which has come through death into life. Now it could be that you can sing, but it's a totally different thing. You don't care.

It's not a matter of I have to sing. It's, well, Lord, anytime. You're ready.

I had one of the most lovely examples of this a number of years ago. We were in a terrible accident in Washington. The lady who was sitting in the front seat who almost lost her life, she's a very godly lady.

I had heard her sing on a few occasions. When she sang, she did it very rarely, but when she sang, I never saw anyone in the group of what they sat there with the sense of God's glory and the anointing of the Lord. Every time you sensed she had chosen that which God was releasing through her spirit.

And one day I heard her give her testimony and she said that she had been in opera. Then she'd been saved. She'd met the Lord.

And in the best of her wisdom and judgment, she decided that she'd use her voice for the Lord. So she moved around from church to church and place to place singing for the Lord. And then one day the Lord spoke to her in a new way and said, No more.

For four years she couldn't sing a word. She couldn't sing a word. This natural talent, this that she had had, God was laying aside.

I heard her say with tears coursing down her cheek, she said, as far as I was concerned, I'd never sing again, although how I love to sing. How many of you can see how easy it is for us to siphon off our satisfaction from a talent or an ability that we have and God wants our satisfaction to come only from Him? I think I know a little of what this means. I believe people can love to preach for God.

I believe that men can learn a natural ability in school and all that goes with it and siphon off from it even the satisfaction of teaching or preaching. And God has to devastate and take every last thing that we have, put it in the tomb, that is, put it in its place of death. But when He gets through and brings the life up

on resurrection ground, on the new side, He anoints that which is of the loveliness of the Lord in us and that alone.

Do you see what we're trying to say this morning? Our dedication then, and I just have to close, we've hardly gotten started. Our dedication has to be according to what? Knowledge. People mean, well, I look at hearts, they want to do something for God, they want to be busy, they want to burn out for the Lord.

All these terms and phrases are so good, but we have to realize that you just aren't redeemed and then give to God the whole mess, all you can do. What is it? God says, no, you need to look back again at Calvary and I want you to see the way by which dedication really works. I take you through the cross, bury in the tomb, and we stand in a whole new position, a whole new base on resurrection ground.

That which has been through the blood, He applies the oil, He anoints. So don't be surprised if the ability you've had to use for the Lord, you could do this or that or something, if suddenly it begins to wane and it goes into death. It's God transferring us from our natural energy.

Oswald Chambers says, first the natural has to go before the spiritual can come into its right place. And we've all had a natural dedication about it. We've had it.

Some more than others. It's a get up and go, let's get something done for God. And He has to bring it to death.

And in the process of it, we go on tomorrow, good thing we don't have messages, we just stop and start. But His dedication in our life is according to renewed knowledge. Renewed knowledge that God brings after the reproofs and as He's instructing us along the way, brings us finally to see that all that He anoints is what has come through death into life.

Shall we pray? Lord, Lord, I guess we've all been guilty of wanting to give unto Thee something of the natural. We had some knowledge. We thought we could use our knowledge to teach and help others.

But it was the natural accumulation. Lord, You can't take that knowledge and really anoint it. You have to take it down through death.

And only that which You bring into resurrection can have into the livingness the reality that will lift and help others. We've all had our talents. We still have them.

So many things we really want to do for Thee. And Lord, we naturally siphon off the satisfaction from our doing of it. But oh, we thank You this morning, Lord, that more and more You're taking us into a whole new realm of understanding that all our delight, all our satisfaction, it's to be in Thee.

Every other fountain dries up. Everything else becomes like a cistern until, Lord, we find in Thee the delight of our hearts. Thou art the one who satisfies.

And our giving and our dedication unto Thee comes into such a change. Oh, we've been so zealous for our interpretation. We've been so zealous for the accumulation of our natural understanding to share it with others.

I thank You that today more than ever You're causing Your people to realize, oh, Lord, that it's the anointing that comes from above that quickens things into life. Everything else, everything else is empty. What I have been able to say this morning, Lord, I claim Thou will do it.

Forgive us when we've tried to give You something and You wanted us. Some ability and You wanted us. Some talent and You wanted us.

Some reservoir that we had stored up, You wanted us, not it. Lord, we'll be sure to give Thee the praise for Your working. We'll be sure, as best we know how, to say, Lord, take our zeal, take our dedication.

We don't want it to diminish, but we want it to be rightly directed. Oh, don't let anyone go away discouraged this morning, but encouraged to believe that our dedication can have real point and focus. It can have new meaning and it can be something for Thee once it's diffused of all our energy and all that represents our own strength.

Oh, we thank You, Lord. Our anticipations are in Thee. In Jesus' name we ask it with thanksgiving.

Amen.

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